AQM: Aquatic Marine: any water sample from the ocean or any other saline aquatic source of water, including salt pans and salt lakes.

AQMS: Aquatic Marine Sediment: any sample taken from the soil or sediment from any body of water that would be classified as AQM.

AQF: Aquatic Freshwater: any freshwater sample. Includes rivers, ponds, aquifers, drinking water, and aquaculture habitats.

AQFS: Aquatic Freshwater Sediment: any sample taken from the soil or sediment from any body of water that would be classified as AQF.

AQB: Aquatic Brackish: any sample taken from a brackish or low-salt environment. Includes estuaries, brackish lakes, and other interfaces between salt and freshwater.

AQBS: Aquatic Brackish Sediment, a sample taken from soil or sediment layer of a body of water classified as AQB. Often used on brackish mud flats.

AQI: Aquatic Ice: icy samples. Includes glaciers, icebergs, and snowmelt.

AQH: Aquatic Hydrothermal: a sample taken from a hot spring or undersea vent, and any associated sediments.

AQS: Aquatic Sediment: any unspecified sediment.

AQO: Aquatic Other: a sample that eludes classification or had no specification.

BI: Built Industrial: a sample taken from an industrial process or a mine (active or abandoned). Includes factories, mines, and chemical plants.

BP: Built Pollution: any sample found in an environment found with a pollutant or contaminant such as oil spills and environmental industrial waste. Much overlap with industrial.

BD: Built Digester: a digester or other bioprocessing facility. Includes digesters, sewage treatment plants, microbial fuel production facilities, enrichment cultures that were found to degrade a certain compound, and septic tanks.

BF: Built Food: a sample taken from human food or drink.

BO: Built Other: a human built environment that eludes any above classification. Many clinical surfaces.

PR: Plant Root: any sample taken from the root area of the plant. Includes rhizospheric soil and nodules.

PS: Plant Surface: any sample taken from the leaf, stem, or fruit surface of a plant. Used rarely because it usually isn’t specified.

PO: Plant Other: any plant-associated sample that doesn’t fit above classifications.

SD: Soil Desert: any sample from arid or desert soil or sand. Includes desert rocks.

SA: Soil Agricultural: any sample taken from farmland or garden soil. Sometimes overlapped with PR, but usually this category was used when the soil was not taken from rhizosphere.

SP: Soil Permafrost: any sample taken from permafrost soil or from subglacial rock or soil.

SO: Soil Other: any sample that didn’t fit above categories. Includes caves. Commonly used.

ZA: Zoological Arthropod: any arthropod-associated sample. Includes larvae and feces.

ZV: Zoological Vertebrate: any vertebrate-associated sample. Body parts and animal fluids were often assumed to be human when not specified and thus put into this category.

ZN: Zoological Non-Arthropod Invertebrate: any invertebrate animal that wasn’t arthropod or vertebrate.

ZO: Zoological Other: any unspecified sample that could not be reasonably assumed to be human.

AE: Aerosol: any sample taken from an atmosphere or aerosolized environment. Very rarely used.

OT: Other: any sample that truly evaded all classification. The weirdest of the weird reside here.