Figure 26-1

City of Abilene, Environmental Laboratory

4209 East Lake Road
Abilene, TX 79601

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.

The day before a Holiday (except Christmas), we will not accept samples after 2:00 PM. Christmas Eve, we will accept samples only until 11:30 AM.

BOD and E-Coli samples will not be accepted after 2:00PM on Fridays.

Bacteria samples: E-Coli (other than those for LT2), Fecal Coliform, Total Coliform (for well samples), Enterococci, Fecal Strep, Heterotropic Plate Count, 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.

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.

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 sample must be analyzed for.

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

We prefer that sample bottles come from this laboratory. We will accept sample bottles from unknown sources, but because of the possibility of contamination and the influence this can have on the analysis, the report will state "sample bottle used was from an unknown source".

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 temperature preservation, the temperature must be within ± 2°C unless otherwise stated.

b) For samples that require preservation at 4°C, the acceptable range is "from just above freezing to 6°C".

c) 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.

d) Record on the receipt form that ice is present (if it is) and the temperature.

Chlorine checks:

e) 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:

f) The pH of samples requiring acid/base preservation is checked upon sample receipt or upon initiation of analysis.

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.