

Envirolab

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This note is intended as a guide only and provided in good faith. For more detailed guidance on sampling techniques, it is recommended that samplers seek advice from experienced site engineers and/or refer to the relevant applicable BS EN ISO, CIRIA, EA or other industry accepted documents*.

Generally, Envirolab recommend that inorganics should be sampled in plastic containers and organics should be sampled in glass containers, although glass can be used for most analyses. If you're not sure how much sample is needed or what sample containers are appropriate please contact Envirolab, we will be happy to help.

Storage and transportation temperature

After receipt at Envirolab samples awaiting analysis are stored in refrigerated areas to minimise loss of temperature sensitive analytes. It is important that you take steps to cool samples during storage on site and during transportation as it is possible that loss of temperature sensitive analytes will occur if samples are not cooled. Trials performed at Envirolab demonstrate that MTBE shows significant losses after only 6 days when stored at ambient temperature. Other volatile compounds will behave similarly and may show quicker deterioration. No detailed information exists to quantify the rate of loss for temperature sensitive compounds but allowing samples to remain at ambient temperatures may mean reported results do not represent concentrations at the time of sampling.

Soils

Usually, industry guidance advises grab samples for site investigations and composite samples for waste sampling.

Waters

When preserved bottles are required only the yellow capped nitric acid (HNO₃) preserved bottles used for metals and the black capped hydrochloric acid (HCl) preserved bottle used for Fe²⁺ and Mn²⁺ need to have the water filtered. All other containers can be filled without pre- filtering the water.

Always fill sample containers to the brim, headspace may cause loss of analyte.

Filtering water samples. Fill the syringe provided with sample water and attach the luer fitting of the filter to the syringe. Slowly depress the plunger into the preserved sample bottle. If samples are very silty and the filter blocks try letting the water settle for a while before filtering.

Clearly label all jars/tubs with the location (for example, BH1, TP2), the depth (if applicable), the sampling date and site name or reference using a permanent marker pen. This information should also be included on the schedule chain of custody sheet (please also refer to the Envirolab "Completing the COC schedule form" document).

Make sure samples are packed into coolboxes appropriately (Please also refer to the Envirolab "Safe Transport of Samples" document).

If in doubt, or require any additional information, please contact us as we will be happy to help. Either call Envirolab or e-mail ask@envlab.co.uk.

*BS 5930, BS 10175, BS ISO 10381 and/or BS EN ISO 5667 (BS 6068-6) maybe of use, but many other standards are also available.