



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Environmental  
Conservation

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
Environmental Health Laboratory

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July 31, 2017

Reference: Drinking Water Chemistry Sample Temperatures for Refrigerated Samples Policy

To all Alaska Drinking Water Chemistry Certified Laboratories:

There has been some recent debate over temperature requirements for shipping and receiving of all chemistry drinking water samples which require refrigeration.

An examination of the federal regulations, EPA-approved methods, and the EPA Manual for the Certification of Laboratories Analyzing Drinking Water (LCM) showed that there is not perfect agreement among these federal references. Therefore, Alaska is setting the policy that when refrigeration is denoted by "4°C", "refrigerated" "cool" or similar notation:

- A laboratory can accept a drinking water sample if its measured temperature is 0.0°C to 6.0°C. No rounding to the integer or tenths digits is allowed.
- The drinking water sample must be stored at the laboratory or service center facility as close to 4°C as practicable, with the same acceptable range of temperature 0.0°C to 6.0°C. No rounding to the integer or tenths digits is allowed.
- No freezing is allowed at any time. Freezing is defined as the presence of ice crystals.
- Samples for Nitrate, Nitrite, and Total Nitrate/Nitrite must be refrigerated during both transport and laboratory storage, even if acidified.
- If an EPA-approved method (*e.g.* EPA 1613) is more stringent than this policy, the method requirement is applied.

**This policy must be implemented by August 31, 2017.** If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the ADEC EHL at (907) 375-8200 or [declabcert@alaska.gov](mailto:declabcert@alaska.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patryce D. McKinney".

Patryce D. McKinney, M.B.A.  
Certification Authority

CC: Cindy Christian, Alaska Drinking Water Program