Group B sampling requirements

Most Group B water systems must sample for bacteria every year and nitrate once every three years. If you are unsure how frequently you should be sampling, please contact the Health District. When filling out a water sample form, be sure to list the name of the water system, ID number, Kitsap County, and check the box for Group B water system. Describe the sample location. Check the box for either Routine or Repeat sample.

Sampling for bacteria:

- Select a location representing the distribution system. This can be an outdoor faucet (preferred) or indoor faucet.
- Remove any hose, fittings, screen, or aerator. Disinfect (optional) the sample port using a spray bottle of isopropyl alcohol or diluted bleach.
- Turn on the water (cold water only), and flush for five minutes.
- Reduce the flow to a steady stream. Fill the bottle to the neck or fill line and cap the bottle. Deliver to lab or drop-off site within 24 hours.

Sampling for nitrate:

- Sample at the pump house (best), or at the first service connection.
- Flush the water for at least ten minutes, then fill the bottle.

To view a video with step-by-step sampling instructions, scan this code with a smartphone camera, or go to: vimeo.com/786975340

Group B operating permits

The Health District implemented the Group B Operating Permit requirement on January 1, 2020 to help fund the cost of administering Group B water systems.

Some of our administrative duties include:

- **Technical assistance**: We help troubleshoot water system issues and answer common questions, such as, "My sample failed. Why? What do I do?"

- **Records and maintenance**: We maintain records for every Group B water system in the county. Use our online system to view your records at kitsaphealth.org/recordsearch.

Continued on next page >>
**Sampling compliance:** We review every incoming water sample result for compliance with our policies and regulations. We send reminder cards when your system is due for required water testing.

**Promote safe and reliable drinking water:** We report on water system compliance for property sales to provide information to the buyer on the details of the water supply for a property. We guide water systems through the necessary steps to ensure adequate water quantity and water quality to all users.

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**Water status reports**

Since 2018, Group B water status reports have been required at the time of property sale.

Last year, 118 public water status reports for Group B systems were completed. Significant problems were identified in 75% (89) of those reports.

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**AVOIDING COMMON PROBLEMS**

**No user agreement:**
Group B user agreements have been required since 2019. All water systems should review their current user agreement or create one if they don’t have one.

**No operating permit:**
Group B water systems must have a current operating permit. Ensure your water system’s contact information is up to date and that permit fees have been paid annually.

Find helpful fact sheets at kitsappublichealth.org/GroupB

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**Following up on an unsatisfactory coliform sample**

When a coliform bacteria water sample comes back bad, you will need to take steps to identify the cause.
Group B systems are required to take two repeat samples to confirm if there is a problem in the water system. Take one sample from the location of the failed sample. The other can be collected from the well or pump house.

Do not disinfect the system before collecting repeat samples, unless specifically approved by the Health District. Contact the Health District if you need help with unsatisfactory samples. We can assist you over the phone or can also arrange to meet at the system for technical support and troubleshooting assistance.

After any corrections are made to the water system, it should be shock chlorinated, and flushed. When chlorine is no longer present, take two repeat samples to verify that the work was successful. Remember to provide 24 hours advance notice to all customers before planned interruption and disinfection/flushing.

If any samples indicate fecal coliform or E. coli in the water, please contact the Health District immediately.

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**WE'RE HERE TO HELP!**

- Visit us at 345 6th St., Suite 300 in Bremerton, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday-Friday
- Call us at 360-728-2235 during business hours and ask to speak to the Drinking Water Inspector of the Day.