

How to Collect a Grab *Enterococcus* Beach Water Sample

Only designated priority beaches may submit *Enterococcus* samples. Samples submitted by non-designated beaches will be rejected. Refer to the [Alberta Safe Beach Protocol](#) for more information. Contact your local public health inspector if you have questions or concerns about recreational water quality.

Materials supplied by AHS (per sampling event)
Three Prov Lab microbiological bottles
Three Prov Lab Microbiological Water Analysis Requisition forms
Three plastic resealable sample bags
Six bright pink labels
Material supplied by sampler
Shoulder length gloves (vet use)
Preprinted beach name/access number labels (optional)
Hip waders
Ice packs
Cooler
Life jacket/personal floatation device



Prov Lab microbiological bottles.

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

Sample Collection

1. Mark three Prov Lab microbiological sample bottles with the numbers “1”, “2” and “3” (see picture above). It is best to do this while the bottles are still dry, using a permanent marker.
2. Choose three sampling locations along the length of the beach used most often by bathers, where the water is about 1 meter or 3 feet deep (approximately hip deep, see picture top of page 2). If there are waves or swells consider sampling in shallower water.

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 the following picture – from left to right when looking towards the water. Alternatively, fixed landmarks or location descriptors such as “park bench”, “north”, or “mid-beach” can be used to ensure consistent site sampling from week to week.

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3. 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 a cyanobacterial (blue-green algal) bloom is present, try to minimize the amount of algae in the sample.

4. With clean hands or gloves, hold the bottle near its base with one hand and remove the cap with the other hand.
5. Rotate the bottle so the mouth is pointing downward at about a 45-degree angle, then submerge the bottle to elbow depth (approximately 30 cm or 1 foot). Rotate the bottle so the mouth points up and fills with water.
6. Lift the bottle out of the water, and if necessary, pour out enough water to reach the fill line indicated on the bottle. Replace the cap immediately so it is secure but not overtightened to prevent the lid from cracking.
7. Repeat for the other two sampling sites.

Note: Do not touch the inside of the cap or the rim of the sample bottle.

Submitting the Samples

1. Stick the ID label from the requisition form AND a bright pink sticker on to the bottle as shown in the picture (right).
2. Complete the requisition form. See the last page of this resource for a sample form.
 - a. Please note there is one access number assigned per beach. Use the same access number for all three samples.
 - b. Under collection site on the requisition, write the number as it corresponds to the number written on the bottle or the location descriptor and "GRAB SAMPLE".



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- c. Affix a bright pink sticker on the requisition (see sample requisition on the last page of this resource).
3. Place the bottle into the plastic bag and place the corresponding requisition form in the side pouch.
4. Place the bottles in an upright position in a cooler with ice packs.
5. Immediately transport the samples to an Environmental Public Health office, Prov Lab (also referred to as Alberta Precision Laboratory) Calgary, or Prov Lab Edmonton.

Notes

- Each of the three samples needs its own requisition form and sample bag.
- Samples will be rejected if:
 - the ID sticker from the requisition form is not attached to the bottle;
 - received at the lab more than 24 hours after collection;
 - received at Prov Lab Edmonton or Calgary outside the accepted days and times indicated below; and
 - 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 (see sample label below). Labels should include the water body name, the beach name and the beach access number.

Stormy Lake
Campground Beach
Access number: 9621522

- Water sample bottle drop off locations for each zone can be found on the Sample Your Water webpage at www.ahs.ca/eph/Page15233.aspx
- Contact your local Environmental Public Health office to determine water sample submission days and times. If delivering samples directly to Prov Lab, samples will only be accepted:
 - Prov Lab Calgary: Monday to Wednesday before 4:00 pm
 - Prov Lab Edmonton: Monday to Wednesday before 4:00 pm and Thursday before 12:00 pm (noon)

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Alberta Health Services **PROVLAB** ALBERTA

Microbiological Water Analysis Requisition

1578061

Peel and stick this ID label onto sample bottle. Sample will be rejected if ID label is NOT affixed to sample bottle.

NOTE: Sample will be rejected if date and time of collection are not filled in

Sample Details

Water Supply for (Name)

Date of Collection: YYYY MM DD HR MIN (Check one) AM PM
 2022 Jun 01 10 30 AM PM

Stormy Lake Campground Beach
Access number: 9621522

Mailing Address: City, Province, Postal Code, Phone (10 digits)

Collected by (print name clearly): **Joan Smith**
 Collector's Phone # (10 digits): **780-791-6078**
 Collection Site (e.g. kitchen tap or whirlpool #3): **Mid-beach GRAB SAMPLE**

Legal Land Description (private homeowners only)

Qtr Section Township Range W of ___ M

NE NW SE SW

GPS Co-ordinates (private homeowners only) (up to 6 decimal places; see reverse for example)

Latitude Longitude

Health Agency Name and Address

Water Sample Type (check ONE box only)
 Sample will be rejected if more than one checkbox is marked

Drinking Water

Treated Public/Communal - Source
 Untreated Public/Communal - Source
 Private Household Well
 Private Household Other
 Ice (unmelted)

Resample - Drinking Water (previous sample showed presence of coliforms)

Treated Public/Communal - Source
 Untreated Public/Communal - Source
 Private Household Well
 Private Household Other
 Ice (unmelted)

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
 Beach

Non Drinking Raw Water

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

Remarks/Requests

190162 (Rev2019-04) See reverse for sample collection instructions Side A

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.

Remove this label and place on sample bottle.

Affix the pre-printed label here that indicates (or write by hand): the water body name, the beach name, and the beach access number.

Identify collection site (e.g. 1, 2, 3, or mid-beach) and GRAB SAMPLE.

Select Beach as the water sample type.

Place bright pink label here.

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online at ahs.ca/eph](https://www.ahs.ca/eph).

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