

## 2. Sample Collection Techniques

In the past, except when testing for lead, the recommended sample collection technique for drinking water from wells was to collect water from the spigot closest to the well head and to let water run for 10-15 minutes before collecting the sample. This procedure was designed to address groundwater quality excluding the effects from the household plumbing, storage tank, well construction, and pump.

Except for microbiology, we now recommend that all drinking water samples be collected from the first draw water out of the kitchen faucet or from the faucet used most often for drinking. Please follow three basic protocols when collecting a drinking water sample:

1. A first draw water sample will be collected (after a minimum of 6 hours, but not more than 12-hour period) during which time there was no water usage prior to the sampling. The GA-EPD recommends that either early morning or evening upon returning home are the best sampling times to ensure that the necessary stagnant water conditions exist.
2. A kitchen or bathroom cold-water faucet is to be used for sampling. If the primary concern is the well pump, draw the water from as near the well head as possible.
3. Place a clean sample container below the faucet and gently open the cold water tap. Completely fill all sample bottles.

For Microbiology testing (i.e. Bacteria), follow 5 basic protocols when collecting a drinking water sample:

1. Select an inside faucet that is clean and not leaking.
2. Remove any faucet attachments such as filters, aerators, screens, splashguards, or water-saver valves.
3. Sanitize the faucet inside and out by dipping the faucet neck into undiluted chlorine bleach (do not use color-safe bleach).
4. Open tap fully and flush the faucet and pipes by running water for 3 minutes. If sampling from a faucet that mixes hot and cold water, run hot water for 3 minutes, then cold water for 3 minutes. Do not turn off the water, but reduce the flow to avoid splashing.
5. Uncap the sample bottle without touching the inside of the cap or bottle, fill the bottle above the 100 mL line, but not completely full and recap. Please note that the white substance in the bottle is a dechlorinating agent, which is essential. Fill the bottle only once; do not rinse.

**Ponds and streams** should be sub-sampled at various depths and positions across the body of water. Sub-samples should then be combined to create one sample.

Wastewater samples should be collected per the requirements of the permit.