



SE MN Water Analysis Lab
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Sample Acceptance Policy

Southeastern Minnesota Water Analysis Laboratory

SAMPLE HANDLING AND PROCESSING

Individuals in southeastern Minnesota may obtain a water test kit from the Olmsted County Public Health front desk. They may also obtain a water test kit from their own county public health or environmental resources department.

The Southeastern Minnesota Water Analysis Laboratory (SEM WAL) is responsible for the use and updating of this policy. In general, SEM WAL staff attempts to resolve issues before the laboratory must reject a sample.

When SEM WAL staff notes a sample does not meet the conditions for acceptance for accurate testing, staff will contact the responsible party for instructions. SEM WAL defines the minimum level of acceptability by the terms required in Minnesota state laws and regulations, the TNI standard or agreements established for particular projects.

When SEM WAL staff are not certain of the category for acceptance for a particular sample (i.e. the collector did not provide the project identification or indicate specific tests), they will use the most stringent criteria to assure that the data are usable. For missing items that do not affect the outcome of the analysis (e.g. collector name), SEM WAL staff will leave the information blank or contact the customer if necessary.

The following items will prevent us from analyzing your sample and supplying valid results:

- The sample containers were broken in shipment or the containers are leaking.
- We did not receive enough sample volume to perform the tests you requested.
- Bacteria samples arrived in a bottle not provided by SEM WAL.
- Samples were not returned to the lab within 28 hours of sampling.

SEM WAL considers the following items essential to valid testing. The samples will be placed on hold in the laboratory until our staff receives the necessary information and authorization from you to proceed. In specific instances where SEM WAL staff decide to proceed with analysis due to a concern that drinking water safety could be compromised, a notation will be made on the final report indicating that the results cannot be validated, and the supply will be re-sampled and analyzed within the proper holding time.

- The paperwork submitted with the samples does not match the information on the sample container.
- The laboratory receives the samples after the specified holding time.
- A water test form was not provided, or the form supplied is incomplete.
- We cannot read the sample labels.
- The collector did not use the correct sample containers for the tests requested.
- The samples were not maintained at the proper temperature to prevent deterioration.

Data Practices

According to Minnesota's Data Practices laws, all information gathered from these forms and the test results must be considered public data and be provided upon request. Occasionally researchers seeking water quality trend data about aquifers or well types, or an individual planning to purchase a particular piece of property may request such data. Typically, water test data is aggregated and summarized with other data to help policy makers monitor and make planning decisions important to land-use, aquifers and groundwater protection.

If you have questions or comments about the water sampling instructions, sample acceptance policy, or about samples you have submitted to our laboratory, please contact laboratory staff at 507-328-7495.

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