



San Antonio River Authority Regional Environmental Laboratory Sample Acceptance Criteria

SARA Regional Environmental Laboratory Sample Acceptance Criteria indicates the minimum conditions a sample must meet on receipt at the laboratory. Sample collection personnel are to use water resistant ink, use appropriate sample containers, adhere to holding times, and sample volume requirements. Deviations from the Sample Acceptance Criteria will be documented on the Chain of Custody (CoC) and the final report.

The laboratory checks samples for the following qualities for chemical and bacteriological samples, where appropriate, to evaluate sample acceptance:

1. **Thermal preservation** – Microbiology samples must be $<10^{\circ}\text{C}$ during transit and all other samples must be $\leq 6^{\circ}\text{C}$. Samples delivered to the lab the same day as they are collected are likely not to have reached a fully chilled temperature. Samples shall be considered acceptable, and not qualified if there is evidence the chilling process has begun. The temperature for each sample will be recorded on the CoC.
2. **pH check** – Analysis that requires acid preservation must be preserved within 15 minutes of collection. The pH of samples requiring acid/base preservation is checked upon sample receipt and documented on the CoC.
3. **Chlorine check** – Drinking water bacteriological samples must be submitted to the laboratory in approved sample containers. Containers are available upon request. The client is responsible for recording the Chlorine Residual on the Drinking Water Sample Identification Sheet.
4. **Sample integrity** – Sample integrity for all samples are checked for:
 - a. Approved container based on the type of analysis requested.
 - b. Cracks, leaks, possible contamination and/or any factors that could affect the integrity of the sample.
 - c. Adequate sample volume and air space.
 - d. Hold times for requested analysis must not be exceeded.
5. **Chain of Custody (CoC)** – Information on the CoC must be properly and fully completed. Sample collectors are urged not to utilize photocopies of CoCs.

If the checks performed upon sample receipt indicate the criteria are not met, then:

1. The sample is rejected as agreed with the client.
2. The decision to proceed is documented and agreed upon with the client. In the event the client cannot be contacted immediately, the sample(s) is logged in and documented accordingly. Subsequent client contact to address the conditions is documented and the sample processed accordingly.
3. Any deviations from the sample acceptance criteria are documented. Absence of any qualifier on the CoC and the final report indicates that all sample criteria has been met.