



G-039 NON-PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY TESTING GUIDANCE

REGULATIONS

Testing of non-public water (such as wells) is required for all licensed Food Sales Establishments with open food. Most food sales establishments must be tested annually; however, shellfish dealers must be tested every 6 months (while the water supply is in use). It is the establishment's responsibility to test the water supply at the correct frequency. Non-public water must be tested for both total coliform and fecal coliform. Sample results must be retained on file at the establishment's location for a minimum of three (3) years, and made available upon request during regulatory inspections. Please see the regulatory requirements for Retail Food Sales (Department Rules Chapter 40-7-1), Manufactured Food Regulations (40-7-18), and the Additional Regulations Applicable to the Handling, Storage, Shucking, Packing, Shipping and/or Sale of Shellfish (40-7-12). **This guidance is not meant for dairy farms or Grade A Dairy establishments.**

WATER TESTING INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION

If your facility utilizes a non-public water supply, you will need to get your water tested for total coliform and *E. coli*. A "Passing Result" is obtained when the water sample has no detectable number of coliforms or *E. coli*. Once your water sample has been tested and you receive a passing result, keep the results on file and accessible for inspection upon request. If you are a new establishment, you must include a copy of these results with your license application. Please note, the test should be conducted **within 60 days** prior to submitting a NEW license application.

If You Do NOT Get a Passing Result:

- *Your Water Test is Positive for Coliform* – Coliform is a standard indicator of insanitary conditions in drinking water. You will need to have your water system checked for cracks in the pipes, cracks in the well seal, leaky faucets, etc., and treated to fix the problem. Another water sample must be submitted to your lab within 7 calendar days from the initial positive result. If your second well water sample result is positive, **contact the GDA at PositiveResults@agr.georgia.gov within 24 hours of receiving the results. You must cease operations or use an alternate water supply (bottled water, etc.) until the source of the contamination has been identified and corrected.**
- *Your Water Test is Positive for E. coli*. – **Cease operations and discontinue use of the water supply immediately. Contact GDA within 24 hours of notification of lab results and wait for further instructions.**

NON-PUBLIC WATER SAMPLING GUIDANCE

To ensure proper sampling of a non-public water supply, the following generalized instructions are recommended by the GDA for any person(s) collecting a sample for testing:

- a) Samples shall be collected from the cold water line at the point of use (sink used to clean equipment, utensils, etc.).
- b) Clean the faucet of any residue or debris. If present, remove the aerator on the end of faucet - remember to replace the aerator after sample collection is completed.
- c) Wash hands thoroughly and dry with a clean single-service towel, or by air dryer, immediately before sampling.
- d) Sanitize the faucet via immersion for one (1) minute in either 70% Isopropyl Alcohol or a bleach/water sanitizing solution prepared according to the bleach label's instructions.
- e) Run water for a minimum of 3 minutes.
- f) Open the sterile sample container (obtained from your lab) without contaminating the interior surface of container or lid.
- g) Close container tightly without contaminating the sample, inside of bottle, or inside of the lid. Inspect the container for leakage, and tighten or re-seal the lid if necessary.
- h) Follow any specific instructions given by the lab; including properly securing the sample for shipment/delivery, and required timeframes for delivery and receipt of the sample.

LABORATORY RECOMMENDATIONS

The GDA recommends using an accredited laboratory to test your water. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website has a list of accredited labs that can perform the water analysis <https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/drinking-water>.