

How to Collect a Water Sample for Chemical Testing

Please read all of these instructions **before** you collect your water sample. If you don't follow the exact instructions, your water sample may be rejected, or the results won't be accurate.

Water samples will **only be accepted** and tested if:

- the water sampled is for human use
- it's collected from the primary residence on the property
- it's collected and submitted in the approved container
- it's collected before any type of water treatment (e.g., water softener, iron filter, reverse osmosis, water distiller, carbon filter, point-of-use filter)
- it's submitted with a **completed** requisition form

Water samples will **not** be accepted or tested if they're for real estate transactions, research, agricultural, commercial, or business purposes. Water samples for these purposes must be sent to a commercial lab at the owner's expense. To find a commercial lab, do an Internet search for labs and the large city you're closest to or look in your phone book.

How do I collect the sample?

1. Keep the container closed until right before you're ready to fill it. Don't touch or contaminate the bottom of the cap or the mouth of the container.
2. Make sure to wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
3. Run the cold water tap with a steady flow for 5 minutes before you collect the sample.
4. To collect the sample, fill the container to the upper shoulder so there is about 1 cm of space at the top. Don't overfill.
5. Put the cap back on the container. Make sure it's put on well, but don't over-tighten it.
6. Take one ID number label from the first page of the requisition form and put it on the space indicated on the side of the container. Put the other ID number label on the cap of the container. The numbers on the ID labels must be the same as the number on the requisition or the sample won't be processed.

7. Fill out the requisition form (see instructions below).
8. Put the water sample in the plastic bag and seal it. Put the completed requisition form in the side pocket of the bag.
9. Deliver the sample to an AHS public health office in your area as soon as possible after the sample has been collected.

How do I fill out the requisition form?

When filling out the requisition form, please print clearly and make sure **all** of the information below is included—if it isn't, your sample won't be processed:

- name, mailing address, postal code, and phone number
- collection site of water sample and reason for sampling (e.g., annual water test)
- legal land description—Use the format Quarter, Section, Township, Range, and Meridian. Legal land descriptions in other formats are **not** acceptable and the sample won't be processed.
- name of the person who collected the sample
- date of collection—Use format dd/mm/yy
- under sample, mark off **private supply**
- under raw water source, mark off the right box and include the well depth (if applicable)
- under sample treatment, mark off **not treated**. If your well has been shock chlorinated, please put the date it was done and make sure the sample is collected at least 7 days after this date.

Other information

- It takes about 6 to 8 weeks to get your test results back. A report will be mailed to the address on the requisition form.
- If you think your drinking water is unsafe, use another supply (e.g., bottled water) until testing shows that your water is safe to drink.
- If test results show a health concern, a public health inspector will try to contact you. Make sure the phone number you gave is the best number to reach you at during the day.
- If you have any questions about the chemical quality of your water supply, call an AHS office in your area and ask to talk to a public health inspector.
- For more information about drinking water and water safety, go to www.albertahealthservices.ca/8294.asp.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information, call Health Link at 8-1-1.

This content may be updated without notice.

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