

Instructions for Total Coliform Rule – Failure to Take Any Repeat Samples Notice

Template on Reverse

Since failure to take any (e.g. none) required total coliform repeat samples after a total coliform positive routine sample requires a Tier 2 notice, you must provide public notice to persons served as soon as practical but within 30 days after you learn of the violation [OAR 333-061-0042(3)(b)]. You must issue a repeat notice every three months for as long as the violation persists. Most monitoring violations are Tier 3 requiring an annual notice, including taking some but not all required total coliform repeat samples, but the Drinking Water Program has determined that failing to take any required total coliform repeat samples after a total coliform positive routine sample is more serious, and is elevated to a Tier 2 notice.

Community systems must use one of the following methods to deliver the notice [OAR 333-061-0042(3)(b)(E)]:

- ** Hand or direct delivery to each customer address
- ** Mail, as a separate notice or included with the bill to each customer address

Non-community systems must use one of the following methods to deliver the notice [OAR 333-061-0042(3)(b)(E)]:

- ** Posting the notice in conspicuous locations
- ** Hand or direct delivery to each customer address
- ** Mail, as a separate notice or included with the bill to each customer address

In addition, both community and non-community systems must use *another* delivery method reasonably calculated to reach others if they would not be reached by the first method [OAR 333-061-0042(3)(b)(E)]. Such methods could include newspapers, e-mail, or delivery to community organizations. If you mail, post, or hand deliver the notice, print your notice on letterhead, if available.

The notice on the reverse is appropriate for hand delivery or mail. Include in your notice the standard language for monitoring and testing procedure violations in *italics* [OAR 333-061-0042(4)(d)]. If you modify the notice, you may not alter this mandatory language.

Corrective Actions:

In your notice describe the corrective actions you took or are taking. Listed below are some steps commonly taken by water systems with failure to take any repeat coliform samples. Choose the appropriate language, or develop your own:

- ** We will take five temporary routine coliform samples in [month]
- ** We have the results from follow up samples taken [insert date] and the results are [insert].
(If applicable - If you have exceeded the monthly limit for total coliform, refer to the following template: www.public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/Documents/pn/pntcunres.pdf)

After Issuing the Notice

Make sure to send your privacy agency a copy of each type of notice and a certification that you have met all the public notice requirements within ten days after issuing the notice [OAR 333-061-0040(1)(j)].

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Test Shows Coliform Bacteria in [System Name] Water

Our water system recently detected total coliform in one of our samples. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. We took one (or more) sample(s) for coliform bacteria during [insert month] which showed the presence of coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than 1 sample per month OR 5 percent of our samples may test positive. We did not collect any (e.g. none) repeat coliform samples, as required, within 24 hours of being notified of the initial positive results. Therefore, the level of risk is uncertain, as we cannot be certain of the water quality during this time period.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791 or the Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program at (971) 673-0405.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present.*

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we are required to conduct follow-up (repeat) testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or *E. coli*, are present. We did not detect any fecal coliform or *E. coli* in the initial sampling.

What is being done?

[Describe corrective action.]

For more information, please contact [name of contact] at [phone number] or [mailing address].

**Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.*

This notice is being sent to you by [system name]. State Water System ID#: [PWS ID#].

Date distributed: [Insert Date]