

Figure 26-1

City of Abilene, Environmental Laboratory

4209 East Lake Road
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Sample Acceptance Policy

The laboratory has a sample acceptance policy (see below) that specifies the minimum conditions a sample must meet on receipt. If these conditions are not met, the client is contacted prior to any further processing.

Bottles: Bottles for bacteria analysis that are not from our laboratory will not be accepted (including "health department bottles").

Bottles for other analyses should also be from our laboratory. Customers who live more than 60 miles away may submit General Chemical samples in clean gallon distilled water containers.

Bacteria samples: Fecal Coliform, Total Coliform (for well samples), will be accepted up to 5 hours after they were sampled, and the sample must be submitted before 4:00 pm. The holding time for these samples is 6 hours.

E-Coli samples (other than those for LT2), will not be accepted after 2:00PM.

Heterotrophic Plate Count, Fecal Streptococcus and Enterococci are by appointment only.

Total Coliform (for approved public drinking water systems) and E-Coli (for LT2) will be accepted up to 28 hours from the time the sample was caught. The holding time for these samples is 30 hours.

TOC samples that need to be analyzed for compliance that need SUVA and/or UV254 will not be accepted after 12:00 noon on Fridays.

Lead and Copper compliance samples will be accepted after the Public Water System has submitted to the lab its TCEQ approved site list and has received: The Laboratory Chain of Custody, TCEQ Chain of Custody forms (Form 20683), Public Water System instructions, Homeowner instructions and enough 1 Liter bottles to collect the necessary samples. All paperwork will be reviewed with the Quality Control Manager (or designated substitute) and the sampler at the time of receipt. If you are on the 6M1 list your samples must be at the Laboratory by June 10, the 6M2 list by December 10, or the Reduced monitoring List by September 10 of the period. Failure to do so may result in your data being reported late to the TCEQ.

Permit renewal samples will not be accepted until a meeting between the Quality Control Manager (or the Laboratory Manager) and the customer has verified what the samples must be analyzed for.

The day before a Holiday we will not accept samples after 2:00 PM.

Samples may be accepted at other times (see the Quality Control Manager or the Laboratory Manager).

Once a sample is submitted, the chain of custody cannot be altered. If you need to analyze for additional parameters, another sample must be submitted.

For soil samples, we define "Procurement" as the date and time that the sample is received at our facility.

Procedure

The laboratory checks samples for the following qualities, where appropriate, to evaluate sample acceptance: temperature, pH, preservative type, bottle type, sample integrity, full required documentation (sample ID, location, date and time of collection, collector's name, preservation type, sample type, and comments if needed).

The following preservation checks are performed and documented upon receipt:

Thermal preservation:

- a) For samples that require preservation at 4°C, the acceptable range is "from just above freezing to 6°C".
- b) Samples that are delivered to the lab the same day as they are collected are likely not to have reached a fully chilled temperature. This is acceptable if there is evidence that chilling has begun.
- c) Record on the receipt form that ice is present (if it is) and the temperature.

Chlorine checks:

- d) Microbiological samples from chlorinated water systems do not require a chlorine check if:
 - Sufficient sodium thiosulfate is present (to neutralize 5mg/L chlorine for drinking water and 15 mg/L chlorine for wastewater).
 - One container from each batch containers is checked for efficacy of the sodium thiosulfate for 5mg/L chlorine for drinking water and 15 mg/L chlorine for wastewater.
 - Chlorine residual is checked in the field and documented.

pH checks:

- e) The pH of samples requiring acid/base preservation is checked upon sample receipt.
Exception: the pH of samples requiring acid preservation for COD, HEM, Metals and TOC are performed and verified in the laboratory.

The sample acceptance policy is available to sample collection personnel, and emphasizes the need for use of water resistant ink, use of appropriate containers,

adherence to holding times, sample volume requirements, and what to do with compromised samples.

Sample submission sheets from the field are filed with the chain of custody sheet if different.

If the checks performed upon sample receipt indicate the criteria are not met, then 1) the sample is rejected as agreed with the client, 2) the decision to proceed is documented and agreed upon with the client, 3) the condition is noted on the Chain of Custody form and/or lab receipt documents, and 4) the data are qualified in the report.