

# Technique for obtaining a water sample

## For all dental treatment water testing

### 1) Pre-Sampling Preparation

- Read Instructions for Use (IFU) for the product being used
- If using an outside lab, remove and freeze ice pack for safe, chilled transport (Length of freezing time dependent on product IFU)
- Select appropriate number of vials/tests based on number of operatories and specific lines in each operatory to be tested.

**Label each vial/test using a wet pen (or indelible ink marker) with the treatment room # and specific line to be tested**

- It is recommended to use one vial/test per line, per treatment room (e.g.: 3 vials: one each for AWS, ultrasonic scaler and water lines for handpieces)
- If CFU counts exceed recommended levels, a communal sample will not allow identification of line-specific contamination

#### Perform hand hygiene

- If using soap and water, follow CDC guidelines
- If using alcohol-based hand rub, follow product manufacturer IFUs
- Don disposable treatment gloves



#### Note:

**Always follow CDC Infection Control Guidelines for Dental Healthcare Settings; 2003**

Waterline sampling technique guide available for download at [Crosstex.com](http://Crosstex.com), or via request for hard copy through [Samples@crosstex.com](mailto:Samples@crosstex.com)

### 2) Treatment Room Preparation

- Remove dynamic instruments attached to the dental unit lines to be tested. Follow CDC guidelines for sterilization prior to patient use
- Wipe contact areas with aseptic prep pad allowing appropriate dwell/contact time per manufacturer IFU

#### If using a metal AWS Tip:

- Remove it
- Wipe contact areas with an aseptic prep pad allowing appropriate dwell/contact time per manufacturer IFU
- DO NOT replace with a metal tip. Draw sample directly from the port

#### If using disposable AWS tips (such as the Crosstex Sparkle™ AWS Tip):

- Wipe contact areas with an aseptic prep pad allowing appropriate dwell/contact time per manufacturer IFU
- Place a new disposable AWS tip on the AWS

#### Flush each line to be tested for 2 minutes into a sink or separate container

- If water has been stagnant in the lines, CFU count may reflect higher counts
- Compliance with ongoing flushing protocols for automated waterline treatments (e.g.: DentaPure™ Cartridges) will promote more accurate test results
- It is especially important to flush waterlines that are infrequently used, unused or extra such as low-speed handpieces, air-water syringes, and ultrasonic scaler ports. These lines create stagnant water (dead legs) and can harbor biofilm and continuously re-contaminate the water system

### 3) Continue with the water sampling technique below that applies to the types of testing you are using:

#### Lab

- Organize UNOPENED vials on clean surface
- Select vial for first test line

#### Remove the cap from the vial. Cap and vial MUST remain in your hand

- If you are unable to maintain aseptic technique in your hand, the cap may be placed open side up on a clean surface
- Only remove cap from the vial that you are sampling. To avoid contamination, test tubes should be open for the shortest amount of time possible
- DO NOT touch the outlet of the waterline or the interior of the collection vial while collecting sample

#### Begin filling vials to recommended volume (avg is 2/3 to 3/4 full per sampling of testing labs)

- Best to flow/trickle water down the side of the vial rather than squirting it directly into the bottom of the vial
- Disruption of the dehydrated neutralizer (if used) by a forceful flow of water can skew the test results

#### Ship water samples

- Place filled and labeled vials into the shipping container provided by the testing laboratory
- Apply frozen ice pack as directed
- Complete shipping label information appropriately
- Arrange for pick-up/shipment with the recommended time limits as directed by the testing laboratory

#### Repeat above steps for remaining vials

#### In-office (paddle-style)

- Organize UNOPENED tests on clean surface
- Select test for first line to be tested

#### Separate paddle from the plastic sampler case and draw water sample into the empty case following aseptic water sampling technique. Paddle must remain in your hand – take care to touch only the paddle handle

- Only remove paddle from the test being sampled. To avoid contamination, paddle should be exposed for the shortest amount of time possible
- DO NOT touch the outlet of the waterline or the interior of the sampler case while collecting sample

#### Begin filling sampler case to volume recommended per the Instruction for Use

- Best to flow/trickle water down the side of the vial rather than squirting it directly into the bottom of the vial
- Disruption of the dehydrated neutralizer (if used) by a forceful flow of water can skew the test results

#### Firmly place the paddle back into the plastic case and place the case down horizontally (filter side down) for time specified per the Instructions for Use

- Remove the paddle from the water sample and shake the excess water from the paddle. Empty the sampler case and firmly replace paddle
- Incubate the water test sampler filter side down at room temperature 68-77°F (20-25°C) for time period specified in the Instructions for Use

#### Examine the filter and perform colony counts and record results

- Compare the paddle with the instruction sheet that accompanied the water test kit to determine if action is required

#### Repeat above steps for remaining test kits

### 4) Record keeping

It is recommended to keep a log that includes the following:

- Sample date
- Clinician name
- Treatment room
- Pass/fail
- Line identification
- CFU count

Consult your state dental board for the required retention of dental unit waterline testing records.



#### Note:

**In the event of a failed CFU test (e.g.: Count >500 CFU/mL), consult your waterline treatment manufacturer or Crosstex for remediation assistance.**



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