

# **Environmental Water Samples** **Collection Protocol**

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## **Samples**

The Alabama Dept. of Public Health Mobile Division Laboratory tests surface water samples collected by certified collectors (Health dept. environmentalists, ADEM collectors, municipal water systems.) **Prior arrangements must be made with the laboratory for samples to be run.** Samples are routinely received and tested Monday through Thursday.

## **Supplies**

- Samples are collected in sterile, non-toxic plastic bottles of 250 or 500 ml volumes. The bottles, prepared by the lab, have a paper dust cover, which should remain, on the bottle until the sample is collected. The laboratory supplies report forms used as a test request and for recording sample information necessary for proper processing.
- A sufficient number of bottles should be obtained from the lab for each sample site and one temperature control sample.
- An ice chest with ice is needed to cool the samples immediately after collection.

## **Collection and Transport**

- Samples are preferably received by the lab and tested within one hour of collection. If this is not possible, samples must be received in the lab within six hours of collection.
- Samples must be held below 10° C (50° F) during the transport time. A temperature control sample is collected at the first sampling site.
- Sample bottles are filled to the shoulder of the bottle. This will allow an air space of about one inch at the top necessary for proper mixing of the sample during testing. Avoid over filling the bottle.
- Write the sampling site on the sample identification tag. Put the ID tag on the sample immediately. Fill in the information on the report form. Critical information on the form includes Sample Site, Date and Time of Collection, and other information that might be pertinent to the sampling event, e.g. rain, turbidity, animals, etc.
- Transport samples to the lab as soon as possible.

Reference: Standard Method for the Examination of Water and Wastewater. 18<sup>th</sup> ed.  
National Beach Guidance and Required Performance Criteria for Grants July 2006.