GENERAL SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ ALL DIRECTIONS BEFORE TAKING SAMPLE !!!

Refer to Reverse Side For More Specific Sampling Instructions

OFFICE HOURS	Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM– 4:00 PM 2:00 PM is the cut-off time for samples to be processed that day. Street Address: 8 Northern Road, Presque Isle, Maine 04769
DATA SHEETS	Please fill in all requested information on the Sample Collection Form provided.
SAMPLE CONTAINERS	**DO NOT** rinse out sample bottles. The MICROTECH bottle is only used for bacterial analysis and is sterile. **DO NOT** open the bottles until you are ready to take the sample. Please fill **ALL** containers provided in the kit (additional containers may be present). Fill as instructed on sample containers. Check for leakage by shaking or turning container upside-down. If leakage occurs, carefully replace cover.
SAMPLING PROCEDURE	It is best to collect the sample just before it is mailed or brought to the lab. Collect the sample from a faucet whenever possible. Collecting directly from the well or spring is difficult and usually results in the accidental contamination of the sample. For bacterial analyses, follow the instructions on the sampling sheet provided. For chemical analyses (except for first draw lead – *see attachment for Federal Government Recommendation Tests*) the sample may be collected directly after taking the bacteria sample.
SAMPLE DELIVERY	**SAMPLES MUST BE SENT THE SAME DAY THAT THEY ARE COLLECTED.** Samples may be dropped off at the laboratory anytime during office hours or by using the after hour sample drop-off box located at the main entrance to the laboratory. Note: This box is checked before hours Monday through Friday so the box shouldn't be used Friday after hours or at any time during Saturday. Samples may also be mailed Mon. – Thurs. to the mailing address below. **For bacterial and safety analyses, samples must be delivered to the lab within 24 hours after collection.** When shipping within the State of Maine, items mailed first class priority are generally delivered the next day. However, for out-of-state samples and some remote locations in Maine, express (overnight) shipping is required. Please consult with your local postmaster prior to shipping to determine the most appropriate shipping method. Collect the sample late in the day and hand deliver directly to the postmaster/shipping service prior to the last mail pickup of the day. Also, check with the carrier to insure that samples will not freeze in transit during the colder months. **DO NOT use a POSTAL DROP-OFF BOX** or send samples on Friday or during the weekend since this can cause a delay in the delivery of the samples to the laboratory.
REJECTION OF SAMPLES	For bacterial and safety analyses, samples arriving to the lab after 24 hours from the time of collection will not be tested. For chemical analyses, this time is extended to 30 hours. MEL may reject samples that do not comply with the method sampling and preservation requirements; we will request a replacement sample; and charge a $5.00 processing fee. Some other problems that could cause a sample to not be tested are: a) incorrect or incomplete paperwork; b) odor of chlorine (ex. *bleach*) detected; c) leaking sample container; d) sample contains ice; e) sample is less than minimum sample requirement (fill between lines); or f) lab error.
RESULTS	Results will be mailed to the address designated under the "Report To Be Sent To" section on the Sample Collection Form that has been provided. Results may also be faxed or e-mailed at no charge if indicated. The typical turn around time is 5 – 7 business days.

MAILING ADDRESS:

MICMAC ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY

P.O. Box 1580

Presque Isle, ME 04769

Phone: (207) 764-4001

Fax: (207) 764-7768

BACTERIA SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

Many of the water samples which fail a bacteria test fail due to sampling error, not because the water is actually contaminated. To ensure that this does not happen, follow these steps when taking a sample from your water system:

CHOOSE A SAMPLE LOCATION

Ideally, the sample should be collected from a tap or spigot located at or near well head or pump house and before the water supply is introduced into any storage tanks or treatment units. To get a representative sample of what you are actually drinking, samples may be collected from a kitchen faucet.

REMOVE FAUCET SCREEN

Disconnect any hoses, filters, or aerators attached to the tap before sampling. These devices can harbor a bacterial population if they are not routinely cleaned or replaced when worn or cracked. A pair of pliers or a wrench may be needed to remove these accessories.

DISINFECT THE FAUCET

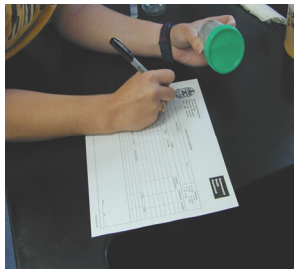
Disinfect the faucet with the swab provided in the test kit (or use a paper towel saturated with alcohol or household bleach). When swabbing the faucet do not touch the faucet with your hands, use gloves if necessary. After swabbing it is a good idea to run the faucet at a slow rate for a few minutes before collecting the sample.

PURGE THE SYSTEM

If the sample must be collected at a point in the water system beyond a pressurization or holding tank, a sufficient volume of water should be purged to provide a complete exchange of fresh water into the tank and at the location where the sample is collected. It is advisable to open several taps during the purge to ensure a rapid and complete exchange of water in tanks. The system should be purged for at least 15 minutes.

COLLECT THE SAMPLE

When sampling for bacterial content, the sample container should not be rinsed before use due to possible contamination of the sample container. When filling the sample container, the water should be turned down so that no splashing drops of water from the ground or sink enter either the bottle or the cap. Fill sample container to the cap line and immediately secure cap tightly. A minimum of 150-mL of sample is required for bacterial analysis. If possible, label the sampler container with the site name, time and date of collection, and sampler initials.



FILL OUT PAPERWORK

Completely fill out all paperwork (sample collection form, etc.) for the laboratory. If the paperwork is incomplete when it arrives to the laboratory, the sample may be rejected for analysis. Bacteria samples should be delivered directly to the postmaster or laboratory within 1-hr of collection. If they cannot be delivered within 1-hr after collection, refrigerate or store samples in a cooler until samples can be transported to the postmaster or laboratory. The samples should arrive to the laboratory within 24-hrs from the sample collection time.

ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? PLEASE CONTACT THE LABORATORY AT (207) 764-4001.

Refer to Reverse Side For General Sampling Instructions

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