

## GA EPD Finished Drinking Water Sampling Instructions

**Important Reminder: PFAS can be found in many consumer goods, which increases the possibility of contamination and false positive results. To avoid potential sample contamination, please avoid handling food packaging, such as popcorn bags, pizza boxes, and fast food wrappers, prior to collecting your samples. Please do not wear any stain or water-resistant clothing. If you are sampling outside, do not sample if it is raining to avoid possible contamination from rainwater running off your rain gear. Do not use permanent markers – ball point pens and pencils are acceptable.**

**Before you begin collecting your samples, please be aware that the lab cannot accept samples over the weekend. Do not ship your samples on a Friday or Saturday. Please plan your sample collection with this timeline in mind.**

Step 1: Review the Contents of the Sample Kit.

1. Open your sample kit. Do **not** remove any bottles from the sample kit at this step. Familiarize yourself with the contents of the sample kit without removing any sample bottles.
2. Check that each of the following items are in your sample kit: You should see five resealable plastic bags with the following contents:
  - a. Two bags containing field blank bottles. Each bag contains one field blank bottle with PFAS-free water and one empty field blank bottle with preservative.
  - b. One bag containing six sample bottles.
  - c. One bag containing nitrile gloves.
  - d. One bag is empty. This bag is to put ice in.

If you are missing any items, please call the EPD Lab at 678-248-7410.

Step 2: Prepare to Collect your Samples

1. If you are using a faucet or tap, remove the aerator and screen before you begin.
2. Remove any plastic tubing that may be attached to the faucet.
3. Open the tap and let the water run at fast flow for approximately five minutes.
4. After five minutes have passed, slow the water flow to the thickness of a pencil to minimize splashing.

Step 3: Collect Your Field Blank Samples

1. The field blanks are collected in the same place where the finished water samples are collected. The field blanks are collected **before** any finished water samples.
2. Two people should conduct the sampling. One person will be designated “clean hands” and be handling the samples bottles. That is the only thing they will touch. They will **not**

put their hands inside the resealable plastic bag. The other person will be designated “dirty hands” and will open and close the resealable plastic bag.

3. Both people should wash their hands before collecting the samples. Please air dry your hands and put on the powderless nitrile gloves included in the sample kit. Both people need to wear gloves during sampling and when handling the samples. Each person will use wear their pair of gloves when collecting each sample in the sample kit.
4. The person designated “dirty hands” will remove the resealable plastic bag containing the two field blank bottles from the cooler.
5. Without touching the bottles, “dirty hands” will move the full field blank bottle to the opening using the outside of the plastic bag.
6. The person designated “clean hands” will remove the full field blank bottle from the plastic bag by touch only the cap of the bottle.
7. “Clean hands” will remove the cap for the field blank bottle filled with water. This cap may be placed on the counter.
8. “Dirty hands” will then move the empty field blank bottle to the opening of the plastic bag using the outside of the bag.
9. “Clean hands” will remove the cap of the empty field blank bottle and, keeping this cap in his hand, will pour the contents of the full field blank bottle into the empty field blank bottle being held by “dirty hands.”
10. “Clean hands” will replace the cap on the field blank bottle, remove the newly filled bottle from the plastic bag, and mix the preservative with the field blank water by inverting the bottle at least five times.
11. As “dirty hands” is holding the resealable plastic bag open, “clean hands” will place all the capped field blank bottles back into the resealable plastic bag they came in.
12. “Dirty hands” will seal the plastic bag and place it in the cooler.
13. Repeat steps 4-12 with the second set of field blank bottles.

#### Step 4: Collect Your Finished Water Sample

1. “Dirty hands” will remove the resealable plastic bag with the empty sample bottles from the cooler.
2. Without touching the bottles, “dirty hands” will then move a sample bottle to the opening of the plastic bag.
3. “Clean hands” will pick up a sample bottle by touching the cap only.
4. “Clean hands” will remove the cap and keeping the cap in their hand, will fill the sample bottle up to the bottom of the neck taking care not to flush out the preservatives and making sure the mouth of the bottle does not come into contact with anything other than sample water.
5. “Clean hands” will cap the sample bottle and invert the bottle at least five times to mix the sample with the preservative.
6. Collect samples for the other five sample bottles by repeating steps 1-5.

7. As “dirty hands” holds open the resealable plastic bag the sample bottles came in, “clean hands” will place the six capped sample bottles into the resealable plastic bag without putting their hands into the bag.
8. “Dirty hands” will close the resealable plastic bag and place it into the cooler.

#### Step 5: Return Your Samples for Analysis

1. Confirm that all the sample bottles have been returned to their resealable plastic bags and put in the cooler
2. Fill out the chain of custody form with the date and time of the sample collection and the names of the persons who collected the samples. Remember do not use a permanent marker.
3. Add ice to the empty sealable bag in the cooler and make sure the ice covers the resealable plastic bags containing the sample bottles. Ice should not touch the sample bottles.
4. Place the completed chain of custody form in the resealable plastic bag it came in. Place the bag with the form into the cooler, close the cooler, place the pre-paid mailing label on the cooler, and send the sample kit back to the lab.
5. Return your samples within seven days of receiving your sample kit. **Ship overnight.** Do **not** ship on Friday or Saturday.

Congratulations! You have collected your finished water samples for PFAS analysis. If there are any issues with the samples collected or PFAS detected in the field blanks, GA EPD will follow up with you directly. Otherwise, GA EPD will contact you with your results.