



COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIVATE WATER SAMPLES



Instructions for proper water sample collection:

- Avoid contaminating the sample bottle or the water source during sampling.
- Use sterilized public health laboratory sample bottles only. They are available at local county health departments or the laboratory office.
- Be sure the bottle is sealed.
- Before the sample bottle is opened, allow the water to run for at least 3 minutes.
- Remove the cap and hold it in your hand (do not lay it down on a surface).
- Do **not** touch the inside of the bottle or the inside of the cap.
- Do **not** rinse out the bottle.
- Do **not** use any device (e.g., cup, funnel, etc.) to fill the bottle.
- Hold the bottle below the neck.
- Allow water to fill bottle up to the 100 mL mark.
- Immediately replace the cap tightly.
- Once the sample has been collected, fill out the form legibly with the requested information.
- Attach a sticker to each sample.
- Deliver samples as soon as possible within the work hour stated below in the "Notes" section. Samples will not be tested if over 30 hours old when received.

Notes:

- Delivery of specimens to the laboratory is the responsibility of the individual.
- Water samples will be received and tested during normal work hours (7:30 am – 4:00 pm) Monday through Thursday.
- The water test report is designed to meet Alabama Department of Environmental Management and Environmental Protection Agency specifications. No additional interpretation or amendment will be provided by the testing facility.
- Private well users are encouraged to seek guidance from Bureau of Environmental Services staff at a local county health department or the RSA Tower (Montgomery, AL) Phone: (334) 206-5373.
- Water samples submitted are tested for total coliform bacteria (including *E. coli*).
- The Bureau of Clinical Laboratories does not perform any chemical analysis of private well water.
- The water test report does not meet any regulatory or financial institution requirements such as mortgage, health or safety in recreational or competitive venues.
- The fee is currently waived for each private water sample tested by the laboratory.

Prattville Laboratory

204 Legends Court
Prattville, AL 36066
P.O. Box 1000, Prattville, AL 36067
(334) 290-3201

Mobile Division Laboratory

757 Museum Drive
Mobile, AL 36608
(251) 344-6049

Prattville Laboratory
P.O. Box 1000
Prattville, AL 36067-9901
(334) 290-6130

Bureau of Clinical Laboratories
Bacteriological Results of Drinking Water
Shaded Area for Lab Use Only
www.alabamapublichealth.gov/bcl

Mobile Laboratory
757 Museum Drive
Mobile, AL 36608
(251) 344-6049

Time Collected				Date Collected		
0	8	0	0	01	01	24
24 Hour Clock				Month	Day	Year

0	0	0					
PWS ID Number							

Time Received				Date Received		
24 Hour Clock				Month	Day	Year

Collector's Name: JOHN DOE Collector's Phone Number: (334) 290 - 6130 System Served: PRIVATE WELL County: YOUR COUNTY

Test Requested: SM9221 - Multi Tube Ferm SM9223B - MMO-Mug

(Zip code not needed on Public Water)
Collection Point and Zip Code

Sample Code (Circle one) CA CP ECA ECP UNS

Lab Number

1	OUTSIDE WELL, 123 HOPE ST. NOWHERE, AL 12345		D P S						
2			D P S						
3			D P S						
4			D P S						
5			D P S						
6			D P S						
7			D P S						
8			D P S						
9			D P S						
10			D P S						
11	RAW		T						
12	RAW		T						

Testing Laboratory
 Mobile 10060
 Prattville 10070

Sample Key
D – Distribution Sample
S – Special Sample
P – Repeat Sample
T – Total Coliform Sample

Results Key
CA – Coliform Absent
CP – Coliform Present
ECA – E. coli Absent
ECP – E. coli Present
UNS – Unsatisfactory (turn over)

Analyst Tested
Analyst Reviewed

Mail Report To: JOHN DOE
123 HOPE ST.
NOWHERE, AL 12345

BUREAU OF CLINICAL LABORATORIES

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE DRINKING WATER TEST REQUEST

1. Each sample should be uniquely labeled with its corresponding collection point number on the Test Request. Please include the PWSID and collection point description on the sample. NOTE: If more than twelve (12) samples are submitted, renumber the second Test Request from the beginning with No. 13, the third form beginning with the No. 25, etc., so each sample has a different collection point number.
2. Complete the following sections of the form:
 - PWSID:** Identification number, assigned by ADEM Water Division, must be completed. (Not applicable for private wells.)
 - Collector's name:** Name of the person who collected the sample.
 - System served:** Legal name of your water system.
 - County:** County in which your water system office is located. (For private wells, the county in which the well is located.)
 - Time collected:** Twenty-four-hour clock format. For times after 12 noon, add 12 hours to the time and write those four numbers. For example, 3:45 would read 1545.
 - Date collected:** Record two digits each for month, day, and year. For example, June 9, 2024, would read 060924.
 - Collection points:** Location where the sample is located. Number and location should be the same as labeled on the corresponding samples(s).
 - mg/L Cl:** Chlorine residual at the collection point in milligrams per liter. (not applicable for private wells.)
 - Sample code:** For each sample, circle the letter to indicate the type of sample collected.
 - Mail report to:** Address to which a copy of the final report should be mailed.
 - Shaded areas:** DO NOT write in any shaded areas. These areas are for lab use only.
 - Shipping:** Use address on front for all deliveries to the Mobile Lab. When shipping via USPS to the Prattville Lab, use address on front. When shipping to the Prattville Lab via courier, UPS, or FedEx, use the physical address – 204 Legends Court, Prattville, AL 36066.

WATER SAMPLE INTERPRETATION

If the CP, or ECP column is marked, the sample is positive for total, or E. coli coliform per 100 mL respectively, and follow-up action is required. Public water systems must follow ADEM's regulations. Individuals should contact their local county health department environmentalist immediately for corrective action advice.

If the result is marked in the UNS (Unsatisfactory) column, contact the laboratory for an explanation. See UNS codes below.

UNSATISFACTORY SAMPLE CODES

- A Sample over 30 hours old (sample over 6 hours old for Fecal/E. coli).
- B Sample leaked in transit.
- C Sample received on a non-scheduled testing day.
- D Incomplete or incorrect information.
- E Laboratory accident
- F Unapproved sample bottle
- G Sample submitted with less than 100 mL of water (must be filled to at least the 100 mL mark leaving air space for mixing of sample).
- H Sample bottle too full (insufficient air space for mixing of sample).
- J Other: