

Elliot Schulman, MD, MPH *Director/ Health Officer*
Michael D. Harris *Deputy Director*
Richard Merrifield, REHS *Director of Environmental Health*

225 Camino Del Remedio ♦ Santa Barbara, CA 93110
 805/681-4900 ♦ FAX 805/681-4901
 2125 S. Centerpointe Pkwy. #333 ♦ Santa Maria, CA 93455
 805/346-8460 ♦ FAX 805/346-8485

January 25, 2007

Mr. Bill Hurst
 5587 West Camino Cielo
 Santa Barbara, Ca 93105

RE: Bacteriological Testing and What Is a Maximum Contaminant Failure?

To Dear Mr. Hurst:

Periodically, Environmental Health Services receives questions regarding bacteriological testing, water system notification and what constitutes a total coliform failure. This letter is to provide you information regarding these issues in hopes that it clarifies the testing procedure and the testing standard.

Firstly, the classification of the water system determines how often bacteriological water samples are taken and analyzed. Below is a chart indicating the classification of water systems and the bacteriological monitoring frequency.

Classification	Frequency
Community (CWS): 15 service connections or 25 or more permanent residents.	Monthly
Non-transient, Non-community (NTNC): at least 25 of the same individuals in 60 days	Monthly
Transient, Non-community (TNC): at least 25 different individuals in 60 days	Quarterly
State Small (SSWS): 5 to 14 service connections and less than 25 permanent residents	Quarterly

The Romaldo Water Company is classified as a State Small Water System and therefore, is required to sample the distribution system quarterly. Environmental Health Services provides the Romaldo Water Company this service every 3 months.

Water sampling procedure

1. The designated primary water-sampling site is allowed to flow for three to five minutes. This ensures that the water sample is representative of the water in the main distribution system.
2. The sample site is disinfected, internally and externally, to prevent cross contamination.
3. The water sample is collected and stored in a 100 milliliter sterilized bottle. The sample is stored in a cool ice chest until delivery to laboratory.

4. A person trained in approved sampling techniques takes the water sample.
5. The laboratory adds a reagent to the sample and incubates it for 24 hours. The reagent is known as Colilert, manufactured by Idexx. See demonstration at http://www.idexx.com/water/colilert/colilert300_en.jsp

Sample Results:

1. If the sample is "clear" after incubation If the water is free of coliform bacteria
2. Sample turns yellow it is positive for total coliforms,
3. Sample turns yellow and glows under exposure to a black light it is positive for both total coliforms and E.coli.
4. The laboratory is required to notify the Water Company or Environmental Health of the detection of Total Coliforms and/or E. coli. If there is a positive detected, a resample of the water system must be done within 24 hours of being notified. In all cases, the water system (State Small) must collect 1 repeat sample from the same location as the original and reanalyzed.
5. Please note that the first detection of coliforms is not a Total Coliform Rule failure, it just an indication that the water system must resample to confirm the initial result. If the repeat sample result is negative for coliforms then no further action is necessary. If, however, the resample again is positive for total coliforms and /or e.coli, the water system has failed the Total Coliform Rule and must take immediate action to:
 - a. Notify the consumers of the water quality failure;
 - b. Determine the cause for the failure and
 - c. Begin disinfection the storage tank(s) and distribution and source.

The after completion of notification, investigation and disinfection, the water system has two options; it can wait until the next scheduled sampling or conduct another sampling of the distribution. The violation remains until a negative result is received and reviewed by this division. If I can be of any service to you please contact this office at 681-4917.

Sincerely,

Norman Fujimoto

Norman Fujimoto
Senior Environmental Health Specialist

Encl.

BACTERIOLOGICAL SAMPLING PATHWAY

