

Proper Collection of Drinking Water Samples for Coliform Analysis

- **You must use the sample container provided by the laboratory.** This container has been sterilized and contains a special chemical (in the form of a white powder) that is required for the test.
 - Find a proper location to take a sample, preferably an inside faucet. However, the sample can be taken from an outside faucet.
 - **If an inside faucet is used, remove any aerators or filtration systems (if present) prior to collecting a water sample.**
 - Sterilize the faucet from which the sample is to be collected in order to eliminate any bacteria present on the faucet which may contaminate your sample. The faucet may be sterilized by using one of the following methods:
 - Use a swab with bleach to wipe the inside and outside of the faucet opening. Rinse the outside lip well with water.
- OR**
- Use a flame (such as a lighter) to sterilize the faucet. Do not use a match, as this could leave soot on the faucet which could contaminate the sample. This method should only be used on outside faucets, as inside faucets could be discolored or tarnished.
 - Turn on the cold water, and allow the faucet to flow for 8-10 minutes in order to clear the line. Reduce the flow to a slow and steady stream in order to collect the sample.
 - Sanitize your hands in a separate sink to ensure no cross contamination.
 - Remove the sterility seal from the sample container and discard.
 - Remove the cap from the sample container, taking care not to touch the inside of the lid or the lip of the container.
 - **DO NOT RINSE THE SAMPLE CONTAINER.** The container contains a powder residue which is required for the test.
 - **Fill the sample container only to the fill line, and seal tightly.**

Submit the sample to the Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority Laboratory, located at 7297 Adams Farm Road, Randleman, NC, **within 24 hours of collection.** Samples are accepted **Monday - Thursday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.**

