



Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Testing Guideline Recommendations for Water Samplers

Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is providing these recommendations to test drinking water for PFAS. The instructions for sampling are very specific and must be followed to get an accurate test result. PFAS samples must be analyzed using Environmental Protection Agency Method 533 or Method 537.1.

Private well owners who want to test their water for PFAS can find more information under PFAS Testing on health.ri.gov/water/for/privatewellowners/about/testing/.

Preparing for PFAS Sampling

Materials Needed

Materials needed for sampling include a cooler, bags of ice, ballpoint pen, two sampling bottles per location (one bottle with preservative and one empty bottle for a field blank), polyethylene sealable bags, powderless nitrile gloves, labels, and chain of custody forms for the samples. Field blanks are a way to establish quality control during the sampling process. The needed supplies for field blanks will be provided by the lab.

Minimizing PFAS Contamination

PFAS are found in many products and materials. Test results for PFAS in drinking water can be contaminated if certain materials are used by the person taking the sample or are in the container used to take the sample. Below is a table showing which items may be used and which items should not be used by the sampler at the sampling site to minimize risk of contamination.

Type of Material	Do Not Use	OK to Use
Packing material used to bring the water sample to the lab	Chemical ice packs	Regular ice
Writing materials	Waterproof/treated paper or field books, plastic clipboards,	Plain paper, metal clipboard, pens

Type of Material	Do Not Use	OK to Use
	permanent markers, adhesive paper products	
Clothing	Waterproof or water-resistant clothing or shoes	Synthetic or cotton material, previously washed clothing (preferably previously washed more than six times) without the use of fabric softeners
Personal care products (on the day of sample collection)	Cosmetics, moisturizers, hand cream, perfume, and other related products	<p>RIDOH does not endorse or recommend any of these products, nor is this list of products all-inclusive or exhaustive.</p> <p>Sunscreens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alba Organics Natural Yes to Cucumbers™ Aubrey Organics® Jason Natural Sun Block® Kiss My Face® Baby-safe sunscreens ('free' or 'natural') <p>Insect Repellents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jason Natural Quit Bugging Me® Repel Lemon Eucalyptus® Herbal Armor™ California Baby Natural Bug Spray™ BabyGanics <p>Sunscreen and Insect Repellents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avon Skin So Soft Bug Guard-SPF 30™
Food and beverage	As food packaging can be a source of PFAS, avoid eating before/during sampling.	Bottled water or hydration drinks

Sample Collection Instructions

Read all instructions before beginning the sampling process. In preparation for sampling, identify the facility code ID, sample code ID, and collection point before going into the field.

Please refer to your sampling plan for the location.

1. Wash hands before sampling and wear new powderless nitrile gloves while filling each set of sample bottles.
2. If possible, avoid contact with any duct tape or pipe thread paste on pipe fittings or sampling tap threads on the water supply discharge pipe.
3. Take the sample for PFAS while (if applicable) the well pump is operating, and, preferably, has been operating for at least one hour.
4. Turn on the cold tap (with the aerator removed) and flush until the water temperature stabilizes (approximately five minutes) and reduce flow to avoid splashing.
5. Using new nitrile gloves, prepare a field blank at the sampling location. Do not place the sample container cap on any surface when collecting the sample, and do not touch the inside of the sample container or its cap. Open and pour the blank sample provided by the lab from its container into the empty container. Seal the cap and label the container.
6. Using new nitrile gloves, collect the sample for PFAS first, prior to collecting samples for anything else. This avoids contact with any other type of sample container, bottle, or package material that could contaminate the sample.
7. Do not place the sample container cap on any surface when collecting the sample. Do not touch the inside of the sample container or its cap. Do not rinse the container as preservatives may be present.
8. **For water sample**, fill the container to the shoulder and secure the cap. **For field blank**, fill the container to the shoulder using the provided deionized water and secure the cap.
9. When the water sample is collected and capped, mix in the preservative by inverting the container.
10. Write the facility code ID, sample point ID, collection point, and date and time of collection on the labels provided and affix the labels to the sample containers. In preparation for sampling, identify the facility code ID, sample code ID, and collection point before going into the field. Please refer to your sampling plan for the location.
11. **Important:** Put each sample in its own sealed plastic bag. The sample bottles should not come into contact with carpet or upholstery in vehicles or in the office.
12. Put the bag(s) in a cooler or shipping container packed only with ice to chill samples during transport (samples should not exceed 10°C). Adequate ice is especially important when collecting samples during hot weather or using overnight sample shipment.
13. Complete the chain of custody forms for each sample with as much information as possible.

Local and neighboring states, Labs Providing PFAS Analytical (Testing) Services of Drinking Water Samples

This list is not a complete list and does not constitute an endorsement of those labs on the list, nor is it a statement against any lab not on the list. Additionally, the labs' capacity to provide analytical services consistent with state law and RIDOH's recommendations above has not been verified. **Always verify a lab can meet your requirements before agreeing to a contract.**

<p>ESS Laboratory 185 Frances Ave Cranston, RI 02910 www.esslaboratory.com 401-461-7181</p>	<p>RI Analytical Laboratories 31 Illinois Ave Warwick, RI 02888 www.rianalytical.com 401-737-8500</p>	<p>Alpha Analytical 320 Forbes Boulevard Mansfield, MA 02048 508-822-9300 / 800-624-9220 www.alphalab.com</p>
<p>Pace Analytical Laboratory 39 Spruce Street East Longmeadow, MA 01028 413-525-2332 www.pacelabs.com</p>	<p>Battelle Analytical 141 Longwater Drive Norwell, MA 02061 www.battelle.org 781-681-5570</p>	<p>NE Chromachem 6 Nicholas St. Salem, MA 01970 www.chromachem.com 978-744-6600</p>
<p>RWA Lab Services 90 Sargent Drive New Haven CT 06511 203-401-2700 www.rwalab.com</p>		

If you have any questions about these sampling recommendations, contact the Center for Drinking Water Quality by calling 401-222-6867 or emailing DOH.RIDWQ@health.ri.gov.

For more information about PFAS generally, please visit health.ri.gov/pfas/. For frequently-asked questions about PFAS Contamination in Drinking Water, go to health.ri.gov/water/about/pfas/.