

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 11, 2018

TO: Licensed Well Contractors

FROM: Christopher D. Elvrum, P.G., Manager
Well Management Section
Environmental Health Division
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SUBJECT: Recommendations for Samples that Require Temperature Preservation

This memo provides additional information and guidance related to the memo you received, dated March 30, 2018, explaining that samples collected from new wells not meeting preservation requirements will not be accepted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The water testing laboratory you work with may require that some samples you collect from water-supply wells be cooled with ice. Cooling with ice preserves the sample so the results are representative of the water that the well owner will be drinking. You must begin cooling the samples immediately after collection by placing them on ice, or placing them in a refrigerator for storage. The samples must not become frozen.

The laboratory will note the sample temperature upon receipt. Samples you submit to a laboratory within 24 hours after sampling may not have time to cool to the appropriate temperature. These samples may still be considered acceptable if they are packed on ice immediately after collection and are in the process of cooling to the appropriate temperature. It is important to note the correct sample time on the chain-of-custody forms and make sure ice is available to the sampler immediately after sample collection.

Below are instructions for collecting, handling, and transporting samples when temperature preservation is required. You can contact MDH or your lab if you have additional questions.

Note: MDH does not recommend using ice packs or gel packs to cool samples in place of loose ice as they may not result in adequate cooling.

Samples that will be Driven to the Laboratory

If you are collecting samples that your company will drive to the laboratory MDH recommends the following:

1. Place sample bottles into watertight, zip-top plastic bags. The zip-top plastic bags prevents the sample bottles from sitting directly in ice water, and maintains the readability of sample labels.



2. Place the bagged bottles inside the cooler.



3. Fill the cooler with loose ice, completely covering the samples. This ensures the whole bottle is cooled.



Samples Delivered by Parcel Courier

If samples will be shipped by courier, you must ensure no liquids leak outside the shipping container cooler. MDH recommends the following:

1. Place loose ice into a watertight, plastic zip-top bag, removing as much air as possible before closing the bag.



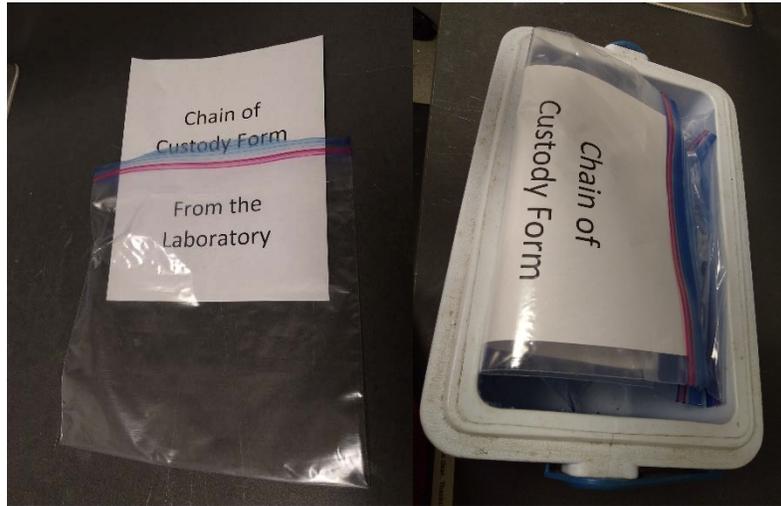
2. Place this bag of ice into a second watertight plastic zip-top bag.



3. Place the bagged sample bottles in the bottom of the shipping cooler. Fill the shipping cooler with as much bagged ice as possible. Make sure the sample bottles are in separate zip-top plastic bags to protect against any leakage.



4. Place chain-of-custody forms in watertight plastic, zip-top bags to maintain the readability of sample labels and forms.



5. Tape the lid for the shipping cooler around all four sides to seal the lid shut and prevent any liquids from entering or escaping the container.



6. Attach a shipping label to the cooler and drop off at a parcel courier drop off location.

If you have questions about shipping water samples on ice, you can contact the laboratory, your parcel courier, or MDH for additional instructions.

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Samples Delivered by Laboratory Courier

If the laboratory you use offers a courier service, follow the *Samples Delivered by Parcel Courier* packaging instructions. Discuss additional sample packaging requirements with the laboratory courier.

Additional Information

If you have any questions, please contact Alex Martell at 651-201-4586 or alex.martell@state.mn.us or Chris Elvrum at 651-201-4598 or chris.elvrum@state.mn.us.

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