

Lead and Copper Sampling

State regulations require all community and nontransient noncommunity water systems to monitor for lead and copper in drinking water.

Unlike other contaminant monitoring, the samples for lead and copper testing must come from regularly used cold water taps inside your customers' homes.

For assistance, call the nearest Department of Health regional office listed at the end of this brochure.



For More Information

If you have questions about sampling procedures, call our regional office:

◆ Eastern Region

Spokane Valley
509-329-2100

◆ Northwest Region

Kent
253-395-6750

◆ Southwest Region

Tumwater
360-236-3030

Our publications are online at
doh.wa.gov/drinkingwater

Other Sampling Publications

Lead and Copper Monitoring (331-111)

Nitrate Sampling Procedure (331-222)

Synthetic Organic Chemical (SOC) Sampling Procedure (331-224)

Inorganic Chemical (IOC) Sampling Procedure (331-221)

Volatile Organic Chemical (VOC) Sampling Procedure (331-220)

Total Trihalomethane (TTHM) Sampling Procedure (331-226)

Haloacetic Acid (HAA5) Sampling Procedure (331-223)



DOH 331-227
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If you need this publication in an alternative format, call 800.525.0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).
This and other publications are available at www.doh.wa.gov/drinkingwater.



Lead and Copper Sampling Procedure

1 Select Homes or Locations for Sampling

There are specific guidelines for selecting the homes or locations where you collect samples, the number of samples required, and setting up a monitoring schedule. For more information, see the publication, Lead and Copper Monitoring (DOH 331-111).

You can:

- ◆ Have residents collect the samples. Be sure to provide directions and sampling kits.
- ◆ Take the samples yourself. Ask residents to allow system personnel into their homes to take the samples.

2 Prepare to Collect the Sample

- ◆ The sample must come from a regularly-used kitchen or bathroom cold-water faucet.
- ◆ The object is to get the “first draw” of the water that has been sitting stagnant in the pipes for at least 6 hours, but no more than 12 hours prior to sampling.
- ◆ To ensure stagnant water conditions exist, the best sampling times are first thing in the morning, or after residents return home from work or school.
- ◆ Make sure that cold water is the last water to go through the faucet before the water sits stagnant in the pipes for the 6 – 12 hours prior to sampling.
- ◆ Do not remove the aerator from the faucet before the stagnation time nor before collecting the sample.

3 Collect Samples

- ◆ Do not run any water immediately prior to collecting the sample.
- ◆ Make sure the water does not go through a hose, water softener, or any kind of filter before it reaches the sample container.
- ◆ Place the open bottle below the faucet and gently open the cold-water tap.
- ◆ Fill the sample container to the shoulder of the bottle or the line marked “1,000 ml” and turn the water off.
- ◆ Cap the bottle tightly.
- ◆ Label the bottle (see step 4), and place it in the sample kit provided.

4 Complete Lab Form and Sample Label

You will either provide completed labels to the homeowners, or fill them out when you collect the samples.

Laboratory forms vary, so be sure to include the following:

- ◆ Water system name and ID number
- ◆ System type (Group A or Group B)
- ◆ Date and time each sample was collected
- ◆ Sample location for each sample (use the street address or another location identifier for the home or building where the sample was collected)
- ◆ DOH source number – write in “distribution” to indicate distribution samples
- ◆ Sample purpose (usually “RC” for routine compliance)
- ◆ Sample type (post-treatment)



5 Ship the Samples

When the samples are ready for shipping, package them with the completed sample information form and send them to the laboratory.