



CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH – WATER LABORATORY

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## **PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING POTABLE / DRINKING WATER SAMPLES**

*If you are interested in collecting non-potable water samples, contact the office at 716-753-4481 for specifics.*

- 1) Samples must be collected in sterile bottles from Chautauqua County lab. If a bottle is damaged or was uncapped prior to sampling, do not use it. The small amount of liquid in the bottle is a sterile preservative. Do not empty or rinse bottles before collecting samples.
- 2) Use **COLD** water. Run water at least 3-5 minutes to flush the lines. Adjust water to a slow, steady stream to avoid splashing.
- 3) Hold bottle in one hand, remove the cap with the other hand. DO NOT set cap down. DO NOT touch the inside of the bottle or cap. DO NOT allow anything else to touch the inside of the bottle or cap.
- 4) Insert bottle under a slow, steady stream of water. Fill bottle to the shoulder of the bottle, *leave roughly 1 inch of air space* in the bottle. DO NOT allow the bottle to overflow. Replace the cap.
- 5) Complete *the Public Water Supply or Private Water Supply section and all other sections* not marked for "Office / Lab Use". Record the chlorine residual, if applicable. Attach the yellow card to the bottle with a rubber band.
- 6) **Samples should be delivered immediately to Mayville and kept on ice while in transport. If samples cannot be delivered immediately, keep them refrigerated or on ice. DO NOT freeze samples.** Samples must be dropped off within 24 hours from the time they were collected. Collection date and time must be filled in.



### **HELPFUL HINTS TO PREVENT CONTAMINATION OF SAMPLES**

- AVOID taps on dead-end mains, leaky faucets, dirty taps, and taps where water dribbles down outside surfaces.
- Remove aerators / screens from faucets before sampling.
- Use alcohol pads or sterile gloves to remove rubber gaskets that may be inside taps.
- DO NOT touch the end of the tap with bare fingers.
- Wipe tap with alcohol pad or diluted bleach/water solution. Run water for 30 seconds to flush chemical from tap.
- Protect sterile bottle mouth and neck from contamination; DO NOT touch these areas.

### **Sterile sample bottles must be purchased in Mayville. Once collected, water samples must be delivered to:**

Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services,  
Hall R. Clothing Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
7 North Erie Street, Mayville, NY

**Water samples are accepted:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.  
Thursday 9:00 A.M. – NOON

*\* Please Note: Holiday schedules may affect normal business hours, please call 716-753-4481 with questions. \**

***For information on total coliform and E. coli bacteria see NYS Dept. of Health website:***

[https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/coliform\\_bacteria.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/coliform_bacteria.htm)