

# Lead and Copper - Community Public Water Systems

## SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCEDURE

**Read instructions carefully.**

**Follow all instructions to avoid sample rejection.**

### Timing:

- Samples must be collected during your designated sampling month (see Chain of Custody Form).
- The lab must receive samples within 14 calendar days of collection.
- You may send samples to the lab as they are collected. Be sure to keep a copy of the Chain of Custody form and the lab's address for when you mail in the remaining samples.

### Sample locations:

- Sample at locations listed on the Chain of Custody Form.
- If this is not possible, you may add additional sites. The sites must meet the sampling pool tier requirements. Contact the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for instructions on adding or deleting a sample site.
- If the system has lead service line at least 50% of samples must be from locations with lead service line.

### Sample bottles:

- You must use each bottle sent to you to collect a sample. Verify on your annual monitoring schedule that you received enough sample bottles.
- If you anticipate needing additional sample bottles, please email [stephanie.voeller@state.mn.us](mailto:stephanie.voeller@state.mn.us) and indicate the number of bottles you need.

### Completing forms:

- Write a contact name and phone number, including area code, on the Chain of Custody Form, and on the bottom of the Sample Collection Procedure document.

### Sample collection procedure:

1. Contact each sample collector (resident/home owner) to:
  - a. Arrange a date to drop off a sample bottle and Sample Collection Procedure for Lead and Copper/Lead and Copper Tap Water Sample Form.
  - b. Arrange a pickup date and location (i.e. front door step) for the sample.
2. Use a ballpoint or permanent pen to write a site number on each bottle label. The site number must match the address where the sample is collected. The Chain of Custody Form lists site numbers and addresses.

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3. Give a sample bottle, Sample Collection Procedure for Lead and Copper/Lead and Copper Tap Water Sample Form to each resident that will be collecting a sample.
4. Review the Sample Collection Procedure with each sample collector to ensure they understand the sampling process. A video describing sample collection is available on the MDH [Sample Collection Procedures \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/samproc.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/samproc.html) webpage.

### Sample pick up:

1. Make sure the sample collector completed the Lead and Copper Tap Water Sample Form.
  - a. Review the form to ensure that samples were collected correctly.
  - b. If there was a mistake, please request a new sample bottle from MDH.
  - c. MDH cannot invalidate results after they have been analyzed by the lab, even if there was a sample error.
2. Make sure the bottle cap is on securely and the bottle does not leak.
3. Make sure the collection date and time, site number, and sample address is written on the bottle.
4. Write the collection date and time for each sample on the Chain of Custody Form.
5. If you have new sites, provide a complete street address, tier, and plumbing materials on the Chain of Custody Form.
6. If any plumbing repairs or replacement have been done, or if a whole-house water softener has been installed since the previous sampling event, note the change on the Chain of Custody Form, for that specific site.

### Shipping and handling:

1. Place the completed Chain of Custody Form in a sealable, Ziploc-type bag for protection.
2. Place the sample bottle(s) and protected Chain of Custody Form in a shipping box. Include packing materials to secure the bottles and prevent movement/damage during shipping.
3. Place the return address label included with the sample kit on the box.
4. Ship the samples to your designated lab using a courier service (Spee-Dee, UPS, FedEx, etc.). You must pay for the postage. (MDH pays for the cost of laboratory analysis). You may purchase shipment tracking when you send the bottles and keep the shipping receipt for your system's record.
5. You may also deliver the sample bottles to your designated lab location using your system's own means. Some labs offer a courier service for sample drop off and pick up so you can contact your designated lab to verify and confirm locations for sample shipment.  
NOTE: If a return address label was not included in your kit or has been lost, please contact Michael Bourland, MDH Compliance Engineer, at 651-201-5928 or [Michael.bourland@state.mn.us](mailto:Michael.bourland@state.mn.us) to confirm your designated laboratory.

Minnesota Department of Health  
Drinking Water Protection Section  
651-201-4700

[health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us](mailto:health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call  
651-201-4700.*