VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Sampling Your Drinking Water

Kit OA - Volatile Organic Compounds **Chlorinated**

CAUTION: This kit contains hydrochloric acid (HCl). HCl is dangerous, handle with care. If HCl comes into contact with your skin, flush with a generous amount of water. We recommend that you wear safety glasses and protective gloves while collecting the sample.

1. What you will need

In this kit:

- Water Sample Collection Information form (Chem 202)
- Three glass vials (these contain ascorbic acid so do not tip or overturn the bottle.)
- Plastic dropper and glass vial with 1 mL or less of HCl (hydrochloric acid)
- Vial labeled "TRIP BLANK," do not open this vial, it must be returned with the samples.
- Cooler/mailer with ice packs. Make sure ice packs are frozen before sampling.

Not in this kit, but needed for sampling:

- Gloves and protective eyewear

2. Prepare

- Plan to take your sample the morning that you drop it off.
- Put the freezer pack(s) in the freezer ahead of time.
- WASH YOUR HANDS in clean water. DO NOT pump gas or handle any volatile chemicals on the day you sample your water. Do not use hand sanitizer prior to collecting your sample. This test is SENSITIVE to these types of activities.
- Put on safety glasses and gloves.
- Go to the drinking water source you want to test and remove strainer screen from your faucet, if applicable. Many faucets have a strainer screen at the outlet, you can remove this by unscrewing the end of the faucet.
- Run cold water for 4-5 minutes, reduce water flow to about a 1/8-inch stream to limit splashing and air bubbles.
- Do not touch inside the cap or mouth of the water sample bottle.

3. Collect

- Plan to take your sample the morning that you drop it off.
- Remove cap and slowly fill the vial at an angle. Do not overfill or rinse the vial because this will remove the needed ascorbic acid powder (preservative). Do not allow the inside of the cap or the vial to touch any other object.
- Add water until it is above the rim of the vial (see photo). This helps prevent an air pocket from forming. Gently tap vial to remove any air bubbles.

- Get the vial of hydrochloric acid (HCl) and unscrew the cap.
- Without touching the dropper to the water, carefully add 3 drops of acid to the water in the vial.
- Screw cap on securely.
- Repeat collection steps for the remaining two vials.
- Check for air bubbles by turning vials over and tapping the cap. Double-check by looking through the bottom. If you see air bubbles, re-open the vial and add a few more drops of water so that its level is above the rim of the vial and screw the cap back on securely.
    - If air bubbles are present when the sample is received at the laboratory, the sample cannot be tested.
    - Do not empty the vial and do not overfill vial, the preservative will be lost.
- Complete the ***Water Sample Collection Information Form,*** including the date and time you took your water sample, your name, address and email address. Your sample cannot be processed without this information.
- If you use any water treatment in your water, describe it on the form (for example: water softener).
- Label the sample vials so it can be matched with its correct form (for example: John Smith, kitchen sink).

3. Return

- Put freezer pack(s)s and the tightly closed water sample vials in the cooler box provided.
- Place the completed *Water Sample Collection Information Form* in the box. We suggest putting the form inside a sealed plastic bag so it does not get wet.
- Get your sample to the Health Department Laboratory within 48 hours by:
    - Bringing it directly to the Lab at 359 South Park Drive, Colchester, Vermont (Monday to Friday, 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)
    - Dropping it off at a District Office BEFORE a courier pick-up time: See the included sheet with addresses and pick-up times. Samples are only accepted Monday – Thursday and most pickup times are around mid-day.
    - Overnight ship it via FedEx or UPS to: 359 South Park Drive, Colchester, Vermont, 05446 (Monday through Thursday. **Do not ship on a Friday or Saturday, your sample will not arrive to the Lab on time for testing.**

Test results will be sent about 7 business days after the water sample was received.