



Instructions for Collecting Drinking Water Samples

*Use only the Whirlpack bag Aitkin County provides for collecting samples. *

Samples in other containers will not be accepted

Many lenders for real estate transactions or loan refinances require that an independent third party collect the water sample. Contact the lender directly with questions on which tests are required and if an independent third party is needed for the sample collection. If you require Minnesota Department of Health accreditation for testing services, contact them at 651-201-4600.

Testing Prices:

\$25 for Coliform and E. coli Bacteria
 \$25 for Nitrates
 \$40 for Nitrates, Coliform and E. coli Bacteria (\$10 discount for all three tests)
 \$50 Collection Fee for onsite sample collections

1. **Sterilize Faucet.** Many faucets have plastic parts; heat sterilizing can ruin these types of faucets. Isopropyl rubbing alcohol or a bleach and water solution (approximately 1 tablespoon bleach per gallon of water) can be used to sterilize the faucet. Immerse the end of the faucet for about 1 minute, or spray sanitizing solution onto the faucet spigot. Pre-packaged sterile isopropyl alcohol wipes may also be used.

- a. If using flaming to sterilize faucet, make sure faucet is metal. If using a candle (matches are not recommended) then hold the flame under the end of the faucet for about 1 minute. If using a larger fire source, such as a butane torch, then sterilize for 5-10 seconds.



A. Opening - Tear the top off at the scored line



B. Separate the wires by pulling the tabs outward



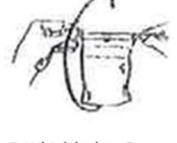
C. Separate wires further by pushing the ends toward the center of bag



D. Fill bag with water so it is 2/3 to 3/4 full



E. Straighten wires by pulling on the ends of the wire



F. Whirl the bag 5 complete revolutions and twist the ends of the wire together 2-3 times

2. **Turn water on and let it run.** After sterilizing faucet, turn on the COLD water and let it run for 5-10 minutes before collecting sample. If property has been vacant, let the water run for 20-30 minutes prior to collection. Always try to sample from the primary drinking tap or sampling point closest to the well. Remove aerator and o-rings on the faucet if present.
3. **Collect Sample.** Tear off the top of the bag along the score line when the water is ready to be collected. Once opened, handle the bag only by the white tabs or the ends of the wire twists. The bag lip should not be touched. Catch the sample, being careful not to touch the bag to the faucet.

Bring water samples in the same day it is collected. **Once collected, sample should be immediately refrigerated or placed on ice for transporting.** Sample temperatures greater than 46^o F will result in “estimated” values for nitrate. Warmer water temperatures may allow organisms to grow in the water giving a possibly inaccurate reading. Sample temperatures <28^o F will not be accepted.