



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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Peter Lyskowski
Acting Director



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor

Missouri Public Water Systems

November 10, 2015

Dear Public Water System Owners/Operators:

The Missouri State Public Health Laboratory (MSPHL) is in the process of implementing a new Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) in its drinking water bacteriology testing laboratory. The OpenELIS (OE) LIMS will provide the laboratory with improved sample management capability, improved data integrity and reduced potential for human data entry error. In addition, the system will provide improved reporting capabilities, including direct electronic data exchange with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' (MDNR) Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS). SDWIS is the computer system MDNR uses to store regulatory water testing data and report testing results to you and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, the new OE LIMS will provide a web portal that MSPHL clients can use to access their own test results in real time.

As the MSPHL implements this new computer system, several changes will be made in the way you collect and submit water samples for testing. This letter and information packet will provide you with information to help educate you on these changes.

NEW SAMPLE BOTTLES:

Beginning in August 2015, the MSPHL began using a larger sample bottle for water bacterial testing. This bottle has a shrink wrap seal and two lines to indicate the proper sample volume. Please read the attached "SAMPLE COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS" for details on how to use these new bottles. **Sample volume MUST be within the two lines on the bottle (100 – 120 mL) to be acceptable for testing.** You may continue to use your old bottles until the MSPHL can ship you new ones. Once you have received the new bottles, please discard or recycle the old bottles.

NEW SAMPLE INFORMATION FORMS:

The traditional sample information "card" that has been used for more than twenty years is being replaced by the **Environmental Sample Collection Form**. An example form is attached. Please read the attached instructions for information on properly completing the new form.

Changes to the form include the following:

1. Form size is expanded to a single 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper. The form is no longer in a triplicate carbon copy format. You may choose to photocopy for your records if you prefer. Note: MDNR does not require a public water system to retain copies of sample collection forms; however, you might utilize them for system inspections.
2. The form is printed by the OE LIMS and will be pre-populated with your Public Water Supply ID number, PWS name, address and county. Forms should not be shared with other supplies.

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Contract operators will be provided with forms for all the supplies they operate. Blank forms will be available for MDNR Regional Office staff use.

3. The form requires all requested information to be printed by the collector. There are no longer check boxes for **Sample Type** or **Repeat Location**.
4. **Facility ID, Sample Collection Point ID and Location** for the sampling site **MUST** be provided by the collector. This information is available from your MDNR approved PWS sampling plan. MDNR will be providing all public water systems with a current copy of their approved sampling plan. This information is required by SDWIS and is used by MDNR to ensure regulatory compliance requirements have been met. Failure to complete this information on the sample collection form may result in a non-compliance report from MDNR.
5. A **Collector Signature** line has been added. The sample collector must sign the form to attest the information provided is accurate to the best of their knowledge.

The MSPHL will begin shipping the new forms to public water systems in late November or early December. **Please begin using the new forms December 16, 2015.** Discard all the old forms (“cards”) at that time.

NEW SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS:

Sample instructions have been revised to include changes to the bottle and sampling form. The instructions include detailed information on how to collect the sample using the new bottle, how to complete the new sample collection form, how to best ship samples to the MSPHL using the free MSPHL courier system, and how to register for the new MSPHL web portal. A copy of these instructions is attached.

NEW WEB PORTAL FOR RESULTS REPORTS

The OE LIMS provides a web portal that may be used by systems to view and print their test result reports, check status of samples, download sample information into Excel, and receive automated emails when samples are received at the laboratory, and when sample results are ready to be viewed. For information on how to gain access to this portal, please contact Shondra Johnson, LIMS Administrator at Shondra.Johnson@health.mo.gov or at 573-751-3334.

IMPLEMENTATION DATES:

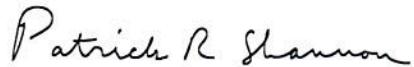
The MSPHL intends to implement the OpenELIS LIMS on **December 1, 2015**. There will be a two week testing period in which laboratory staff will run the new LIMS in conjunction with our current manual, paper-based system to ensure the OE LIMS is operating properly. You may continue to submit samples as you currently do, using the old sample information card, throughout this time.

On December 16, 2015, the MSPHL plans to “go-live” with the new OE LIMS. Samples submitted after that date should be submitted on the new Environmental Sample Collection Form. At that time, the MSPHL Test Results Web Portal will also be available to those systems that have been granted access.

The MSPHL and MDNR understand that there will be a lot of changes to a system that has been in place for many years. The MSPHL is excited about the added benefits from this new system, and we ask for your patience as we implement the OpenELIS LIMS at the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory.

If you have any questions, please contact the MSPHL Environmental Bacteriology Unit at 573-751-3334. You may also contact your MDNR Regional Office for additional information on sample collection.

Once again, thank you for your patience and understanding as we implement these changes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick R. Shannon".

Patrick R. Shannon
Manager, Environmental Bacteriology Unit

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