Water Sampling Tips

1. Use a clean, indoor faucet whenever possible. Outside faucets are exposed to many factors (insects, animals, etc.) that could cause a positive bacteria test.

2. Try to avoid threaded taps, leaky, or old swing type faucets.

3. Remove any screens/aerators that may be present in the faucet. Cracks, crevices and screens are common areas of bacterial growth and are they are hard to sanitize properly.

4. Do not use a dirty or contaminated tap.

5. Wash or sanitize your hands.

6. Disinfect the faucet by spraying bleach on the inside and outside of the faucet and allow the bleach to sit for a few minutes. If you do not have a spray bottle, place a capful of bleach in a clean glass and fill with water, then submerse the faucet in the glass for one minute. Do not use dishrags or sanitizer wipes to disinfect the faucet.

7. Do not sample through a hose or a treatment device.

8. Always sample cold water.

9. Allow the water to run with the valve open as far as possible for a minimum of 5 minutes before taking the sample. The longer you can let the water run, the better.

10. After running the water for the time specified noted above, slow down the flow and maintain a steady low flow, pencil sized stream to fill the bottle.

11. Do not open the sample bottle until you are ready to take the sample.

12. Take the seal completely off the bottle then open the bottle but do not set the cap down.

13. Do not rinse the bottle prior to sampling.

14. Do not touch the inside of the cap or bottle. Do not allow the cap or the bottle to touch the faucet.

15. Do not breathe directly into the bottle or hold it up near your face.

16. Quickly fill the container to the fill line in one uninterrupted motion. A small amount of excess above the fill line is fine. Do not refill or top-off the bottle.

17. Seal the container tightly as soon as it is filled.

18. Place the sample bottle back into its proper container along with the completed submission form and proper payment. Make check(s) payable to the State of Michigan if using the state lab. (Only one check is necessary if all samples are for the same address and property and sampling point). District Health Department #2 will automatically receive the water sample results from the state lab.

19. Send/transport the samples as soon as possible on the same day you take them. The state lab is closed on weekends, so the samples must be mailed/shipped early in the week, preferably on Monday or Tuesday. The samples have a maximum holding time and if they are not received by the lab in a timely fashion, the holding time will be exceeded and you will have to resample.

20. Please consult with the post office regarding postage that will ensure prompt delivery of the water sample.