

# Water Quality Testing: How Do I Go About Getting My Water Tested?

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Before you can get a laboratory to test your water you need to be able to tell them what tests you want done. Many laboratories are able to help assist you in selecting appropriate tests depending on your situation.

Information regarding agricultural water quality is available from both federal and provincial departments of agriculture. If you are unsure about the tests required or need additional advice you may contact the department of agriculture, your provincial water/environmental agency, or your local health department for further assistance depending on the type of information you require. Some provincial agencies have water quality programs in which you can get your water analyzed at a reduced cost. They may also be able to advise you about accredited laboratories which test water. Most telephone books which you can view at your local library list "Laboratories, Analytical" in the yellow pages.



Whichever laboratory you choose to test your water, ask them about their accreditation, quality control program, and how much it will cost to perform the analysis. They will send you the necessary sample bottles and instructions. Read the instructions carefully and follow them exactly. Some tests require that the samples are shipped cool and normally arrive at the lab within 24 hours of the sample collection. The test for coliform bacteria is one example that must meet this shipping protocol.

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Contact the Ag-Info Centre, toll-free in Alberta at 310-FARM (3276)

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