

BUTTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT LABORATORY
695 Oleander Avenue
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 891-2747 Fax (530) 895-6660

TECHNIQUE FOR SAMPLING PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

Individuals wishing to test water from a private source may do so as an alternative to having collection done by an authorized member of the Environmental Health Department. **A fee of \$24 is collected by Butte County Health Department for the testing.** The bottle has been sterilized and has a screw cap. Do not rinse the bottle as it contains a measured amount of **sodium thiosulfate**, which is necessary for an accurate test. Check the well for protection against surface contamination. The faucet from which the sample is to be taken must be chosen carefully:

- a. If testing just the well, collect as close to the well as possible.
- b. The valve stem of the hose bib should not be leaking. (see #1 below)
- c. Water should not curl back over the outlet of the hose bib. (see #2 below)

The selected faucet should be scrubbed with bleach solution (1 part household bleach plus 9 parts water) several hours prior to sampling.



- d. If a faucet is chosen inside the house, be sure and remove the aeration screen from the end of the faucet if one is present.
- e. The water should be turned on and allowed to run for 5 minutes.

Fill the sample bottle to the line. Don't over fill the bottle. An air space needs to exist between the water and cap. **Samples with water levels LOWER than the LINE may be REJECTED!**

Replace the cap on the bottle.

NOTE: Do not touch the inside of the cap or top of the bottle with your hands or faucet. A new sterile bottle will be needed if anything but the water being tested touches the screw cap area.

Fill out the laboratory form with the date, source, your name, phone number, etc and bring it with the specimen when delivering to the laboratory.

**Collection Days: Monday through Thursday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

NOTE: Butte County Health Department Laboratory DOES NOT ACCEPT water samples on Fridays and after 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday or the day before a holiday.

Samples can be stored up to 30 hours at 5 +/- 3 C⁰ between collection time and time delivered to the Butte County Public Health Department Laboratory.

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