



## **Sampling Instructions Total Coliforms & E. coli – Presence/Absence For Drinking Water**

### **Sampling Kit**

1 clear, sterile bacteria sample bottle containing sodium thiosulfate powder, marked at 100mL.

### **Sample Collection**

Open all inside and outside spigots and allow the entire water system to flush for approximately 15 minutes before collecting the sample. Turn off all the spigots and select the faucet from which the sample will be collected. For home testing, the kitchen sink is normally used.

If present, remove the aerator from the faucet. Using standard household bleach, disinfect the opening of the faucet, using a spray bottle or by simply splashing bleach on, into, and around the faucet opening. Allow the bleach to sit undisturbed for several minutes, then turn the water on and thoroughly rinse the faucet to remove any traces of bleach. Allow the water to run on full pressure for several more minutes, and then decrease the water flow to a slow, even stream.

When taking the sample, be very careful to keep your hands or any other foreign object from touching the inside of either the bottle or the cap. This could possibly contaminate your sample and affect your result. Remove the plastic seal from around the cap using the red break-away tab and throw it away. When removing the cap, keep the underside facing down to ensure sterility. Do not rinse out the powder, and do not set the cap on the counter.

Fill the bottle to the **100 mL** mark indicated on the bottle, and secure the cap immediately.

Record the sampling location, date, and time on the bottle label.

### **Holding Time**

Your sample must be returned to the laboratory within 24 hours of sample collection. Samples that arrive at the laboratory past the holding time must be re-sampled to ensure data quality.

### **Sample Storage and Transportation**

Samples must always be kept cold after collection. Be sure to either refrigerate your sample, or keep it on ice until it has been relinquished to the laboratory. A small zip-lock bag containing loose ice is usually sufficient for transporting your sample a short distance. A small ice chest may be necessary if longer transportation times are required.

### **Payment**

Payment will be required when the sample is dropped off for analysis.

### **Data Reporting and Turn-Around Time**

Data will be reported as either "Present" or "Absent". If you receive a "Present" result for either Total Coliform or E.coli, please contact the laboratory staff for recommendations and instructions. Turn around time is one business day - samples will be reported by 5pm the next business day.