

Acceptable/Unacceptable Preparedness Samples

Preparedness Specimens WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED for laboratory testing without authorization by the Laboratory Director or Deputy Director.

ALL SPECIMENS MUST BE PROPERLY COLLECTED, PACKAGED, SHIPPED, AND DECONTAMINATED BEFORE TRANSPORT TO AND ACCEPTED BY DPHL.

GENERAL PREPAREDNESS SPECIMEN CRITERIA

1. Follow DPHL Specimen Collection, Identification, Packaging, Shipping, and Documentation guidance.
2. Utilize DPH Office of Drinking Water (ODW) drinking water kits for drinking water specimens.
3. Utilize DPHL Environmental Sample Collection guidance for non-clinical, non-drinking water samples.
4. Contact DPHL for additional collection guidance prior to specimen collection.
5. All preparedness specimens and drinking water specimens require the use of a Chain of Custody and Request for Testing paperwork.
6. Follow the appropriate DPHL Preparedness Specimen Collection List for the specimen type.

ACCEPTABLE CHEMICAL PREPAREDNESS SPECIMENS

1. At this time, DPHL Chemical Preparedness Lab analyzes Clinical Samples, drinking water samples, and other specimens by request.
 - 1.1. Additional analyses may be referred to other affiliate laboratories with the state or within the appropriate testing network.
 - 1.2. Clinical: Follow the latest "Shipping Instructions for Specimens Collected from People Potentially Exposed to Chemical Terrorism Agents" Guidance from the CDC.
 - 1.3. Clinical specimens require the collection of a minimum of two sample blanks per lot.
 - 1.4. Use DPHL/ODW drinking water kits for analysis of drinking water samples.
 - 1.5. Use DPHL environmental collection kits for environmental samples.
2. ALL sample collection (routine, potential occupational or inadvertent chemical exposure, chemical terrorism, industrial incident, etc.) must follow basic evidentiary collection requirements.
3. Routine samples must be discussed prior to submission.

- 3.1. Preliminary tests of drinking water for trace metals are available.
4. Samples must be properly stored post collection through receipt by DPHL.
 - 4.1. Blood samples are to be refrigerated at 2-8°C, never frozen, and shipped with cold packs.
 - 4.2. Urine samples are to be frozen and stored at -70°C if possible, and shipped on dry ice.
 - 4.3. Drinking water samples must be analyzed stored on ice below 10°C, transported, and analyzed within 24 hours of collection.
 - 4.4. Environmental specimens require the collection of a field blank and a sample blank.

ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL PREPAREDNESS SPECIMENS

1. For environmental samples for Real-Time PCR testing, collect two (if possible) dry, non-cotton (e.g. Dacron) swabs and place in two separate, sterile tubes. Decontaminate outside of tubes with 10% bleach solution. Put tubes in secondary container and decontaminate outside of that container. Place in outer container and decontaminate again. Submit to laboratory.
2. For clinical samples for Real-Time PCR testing, refer to the following current BT Collection Chart for collection instructions. Put tubes in a plastic bag and decontaminate outside of that bag. Place in another bag and decontaminate again. Submit to laboratory.
3. For viral testing, collect vesicular swabs, dry or immersed in transport medium depending on viral test ordered. Scabs from crusted lesions are also acceptable. Follow instructions from the current BT Collection list. Check with virology section for specific questions for collection. Package sample as in #2 and submit to laboratory.
4. For environmental samples for culture, collect using a culturette or lightly moisten a swab and place it in sterile tube. Refrigerate at 2-8°C if specimen will not arrive at the lab the same day. Package sample as in #1.
5. Powder contained in its original package or envelope is an acceptable sample. If there is a large amount of powder, it may be put into a sterile container and tightly sealed. Prepare as in #1.
6. Drinking water samples must include a temperature control. Specimens should be stored and transported at 4°C on ice or cold packs.
7. Presence/Absence testing for total coliforms and *E. coli* must be completed within 30 hours of collection.

UNACCEPTABLE SPECIMENS FOR PREPAREDNESS TESTING

1. Meeting any of the above general unacceptable specimens guidelines for Preparedness testing.
 - 1.1. The submitter should contact the Delaware Public Health Laboratory (DPHL) at 302.223.1520 to answer any questions related to any aspect of

sample collection, preservation, packaging, and/or transport to avoid sample rejection.

2. Unopened packages, letters, or environmental samples that have not been field screened for explosives, biologicals, chemicals, or radiation.
3. Samples that are too large to fit under the biological safety cabinet or glovebox. Packages must be smaller than 8 inches in height and less than 12 X 24 inches in width or length.
 - 3.1. To test large packages, specimens must be taken in the field using two sterile non-cotton swabs or material put in a small sterile container (conical tube, urine cup, etc.)
4. Clinical Chemical Preparedness samples that have been improperly stored. Samples must be transported within 30 minutes of packaging or transported frozen on dry ice (urine) and on ice packs between 1 – 10°C (blood).
5. Samples with missing information on DPHL Chain of Custody Form and/or Request for Preparedness Testing Form or without appropriate paperwork.
6. Wrong or improperly collected samples submitted for test requested.
 - 6.1. Please see DPHL Collection Procedures and Current Testing Available for further information.
7. Inadequate volume of sample submitted.
8. Non-screened environmental samples.
9. Samples improperly packaged and/or shipping incorrectly.
10. Samples shipped without proper authorization.
11. Specimens not following Chain of Custody and evidentiary requirements.