



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Certified Drinking Water Labs

FROM: Patryce D. McKinney, MBA 
Chief, Environmental Health Laboratory
Alaska SDWA Certification Authority

DATE: August 17, 2020 – November 17, 2020

SUBJECT: Balance Calibrations

This memo establishes the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Drinking Water Laboratory Certification Program's (LCP) Policy for the annual balance calibration requirement in drinking water certified laboratories during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions put in place by companies and communities, some laboratories may have issues completing annual balance calibration prior to the expiration date. Laboratories are encouraged to take steps such as scheduling with their vendor early so they will have time to make an alternate plan if their vendor isn't traveling.

Laboratories are responsible for finding an alternate vendor for the annual balance calibration. However, it is understood that due to travel schedules, remote areas especially, may still not be able to get a vendor out for calibration prior to their expiration date. In those cases, the laboratory needs to contact the LCP as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

In cases where a laboratory cannot get a vendor out before the expiration date, the LCP may grant the laboratory a one month extension with the following criteria:

- The Laboratory must contact the LCP and receive approval for an extension prior to calibration expiration. They should also have made contact with vendors with estimated dates.
- The balance should only be used for unplanned emergencies during the extension period. The Laboratory should perform any volume checks that are due in the coming month, prior to the calibration expiration. In-house made media the lab will need during that the extension should be made prior to the calibration expiration, if possible.
- If the laboratory needs to use the balance for any drinking water related activities during the extension period, the three-point calibration check must be completed each day of use, prior to using the balance. The three weights must bracket the expected weight(s) of use (at least one check above and at least one check below the expected weight(s)).
- The laboratory must maintain documentation of the extension including the reason and approval.

The LCP will evaluate this policy by November 3, 2020 and re-issue the policy, as necessary.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email DEClabcert@alaska.gov or call 907-375-8200.

Thank you.