



**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

PUBLIC HEALTH BRANCH  
PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY  
**Patricia McVay, MD, Laboratory Director**  
529 I Street Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 268-2179 Fax: (707) 445-7640

**Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 12 noon and 1 to 5 pm**

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT WATER SAMPLES ON FRIDAY**

**Water Sampling Instructions**

**Note:** We test only for bacterial contamination from soil and feces. We do **NOT** test for metals and chemicals.

**North Coast Laboratories offers this type of testing: 822-4649**

**Drinking Water (Presence/Absence is Primary Test)**

1. Do not rinse the sample bottle before using or add any substance, i.e. bleach, to the bottle before sampling. The sample bottle may contain a white powder or a tablet as a preservative and is ready for your use "as is."
2. Clean the tap if needed and remove the aerator if one is installed.
3. Run the water for a few minutes.
4. Open the sterile sample bottle and **fill the bottle to approximately ¼" over the 100ml line**, but not to the top. We need the headspace so we can adequately mix the sample. Seal the cap tightly.
5. **Return it to the Laboratory within 24 hours of collection.** It is preferred that the sample is transported on ice, but not required.
6. Complete the sample form with the following information: agency or your name, address, sampling point, date and time collected, bottle cap number, phone number and address of where we should send the results.

**Raw Surface Water such as Spring Water (Enumeration is Primary Test)**

1. Open the sterile sample bottle and dip into the water about 6-12 inches deep. *Fill the bottle to approximately ¼" over the 100ml line*, but not to the top. We need the headspace so we can adequately mix the sample. Seal the cap tightly.
2. If sampling a stream or river, point the open end of the bottle upstream. From shore, a long sampling pole will facilitate sampling.
3. **Refrigerate the filled sample bottle and return it to the Laboratory within 6 hours of collection. Use an iced cooler to transport the specimen.**
4. Complete the sample form with the following information: agency or your name, address, sampling point, date and time collected, bottle cap number, phone number and address of where we should send the results.

**If you have concerns or questions about your water system, please contact Environmental Health: 445-6215**

**For questions about sample collection and testing, please call the Laboratory Information Line: 476-4945**

**THE COST FOR PRESENCE/ABSENCE TEST IS \$20 AND FOR ENUMERATION TEST IS \$25**