



Colilert Sampling Instructions

- Use a sterile container provided by the laboratory. Do not rinse the container, it contains sample preservatives.
- Choose an appropriate location for samples. An end-use point is most applicable (i.e. kitchen sink).
- Hands should be cleaned, and if possible gloves worn, to avoid contamination of the sample.
- Remove the screen from the faucet before sample collection to avoid contamination.
- Use a flame (i.e. a lighter) to sterilize the faucet before sample collection to avoid contamination.
- Turn the water on (with the water flow at the diameter of about a pencil) and let run for several minutes. If the water had not been run in over a month, let the water run for 20-25 minutes before taking the sample.
- Remove the plastic seal and unscrew the sample bottle cap. Do not set the cap down, this can result in contamination.
- Do not rinse out the container. Fill the container to just above the 100-mL fill line. The lab must have at least 100-mL to perform the test, however make sure there is some head space (air space) in the container, otherwise the sample is invalid and cannot be tested. Do not overflow the container.
- Secure the cap on the container and mark the date and time of collection.
- Keep the sample away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures. The samples should be kept at 4°C +/- 2°C, be sure to store and transport the sample in a cooler on ice.
- Fill out a chain of custody form completely including client name, mailing address, sampler name, sample identification (location), date, time, analysis requested (colilert), and whether or not the sample is for compliance.
- Return the sample to the lab as soon as possible after it is collected. The laboratory must be able to process the sample within 30 hours of the sample collection time.
- Payment is due upon sample submission unless an account has been established.
- 24 hours is required to complete the analysis, verbal results can be given at this time.
- Reports will be faxed if requested, and hard copies mailed within five business days.

IMPORTANT: Remember that the sample will be called invalid and not processed by the laboratory if any of the following occur:

- **The sample is frozen.**
- **The sample volume is less than 100 mL.**
- **There is no head space (air space) in the sample container after sampling.**
- **The sample is received past 30 hours of the sample collection time.**
- **The sample has a residual chlorine concentration of >4 mg/L.**
- **The sample has confluent growth.**

**PLEASE NOTE:
SAMPLES FOR BACTERIA ANALYSIS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED
ON FRIDAYS OR ON THE DAY BEFORE A HOLIDAY.**