



Alpine County Health and Human Services Environmental Health

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GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING SAMPLE SITES AND COLLECTING SAMPLES

1. When selecting sample sites, it is important that the tap is located in a clean environment. Consider protection from contamination from humans, animals, dust, rain and other sources. Outside hose bibs should be clean, located at least 18 inches above the ground, be used frequently and discharge downward. You may wish to install specially designed and protected “dedicated sample taps” from which to collect routing samples.
2. Use only sterilized sample bottles provided by an approved laboratory. Check bottles upon receipt to ensure the lids are tight. Do not accept bottles with loose lids.
3. Maintain a supply of five bottles stored in a clean place and do not open until sample is taken. Use oldest bottles first.
4. Allow the water to flow for two to three minutes before collecting sample. Do not open the tap to full and adjust the rate of flow from the tap so that the jet of water breaks sharply away without lapping the outside lip of the tap.
5. Hold the sample bottle at or near the bottom and loosen the lid. Keep the lid pointed downward while filling bottle and replace as soon as sample is taken. The shut off tap and properly complete laboratory sample slip.
6. Store the sample in a clean container during transport to laboratory. If the transport time will exceed one hour, store the sample in a clean ice chest for transport to the laboratory.
7. Do **not** sample from fire hydrants, bathroom taps, leaking taps, drinking fountains or taps which have aerators, strainers, or swivel faucets.
8. Do **not** rinse sample bottles or allow water to run over hands or other objects during collection.
9. Do **not** place the lid on the ground or other object(s) during sampling.
10. Do **not** sample during unfavorable weather conditions such as during or immediately after a rainfall or while a strong wind is blowing.
11. Do **not** sample from taps surrounded by excessive foliage or which are dirty or corroded. Never sample from a hose or other attachment fastened to the tap.
12. If the water supply is chlorinated, test for the chlorine residual before collecting the bacteriological sample and record the result on the sample slip.