



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
LABORATORY SERVICES
630 HART LANE
NASHVILLE, TN 37243

To: All Community and Non-Community Water Supplies

From: David L. Smalley, M.S.S, Ph.D., B.C.L.D. *DLS*
Director, Laboratory Services

Date: May 13, 2009

Subject: **Charge for Required Testing of Microbiological Parameters for Drinking Water Samples**

Effective July 1, 2009, the Division of Laboratory Services will charge for all microbiological compliance testing on drinking water samples received from both community and non-community water systems. The routine compliance test, Total Coliform, will cost \$13.00 per sample. An invoice will be sent with the test results. The complete current water test fee chart is attached.

Historically, the Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Laboratory Services has received water samples from both community and non-community water systems for microbiological compliance testing using the total coliform test. This compliance testing has been performed at no cost to the water system. While the Division of Laboratory Services has provided this testing service, it has not received additional State funding during any budget year to offset the increasing costs associated with testing. Given the costs associated with testing a large number of yearly samples, and continuing State budgetary constraints, the Division of Laboratory Services can no longer provide microbiological compliance testing at no charge.

Currently, there are no State regulations that require community and non-community water systems to send their microbiological compliance samples to the Division of Laboratory Services for testing. Water systems in Tennessee have three options for analysis of microbiological samples; (1) the water system may receive certification from the State Certification Office and perform their own compliance testing, (2) they may send microbiological compliance samples to the certified state laboratory (Nashville, Jackson, Knoxville, or Memphis); or (3) they may send microbiological compliance samples to a commercial laboratory approved for microbiological drinking water analyses. Section 1200-5-.14 of the Regulations states that for the purpose of determining compliance with the regulations regarding maximum contaminant levels, samples may be considered only if they have been analyzed by a laboratory certified by the Department. The following link is a current (12-2-2008) listing of commercial laboratories certified by Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) for microbiological analysis:

http://www.state.tn.us/environment/dws/pdf/micro_labs.pdf

Please note that not all commercial laboratories are certified for the analysis of microbiological drinking water samples.

Effective July 1, 2009, the Division of Laboratory Services will only provide water sample bottles to the water systems that continue to send their compliance samples to one of the four certified state laboratories (Nashville, Jackson, Knoxville, or Memphis). A fee of \$13.00 will be charged by invoice for each routine compliance sample received.

The Division of Water Supply Regulations, Rule 1200-5-1, provide the rules and regulations that agents, employees or representatives of public water systems must meet. The rules apply to all public water supply systems that provide water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections or regularly serves an average of at least twenty-five (25) individuals daily at least sixty (60) days out of the year. A public water supply system is either a community water system or a non-community water system. A **community water system** is a public water supply system that serves at least fifteen (15) service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least twenty-five (25) year-round residents. A **non-community water system** is a public water supply system that is not a community water system and which generally serves a transient population such as hotels, motels, restaurants, camps, service stations, churches, industry, etc.

Rule 1200-5-1-.06(4) (a-e) describes the maximum contaminant levels for microbiologicals that are applicable to both community and non-community water systems. The maximum contaminant level (MCL) is based on the presence or absence of total coliforms in a sample, rather than coliform density.

If you have any questions concerning this change in policy, please contact the following individuals:

Dr. Bob Read, Environmental Laboratory Director, (615)262-6300, bob.read@tn.gov

Jim Gibson, Microbiology Laboratory Director, (615)262-6300, jim.gibson@tn.gov.

Environmental Microbiological Test Costs (4/1/2009)	
Total coliform only	\$13.00
E. coli only	\$13.00
Enterococcus	\$15.00
Fecal coliform by MF	\$15.00
Fecal strep by MF	\$15.00
Total coliform by MPN	\$26.00
Fecal coliform by MPN	\$30.00
Fecal strep by MPN	\$30.00
Total coliform and E. coli - presence/absence without quantitation	\$13.00
Total coliform and E. coli with quantitation	\$15.00
E. coli and Fecal MF with quantitation	\$28.00
Total coliform, E. coli, and Fecal MF with quantitation	\$28.00
E. coli, Fecal MF, and Enterococcus with quantitation	\$43.00
Heterotrophic Plate Count	\$26.00