Nitrate Sampling Procedure

This brochure provides general information on how to collect a sample for nitrate. Steps and procedures can vary depending on the laboratory used, so you should follow the instructions provided by the laboratory you are using.

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The general sampling procedure for nitrate monitoring is as follows:

The day before

**Step One:** Freeze the chemical cold pack.

**Step Two:** COMPLETE the laboratory form and sample label.

Laboratory forms vary. Be sure to include the following:

- Water system name
- Water system ID number
- System type (Group A or Group B)
- DOH source number (such as SO1)
- Sample purpose (usually “RC” for routine compliance sample)
- Date and time the sample was collected
- Sample location (specific location where you collected the sample. For example, “pump house tap.”)
- Sample type (pre-treatment, raw, or post-treatment)

**Sample Collection Day**

**Step One:** Locate a sampling tap that is after treatment (if applicable) but before water enters the distribution system.

**Step Two:** Remove any attachment from the tap such as hoses, filters, screens, or aerators.

**Step Three:** Flush the water for about 5 minutes or until the water reaches a constant temperature.

**Step Four:** Fill the sample container to the shoulder of the bottle.

After completing sample collection

*Keep all samples refrigerated until you are ready to ship them.* When samples are ready for shipping, pack the samples, frozen chemical cold pack, and completed sample information form into a container and ship it to the laboratory within 24 hours.

Some county health departments and laboratories will pick up samples at a central drop-off location. Be sure to follow their schedule so that your samples reach the lab in time.