How to Collect a Composite Enterococcus Water Sample

Only designated priority beaches may submit Enterococcus samples. Samples submitted by non-designated beaches will be rejected. Contact your local public health inspector if you have questions or concerns about priority beaches or recreational water quality.

### Materials supplied by AHS (per sampling event)

- Three 50 mL conical tubes
- One ProvLab Microbiological Bottle
- One ProvLab Microbiological Water Analysis Requisition form
- One plastic resealable sample bag
- Two bright pink labels

### Materials supplied by sampler

- Shoulder Length gloves (vet use)
- Preprinted Beach name/Access number labels (optional)
- Hip waders
- Ice packs
- Cooler
- Life jacket/Personal flotation device

**Important Note:** If a cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) bloom is present, be sure to prevent direct contact with the water as some types of cyanobacteria may cause skin irritation. The use of hip waders and arm length plastic gloves (available from veterinary supply stores) will help prevent contact with the bloom. A cyanobacteria reference guide which includes pictures can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions document located on www.ahs.ca/bga.

**Sample Collection**

1. Choose 3 sampling locations along the beach in areas of greatest use by bathers, where the water is about 1 meter or 3 feet deep (approximately hip deep – see picture 2). If there are waves or swells consider sampling in shallower water.
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**Note:** It is important to be consistent with how the collection site numbers are assigned between sampling days. If not consistent, sample result data for a specific site cannot be compared. It is recommended that the collection site numbers follow the convention depicted in Picture 2 – from left to right when looking towards the water. If the water is calm, wait for sediment/debris to settle before collecting the water sample. Collect the sample from an incoming wave if present.

**Note:** If Blue-Green Algae is present, it is important to minimize the amount of algae in the sample.

2. With clean hands or while wearing gloves, hold the 50 mL conical tube near its base with one hand and remove the cap with the other.
3. Tip the tube upside down, then dip it 15-30 cm (6-12 in) below the water surface and collect a full tube of water.
4. If necessary, pour out enough water to reach the 50 mL mark indicated on the tube. Replace the cap on the tube.
5. Repeat for the other two sites. Once sampling is completed at all 3 sites, exit the water.
6. Pour the water in the three 50 mL tubes into one ProvLab microbiological bottle. The total volume of the composite water sample in the bottle is approximately 150 mL (below the 200 mL mark on the bottle). Replace the cap immediately so it is secure but not overtightened to prevent cracked lids.

**Note:** Do not touch the inside of the cap or the rim of the conical tubes and microbiological sample bottle.

**Submitting the Samples**

1. Stick the ID label from the requisition form onto the bottle (see picture 3).
2. Complete the requisition form (see example below).
3. Affix a bright pink sticker on the requisition and bottle (see pictures 3 and 4).
4. Place the bottle and completed requisition into the plastic bag and side pouch, respectively.
5. Place the bottle in an upright position in a cooler with ice packs.
6. Immediately transport the sample to an Environmental Public Health office, ProvLab Calgary, or ProvLab Edmonton.
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Notes:

- Samples will be rejected if:
  - the ID sticker from the requisition form is not attached to the bottle;
  - a sample is received at the lab more than 24 hours after collection;
  - a sample is received at ProvLab Edmonton or Calgary outside the accepted days and times indicated below; and
  - a sample is submitted from a non-priority beach without prior approval from a Public Health Inspector.

- Labels can be made to assist with filling out the requisition form. Include the water body name, beach name, and beach access number. They also may include the collector name and phone number.

- Discard the 50 mL conical tubes after each sampling event. Do NOT use for collecting samples from other beaches.

- Water sample bottle pick up & drop off locations for each Zone can be found on the Sample Your Water webpage.

- Contact your local public health inspector to determine water sample submission days and times. If delivering samples directly to the ProvLab, samples will only be accepted:
  - ProvLab Calgary: Monday to Wednesday before 4:00 pm
  - ProvLab Edmonton: Monday to Thursday before 12:00 pm (noon)
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For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

Edmonton Main Office 780-735-1800 Grande Prairie Main Office 780-513-7517
Calgary Main Office 403-943-2288 Red Deer Main Office 403-356-6366
Lethbridge Main Office 403-388-6689 www.ahs.ca/eph

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### Microbiological Water Analysis Requisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Collection</th>
<th>Time of Collection</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>YYYY</td>
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<tr>
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<td>06</td>
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</table>

#### Water Sample Type (check ONE box only)

- Drinking Water
  - Treated Public/Communal - Source
  - Private Household Well
  - Private Household Other
- Resample - Drinking Water (previous sample showed presence of coliforms)
  - Treated Public/Communal - Source
  - Untreated Public/Communal - Source
  - Private Household Well
  - Private Household Other
- Ice (unmixed)

#### Non Drinking Water

- Pool greater than 30°C (86°F)
- Pool less than or equal to 30°C (86°F)
- Clinical Distilled/Deionized
- Clinical Laboratory Reagent Water
- Post Reverse Osmosis

#### Non Drinking Raw Water

- Ground Water
- Surface Water Lake
- Surface Water River
- Surface Water Other
- Sewage

### Sample Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water Supply for</th>
<th>(Name)</th>
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### Health Agency Name and Address

See reverse for sample collection instructions

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**Picture 4: A completed requisition form**

- **Identify collection site (1, 2 or 3) and “COMPOSITE SAMPLE”**.
- **Indicate the Water Sample Type: BEACH**.
- **Place fluorescent pink label here**.
- **Remove this label and place on sample bottle**.
- **Affix the pre-printed label here (or write by hand) that indicates**:
  - The water body name,
  - the beach name,
  - the Beach Access Number
  - and the collector’s name and phone number.
- **The date and time must be completed. Samples will be rejected if left blank or received at the lab more than 24 hours after collection.**