



# American Agricultural Laboratory, Inc.

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## DIRECTIONS FOR TAKING WATER SAMPLES

1. Sterile bottles **MUST** be used when sampling potable water samples. A water sampling kit should be obtained by contacting the laboratory. Each kit includes 3 bottles, one each for: 1) Coliform Bacteria test, (contains a pill, do not remove) 2) Nitrate test, (contains a small amount of **sulfuric acid**, USE CAUTION) and 3) all other water tests. The bottles have color coded labels.
2. An additional bottle for testing heavy metals must also be requested if heavy metals testing is required. The laboratory is not certified for testing heavy metals in potable water
3. For drinking water, allow faucet to run 5-10 minutes before taking the sample.
4. Irrigation wells should be sampled at the peak of the irrigation season.
5. Samples from new wells should be collected after the pipe and screen are in place. Pump the well for at least 10 hours before sampling.
6. Samples of lakes, streams, and ponds should be taken from below the surface.
7. Send the sample to the laboratory immediately after collection. Samples for Coliform Bacteria and e.coli must reach the lab in less than 30 hours, to still be a viable sample. Any over 30 hours must be rejected and resampling take place.
8. It is a good idea to contact your post office and/or courier to find out what time they send packages out, so that you can collect your sample just prior to that time.