

# Water Sample Collection Instructions

- We will provide sterile bottles or bags for water sample collection.
- You may deliver samples directly to the laboratory. The days/hours that we accept samples are listed on the front of this form.
- Samples should be taken from a cold-water tap - before any treatment equipment, if possible. Remove aerators, screens, hoses, filters, or any other devices attached to the tap.
- Be careful not to touch the inside of the bag or bottle.
- Sterilize the tap or faucet by heating it until dry by holding a flame beneath the opening. Candle/grill lighters work well for this. This step can be skipped if you are not testing for bacteria.
- **NOTE: Do not heat plastic, nickel, or any other colored fixtures.** The heat can melt or discolor them. For these faucets, use alcohol or bleach on a cotton ball and carefully swab the opening.
- Turn the water on and allow it to run for 10 minutes.
- **Lead requires a one-liter sample bottle and extra instructions; please call before sampling if you want to test for lead.**

## Collecting the sample into a Whirl-Pak bag:

1. **Tear off the top of the bag at the perforated line.** Do not pull the bag open before tearing off the top at the perforation. The bag is sterile.
2. Use the white tabs to open the bag. Do not touch the top edge of the bag as you open it.
3. Hold on to the yellow wires to fill the bag with cold water, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.
4. To close the bag, continue to hold on tightly to the yellow wires, with your fingers at the edges of the bag. Quickly spin or flip the bag end over end between your hands to roll up the top of the bag. The top can be rolled up slowly, but then the bag will tend to leak, and will hold less water. **We need at least 120 mls of water, which is about 3/4 of a bag.**
5. Twist the yellow wires together to keep the bag from unrolling or leaking.
6. Samples collected in these bags cannot be mailed. **Bring them directly to the lab within 24 hours of collecting the sample. Keep them cold with ice, but don't let them freeze.**
7. Payment is due at the time the sample is delivered to the lab.

## Collecting the sample into a sterile bottle:

1. Open the bottle. Be careful not touch the interior of the bottle or cap, as they are sterile. Do not rinse the bottle or cap prior to sampling.
2. Carefully put the bottle under the faucet to fill it, being careful not to splash. Do not fill it up to the top, but only to the "fill" line that is drawn on in marker.
3. A cardboard mailer will be provided if you wish to mail your sample to us.
4. Mail samples Monday through Wednesday to insure proper processing. **Send them by a guaranteed next day method, as we must receive them within 24 hours of sampling.**
5. Please send payment with the sample, as it is due at the time of sample receipt.

**Please call if you have any questions (320)251-5090**