

# Water Quality Parameters – Phosphate Inhibitor (Ortho-Phosphate, Total Phosphate, Alkalinity) – Community Public Water Systems

## SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCEDURE

### Reference Method SM 4500P F, EPA 365.1, SM 2320 B

Read instructions carefully.

Follow all instructions to avoid sample rejection.

- **Sample bottle:**
  - 250-mL plastic General bottle, Unpreserved
  - 125-mL plastic General bottle, Unpreserved
- **Shipping/sample hold time:**
  - Ship immediately. The sample must arrive at the laboratory within 48 hours of collection.
- **Sample location:**
  - State-approved or State-accepted location. If one of your locations is not in use, contact your district engineer for direction.
- **Prior to collection:**
  - At least 48 hours before sampling, remove ice packs from the sampling kit and freeze them.

#### Sample collection procedure:

1. Attach the pre-printed label to the bottle. If you do not have a pre-printed label, write the following information, using a ballpoint or permanent pen, on the generic bottle label: PWSID, PWS Name, and Location ID.
2. Remove any attachments from the sample tap.
3. Turn on the cold water tap and run for 4 to 5 minutes, or until the water temperature has stabilized, whichever is longer.
  - a. If there is only one faucet handle, make sure it is in the cold water position.
4. Reduce the flow of the water so the stream is steady and the width of a pencil.
5. Remove each bottle cap and hold in hand. Do not touch the underside of the cap or the inside of each bottle.
6. Fill bottles to the shoulder. **DO NOT** overfill the container.

7. Screw the cap back on the bottles. Make sure the cap is on securely. Turn the bottles upside down to make sure the water does not leak.
8. **Note:** water quality parameter testing requires a field pH. Write the pH value on the Chain-of-Custody for each sample. See the pH (Field) sample collection procedure document for instructions.
  - a. pH (Field)  
([https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/sampproc/ph\\_sp.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/sampproc/ph_sp.pdf))
9. Replace any attachments that were removed from the faucet or sample tap.
10. Repeat for other bottles and other locations.
11. Upon completion of sampling, immediately (within 15 minutes) place sample in cooler with frozen cooling material.

**Complete the Chain-of-Custody form using a ballpoint or permanent pen:**

1. Name of the sample collector.
2. Date and Time collected (include a.m. or p.m.).
3. Field Number (if applicable).
4. Write down the pH at each location.
5. Put your signature on the “Relinquished By” line, including date and time. The date and time are when the sample is put in the return mailer and sealed. If samples pass hands prior to packaging, both parties must sign, date, and time. The first party would put down the date and time of the transfer, and the second party would put down the date and time the sample is packaged.

**Deliver samples to the laboratory:**

1. All sample containers must have cooling material present without evidence of sample freezing.
2. Sample temperature requirements depend on when the lab receives the sample:
  - a. Received 0 - 24 hours after collection: frozen or partially frozen (i.e. containing some solids) cooling material must be present. The temperature of the cooling material must be less than the temperature of the sample(s).
  - b. Received more than 24 hours after collection: frozen or partially frozen cooling material must be present. The temperature of the samples must be between 0.0 and 6.0° C.
3. Dropping off samples in person:
  - a. Frozen or partially frozen cooling material must be present. Laboratory staff must confirm the state of the cooling material. The temperature of the cooling material must be less than the temperature of the sample(s). Temperature requirements listed above must be followed.

- b. Physically hand cooler/container containing samples and cooling material to laboratory sample receiving staff. Do not leave sample containers at the sample dock unattended.
4. Shipping samples:
  - a. Make sure the completed Chain-of-Custody is in the shipping container.
  - b. Add enough fresh, frozen cooling material to the mailing container to maintain appropriate sample temperature as indicated above, with no evidence of freezing.
  - c. Bring the mailer to a courier that **guarantees** overnight/express shipment to the Public Health Laboratory.
  - d. Non-US Postal Service courier services are generally recommended for sample shipping.

Please note the **shipping label provided is for courier service only**. If you use the US Postal Service (USPS), you will need to create your own shipping label using the USPS address below.

USPS cannot guarantee overnight delivery. If you use USPS, you risk failing to complete a compliance sample or having to resample due to missing sample acceptance requirements (e.g., hold time, temperature, etc.).

**Courier Service (Spee-Dee, UPS, FedEx, etc.)**

Minnesota Department of Health  
Public Health Laboratory  
Environmental Sample Receiving  
601 Robert Street North  
Saint Paul MN 55155-2531

**US Postal Service – 1<sup>st</sup> Class**

Minnesota Department of Health  
Public Health Laboratory  
Environmental Sample Receiving  
P.O. Box 64899  
Saint Paul MN 55164-0899

If you have questions, call 651-201-4700, or email [health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us](mailto:health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us).

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-4700.*