

Louisiana Office of Public Health Laboratories

Test Name	<b>Heterotrophic Plate Count of Water</b>
PHL Location	Amite Laboratory, Central Laboratory
CPT Code	N/A
Synonyms	HPC, Standard Plate Count, SPC
Brief Description of Test	Heterotrophic Plate Count, also known as “standard plate count”, is a technique used for estimating the viable bacteria population in a water sample for aerobic and facultative anaerobic bacteria.
Possible Results	Colony Count/ml
Reference Range	30-300 colonies
Specimen Type	Drinking water, vending water, bottled water, dairy waters of all types, including recirculating cooling water and dairy water with glycol.
Specimen Container(s):	<p>Drinking water and dairy water samples are collected in sterile, disposable, 120ml Idexx vessels, each containing 10 mg sodium thiosulfate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only containers QC'd and supplied by the laboratory are suitable for use. DO NOT purchase privately.</li> </ul> <p>Bottled waters are submitted in the containers in which they are sold.</p>
Minimum volume accepted:	100 ml
Collection Instructions	See Specimen Container(s) above.
Storage and Transport Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store and transport sample(s) in clean ice cooler.</li> <li>• Dairy water samples must be at 0.0-4.5°C upon receipt into the laboratory.</li> <li>• Maximum time from collection until analysis is 8 hours.</li> </ul>
Causes for Rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sample &gt; 8 hours old</li> <li>• Sample frozen</li> <li>• No sample ID</li> <li>• Unacceptable collection container</li> <li>• Insufficient sample</li> <li>• Sample leakage</li> <li>• Incomplete sample form</li> </ul>

Limitations of the Procedure	Difficult to enumerate when bacterial population of sample is extreme.
Interfering Substances	Excessive chlorine, fungal growth.
References	DOLSOPDWM-02 Heterotrophic Plate Count Method for the Enumeration of Heterotrophs in Drinking Water Pour Plate Method SOP of the LDH-OPH Laboratory.
Additional Information	<p>A STARLIMS COC or completed Lab 8 form must accompany each sample.</p> <p>The following is required information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sample sequence #s or STARLIMS sample ID label</li> <li>• Project code</li> <li>• Name of supply</li> <li>• Collected by (name)</li> <li>• PWS ID (if applicable)</li> <li>• Date and time of collection</li> <li>• Type of sample</li> <li>• Disinfectant residual (if applicable)</li> </ul>
Release Date	06/12/2019
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