



Testing your Water for Bacteria

(bottle with red sticker, for municipal water customers)

Water Sample Drop off Hours and Location

Drop off hours

8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Monday through Wednesday only

Bring sample and exact cash or a check made out to City Treasurer.

Drop off location

City County Building

210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 507

Madison, WI 53703

How to Collect the Water Sample

Collect the sample right before you bring it to our office. See drop off hours above.



Choose a faucet

Choose a cold water faucet that is not connected to a water softening system. Do not use an outside faucet.

- If you are testing well water, using the kitchen sink will test both the well and household plumbing. Using the faucet on the pressure tank will test just the well.
- Make sure there is a drain nearby. Water will be running for a few minutes. Do not attach a hose to reach the drain.
- Remove all parts from the end of the faucet, like aerator screens or water filters.



Sterilize the faucet

For best results, you must sterilize the faucet before sampling.

- Faucets with plastic parts: sterilize with a bleach solution. Soak the end of the faucet in a solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water for 30 seconds. Do not touch the tap after sterilizing.
- Metal faucets: sterilize using bleach (see above), or by holding a flame from a propane torch beneath the opening for at least 30 seconds.
 - It is possible that the propane torch may discolor your faucet.
- Do not touch the tap after sterilizing.



Collect the sample

- Let the water run for at least 5 minutes at a medium flow. Do not touch or turn off the tap until the sample has been collected.
- Take the cap off the sample bottle and put the cap open side up on a clean surface. Do not touch the lip of the bottle or the inside of the cap.
- After the water has been running for 5 minutes, fill the bottle to within ½ inch of the top.
- Screw the cap on tight. Be careful not to touch the lip of the bottle or the inside of the cap.



Complete form and return sample to us

- Complete the chain of custody form.
- Keep the sample refrigerated or on ice until you drop it off.
- Return your sample(s) during the times listed above.

Questions?

Call: (608) 243-0357

Email: lab@publichealthmdc.com