



# State Hygienic Laboratory

at The University of Iowa

Sample Collection and Shipping Instructions

## Total Coliform, *E.coli* and/or Nitrate for Drinking Water

### Container # 32 and/or #20

#32- Chlorine Neutralizer Present in Bottle  
DO NOT RINSE OUT

#### Collection and Handling

- Fill out the sample collection form provided; especially COLLECTED DATE and COLLECTED TIME or the sample may not be tested.
- Use the sample bottle(s) supplied by the laboratory. At a minimum write on the bottle label your name and collection date and time. One bottle is necessary for total coliform and *E.coli* testing and one bottle for nitrate testing.
- To assess overall drinking water quality, collect sample from the drinking tap, avoid leaking faucets and outside hydrants.
- Remove aeration screens from the faucet before collecting sample. If unable to remove, select another tap.
- Open cold water tap to obtain smooth-flowing stream at moderate pressure without splashing. If water flow is not steady, select another tap.
- Run water for at least 2-3 minutes to flush the line. Note: For an outside collection site, special tap disinfection (flame or chlorine) and longer flushing (10-15 minutes) is usually required to obtain valid bacterial results.
- Reduce water flow slightly (to pencil width) to fill container without splashing.
- Fill container slowly to the **shoulder** of the bottle (within 3/4 inch from top but above the 100mL line) and replace cap tightly. Caution: Inside sample bottle is sterile-avoid placing fingers inside bottle or cap. Do not place cap down. Do not overflow or rinse out bottle(s) (the bacterial bottle contains a chlorine neutralizer in the form of a white powder or small amount of liquid; this will not interfere for those waters that are not disinfected).
- Enclose check payable to the Hygienic Laboratory for the tests requested as instructed on the form. If you have an account with the laboratory, no payment with sample is necessary.
- Sign the "relinquished by" line (and record date/time) in the chain of custody/tracking area

#### Shipping Instructions

- Mail or ship sample bottles **immediately** after collection (same day collected). Samples must be received within 48 hours after collection. Avoid Friday, weekend or holiday mailings unless prior arrangements have been made. First class postage, UPS and Fed Ex (ground) or other carrier service may be necessary to ensure rapid delivery from your area.
- Samples may be brought directly to the Iowa City, Ankeny or Lakeside Laboratories during business hours.

#### Contact Information

- Client Services: questions, orders, etc., 800-421-4692 or 319-335-4500
- Environmental Microbiology section(s) for technical questions: 319-335-4366 (Iowa City) or 515-725-1600 (Ankeny) or 712-337-3669 ext 6 (Lakeside).