ADEQ Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

DRINKING WATER COMPLIANCE TIPS

Keeping Samples Cool in the Arizona Heat

To help ensure the accurate analysis of a sample, precautions must be taken to keep samples within a certain temperature range — especially in the Arizona summertime.

Note that temperature requirements do not apply if less than two hours pass between sampling and submittal to the laboratory, and metals samples preserved with nitric acid, including radiochemicals, do not need to be kept cool.

Standard methods require:

- Microbiological samples to be received at temperatures between 2° -10° C.
- Chemical samples to be received at temperatures between 2° - 6° C.

How to cool your samples:

- Use wet ice in a cooler (not use blue ice or ice packs) and put the chain-of-custody in a ziplock bag to keep it dry. You can use a Styrofoam cooler, if more insulation is needed.
- Place a temperature blank in the ice cooler with your samples. A temperature blank is a small plastic bottle filled with tap water that acts as a representative temperature for the samples upon laboratory receipt. If your lab doesn't provide a temperature blank, you can make your own and make sure to clearly write "TEMPERATURE BLANK" on the bottle so the lab doesn't confuse it for a sample.

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Keep in Mind!

If you are shipping the samples, make sure to use a plastic bag to line the cooler before adding ice and samples.

This is important, because if your cooler or package leaks, the shipping company will hold it to ensure there are no hazardous materials. This could result in your samples expiring, which would require you to resample.

For more drinking water compliance tips and to request future tips, visit: azdeq.gov/DWComplianceTips

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