STEP SIX

Hold the bottle under the stream of water, being careful not to let the bottle touch the sample tap. Fill the bottle to the neck or indicated fill line, but do not allow it to overflow. Remove the bottle from the water flow and replace the cap.

STEP SEVEN

Complete the lab slip. If there was anything unusual about the sample collection, note it on the lab slip.

Laboratory forms vary, but the following information is very important to complete:

- Water System ID number
- Water System name
- Collection date and time the sample was taken
- Type of sample
- Sample location (street address or other type of location identifier)
- System type (i.e., Group A or B)

STEP EIGHT

Secure the lab slip to the bottle with the rubberband. Deliver the sample to a certified lab or to a designated drop-off location for the lab as soon as possible. Lab analysis must begin within 30 hours of sample collection.

If you have questions about coliform sampling collection procedures, contact your regional office:

SW Regional Office:
(360) 753-5090

NW Regional Office:
(253) 395-6775

Eastern Regional Office:
(509) 456-2788

COLIFORM

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Washington State Department of Health
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS
DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER

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COLIFORM SAMPLING PROCEDURE

This brochure provides general information on how to collect a coliform sample. The State Department of Health recommends that you collect your sample using the following steps. If instructions from your laboratory are different, you should follow the steps listed here.

Generally the sample kit contains:

- A sample bottle
- A lab form
- A rubber band

The general sampling procedure for coliform monitoring is as follows:

STEP ONE

Routine and repeat samples should be collected from sites throughout the distribution system in accordance with your Coliform Monitoring Plan.

Choose a sample tap that represents the water in your distribution system. Avoid poor sample sites such as swivel faucets, hot and cold mixing faucets (with a single lever), leaky or spraying faucets, drinking fountains, janitorial sinks, frost-free hose bibs, and faucets below or near ground level.

STEP TWO

Remove any attachments from the faucet, including aerators, screens, washers, hoses, and water filters. If you choose to disinfect the sample site prior to sample collection, be sure to thoroughly flush until all disinfectant is removed.

STEP THREE

Turn on the **cold water only** and let it run with a steady stream for at least five minutes. Before collecting the sample, turn the water down to a thin stream (about the width of a pencil), then let the water run one minute. If the system is chlorinated, measure the chlorine residual and note the results on the lab slip. Water conservation tip: The flushed water may be saved in a bucket to be used later.

STEP FOUR

There may be some liquid or powder in the sample bottle to neutralize any chlorine that may be present. **Do not** rinse it out.

STEP FIVE

To avoid contamination while taking the sample, hold the bottle near the bottom with one hand, hold the top of the cap with the other, and then unscrew the cap. **Do not** set the cap down, touch any part of the cap that touches the bottle, or let anything touch the rim or inside of the cap.