

Vermont Department of Health Laboratory
359 South Park Drive, Colchester, VT 05446
1-800-660-9997 (VT only) or 1-802-338-4724
AHS.VDHLabCustomerService@vermont.gov

Drinking Water Sample Acceptance Policy

The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory accepts drinking water samples as represented 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)
- Name of person taking the sample and daytime phone number and/or email address
- Physical Location and Address where sample was collected
- Sampler remarks if needed
- 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 submitter or 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.

Some tests require your sample to be kept cold. If your sample container(s) came with ice packs, be sure to freeze them ahead of time and include them with the sample.

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
- The sample volume is not sufficient for testing

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- The sample shows signs of damage, contamination, or inadequate preservation
- The sample is a composite – 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

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

Any submitter/laboratory discussions or decisions 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 analyze 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 to 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 or write to us.