

To all water system operators and sample collectors,

**Important Notice Regarding RTRC (Bacteriological) Monitoring at Public Water Systems Amidst COVID-19 Concerns:**

There have been some questions received regarding bacteriological monitoring and social distancing due to Covid-19 concerns. Drinking water quality, and therefore bacteriological monitoring, is considered a high priority so all active public water systems are still required to collect the required number of monthly routine samples. However, if your water system is having difficulty in the collection of drinking water samples during this time due to staff illness, absenteeism or policies on temporary social distancing practices, please notify public drinking water staff in your Regional Office (contact information can be found at <https://dnr.mo.gov/regions/docs/romap.pdf>) or Public Drinking Water Branch at 573-751-1077. For many public water systems, current approved sample siting plans likely include locations that are high traffic areas where there may be a larger number of people. During this time of concern, the Department of Natural Resources will allow systems to use alternative sampling locations (even if not listed on sample siting plan) from low traffic sites, outside spigots or sampling stations as long as sampling is representative of the distribution system. For larger water systems, this may mean reducing the number of sampling sites used, but increasing the number of days samples are collected at these fewer sites, during the monitoring period in an effort to maintain the best practical sample coverage throughout the distribution system while avoiding high traffic areas with potential for larger crowds.

**The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services -State Public Health Laboratory (Bacteriological Analysis) and Missouri Department of Natural Resources -Environmental Services Program Laboratory (Chemical Analysis) will remain open and the courier will continue to pick up samples from the designated pick up locations.** If you are unsure of the estimated pickup time for a specific courier pickup location or have a concern whether or not a specific location (i.e. hospital) is accepting bacteriological samples during this time of concern, please visit the following website for contact information: <https://dnr.mo.gov/env/wpp/docs/courier-list.pdf>. If you routinely use a hospital as your courier pick up location, you may want/need to use a different pick up location nearby. If your water system utilizes an independent laboratory, please contact them if you have questions or concerns regarding drop-off or shipping arrangements.

If changes do occur, MoDNR will notify public water system staff through email. Please share this information as needed.

Thanks,

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