



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**501 N. THOMPSON, SUITE 101**  
**CONROE, TEXAS 77301**  
**(936) 539-7839 • (281) 364-4200 EXT 7839 • FAX (936) 539-7961**

**PROCEDURE FOR TAKING BACTERIOLOGICAL SAMPLES OF DRINKING WATER**

This test is for the coliform organism which is commonly found in sewage and surface waters. If coliform organisms are found, they indicate that the sample is contaminated with potentially disease causing organisms possibly from sewage, or surface water. This test is only suitable for closed and properly sealed system. Samples from streams, ponds, unprotected springs, open storage tanks and unsealed wells usually show contamination. It should be noted that samples indicate the condition of the water only at the time the sample is taken.

Samples must be collected in a laboratory supplied bottle. An outside faucet (with mouth facing downward) is the preferred place to collect the sample. Samples should not be collected from faucets with leaky washers or valve stems, from drinking fountains, hoses, open pipes or other places that cannot be properly sterilized.

The tap should be flushed a short time; the mouth of the faucet flamed to dryness (with a propane torch, lighter, etc) to sterilize it; the water turned back on, and the sample bottle filled to the 100/ml mark. The fingers or any other object should not be permitted to come in contact with the inside of the cap or the lip of the bottle. Accidental contamination is very possible if every precaution is not taken. Do not rinse the bottle or empty it during the process; it contains a chemical used to neutralize chlorine. Replace the cap carefully and tighten.

A report form is supplied with each bottle. Fill out the form with a black ballpoint pen and take it with the sample to the laboratory. If the sample is taken for a public system, be sure it is identified properly on the report form; otherwise, it will not be recorded on the system's record. You should receive the results by mail in about one week. Samples containing an insufficient amount of water or samples submitted in bottles other than those furnished by the laboratory will not be examined.

**Area Lab Testing:**

City of Houston  
Health Department Laboratory  
Water and Dairy Section  
2250 Holcombe Blvd.  
Houston, TX 77030  
(832) 393-3939

Nova Biological  
1775 N Loop 336 E  
Conroe TX 77301  
(936) 756-5333

North Water District Lab  
8725 Fawn Trail  
The Woodlands, TX 77385  
(936)321-6060