

Heterotrophic Plate Count (HPC) Collection/Shipping Guidelines



Sample: Potable or nonpotable water collected in sterile bottles with sodium thiosulfate neutralizer.

Method: Quantitative Pour Plate Standard Method 9215B.

Collection:

Free sterile screw-top bottles with sodium thiosulfate neutralizer are available from U.S. Micro-Solutions, call 1-877-US MICRO (876-4276).

Potable Water:

1. Turn on cold or hot water and immediately collect 100 mL in a sterile plastic bottle with sodium thiosulfate.
2. Fasten lid tightly and invert bottle to mix.
3. Keep samples cold ($\leq 8^{\circ}\text{C}$) prior to shipping.

Cooling Towers & Reservoirs:

1. Collect a 100 mL sample of water from reservoir or condensation pan by submerging an open sterile plastic bottle with sodium thiosulfate just under the surface of the water. Avoid collecting excessive sediment.
2. Fasten lid tightly and invert bottle to mix.
3. Sanitize the outside of the bottle with an alcohol wipe to prevent cross-contamination of samples.
4. If collecting samples from more than one location, wear disposable gloves and change after each sample.
5. Keep samples cold ($\leq 8^{\circ}\text{C}$) prior to shipping.

Shipping:

1. Clearly label each sample with a Sample Number and complete the Chain of Custody (COC).
2. Place samples in Ziploc bags and then in a box with an insulated foam liner and ice pack.
3. Insert the completed COC form into a plastic sleeve or Ziploc bag and place in box.
4. Ship samples Monday through Friday for receipt within 24 hours of collection.