

The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory accepts drinking water samples as submitted by the sampler. The sampler is responsible for following the sampling instructions and meeting the laboratory and regulatory sampling requirements.

What sample information is required?

Always include a completed Water Sample Collection Information Form with drinking water samples. The form must include the following information in indelible ink:

- Name and mailing address where the report is to be sent (usually pre-printed on the form)
- Date and Time of Collection (required for all tests)
- Daytime phone number and/or email address of person collecting the sample
- Physical Location and Address where sample was collected
- Homeowners or private systems – note **Source** and **If chlorine has been used to disinfect the water system in the past two weeks** in the section under “Private Sample Information Only”.
- Regulated water systems – completely fill out the lower section of the Water Sample Collection Information Form that is for “Regulated Public Water System Use Only”.

Lab personnel may try to contact the person taking the sample to request the missing information.

What condition should my sample be in?

Samples must be delivered to the laboratory within the timeframes listed in the sampling instructions. It's best to collect the sample on the day that you're dropping it off.

Some tests require your sample to be kept cold. If you received ice packs with your kit, be sure to freeze them ahead of time and include them with the sample. The sample containers must not be frozen.

Follow all sampling instructions included with your container(s). The lab will note deviations from the collection instructions on the Water Sample Collection Information Form.

Why was my sample rejected?

The following situations will likely result in the sample being rejected:

- The sample is not received at the laboratory within the timeframes listed in the sampling instructions (i.e. too old to test)

- Any of the required information is missing from the Water Sample Collection Information Form
- The sample is not kept cold (if necessary), or other sampling instructions are not followed
- The sample is received frozen
- Chlorine or other oxidizers are present
- Not enough sample is present for testing (i.e. underfilled containers)
- The sample shows signs of damage, contamination, or inadequate preservation
- The sample is taken from multiple locations using the same sample container
- The sample is discolored, very cloudy, or contains heavy sediments or sewage
- The sample is submitted in sampling containers not approved by this laboratory
- The sample is collected in a different container and transferred to laboratory containers
- The sample is collected from a location outside of Vermont
- The sample is a consumer product (such as bottled water)

What happens if my sample does not meet these requirements?

Testing will not proceed for samples that do not meet these requirements, unless there are written or verbal instructions from the customer asking the laboratory to proceed **and** the Laboratory Director or designee agrees to accept the samples for testing and qualify the results.

The laboratory test report will qualify any results for samples that do not conform to testing requirements.

Any discussions or decisions between the laboratory and the submitter related to how the laboratory will proceed with sample rejection or analysis will be documented and retained.

You may need to submit a new sample. If so, a new kit will be sent to you.

If the laboratory is unable to test a drinking water sample and needs to subcontract the sample testing to another accredited laboratory, the laboratory will contact the customer or request the customer submit a new sample. Please be sure to provide contact information on the Water Sample Collection Information Form.

If you have questions or suggestions regarding the laboratory's sample acceptance policy, please call us at 802-338-4724 or 800-660-9997 (VT only).