



RECOMMENDED PRESERVATION AND CONTAINER GUIDE

- AIR
- AQUEOUS
- BIOTA
- PRODUCT
- SOLID

At Eurofins Environment Testing, we are committed to the highest standards of sample integrity and analytical reliability. From collection through laboratory receipt, every step in the sample-handling process plays a critical role in ensuring accurate and defensible results. To support this, we respectfully ask that you observe the following best practices when preparing and submitting samples.



SAMPLE COLLECTION CONSIDERATIONS

Care must be taken during sampling to prevent loss or cross-contamination of preservation reagents. Any spillage or inadvertent transfer of preservatives between containers may alter the chemical composition of the sample and compromise the validity of results, particularly for multi-parameter testing. Many analytes are susceptible to degradation, volatilisation, or chemical transformation when exposed to air, light, or temperature fluctuations. Where applicable, appropriate field filtration, immediate sealing, and light protection should be implemented to maintain sample stability.



COOLING AND TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

To ensure the stability of sensitive analytes, all samples should be chilled to $\leq 6^{\circ}\text{C}$ immediately after collection and maintained at this temperature throughout transportation to the laboratory. Microbiological samples should never be frozen and should ideally be kept at $3\text{--}5^{\circ}\text{C}$. Upon arrival, the surface temperature of each sample is measured using a calibrated infrared thermometer, recorded on the Chain of Custody (COC) form, and logged into our Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). Please note: Temperature blanks (control bottles used to verify temperature conditions during transport) are generally not required unless explicitly requested, such as for specific microbiological analyses of drinking water.



CONTAINER SELECTION, PRESERVATION, AND HOLDING TIME COMPLIANCE

The preservation of analyte integrity requires strict adherence to specified protocols for container type, preservation method (e.g., acidification, cooling), and maximum holding times, calculated from the moment of sample collection. Eurofins provides detailed guidance on container selection, preservative requirements, sample volume, and holding time limits for each analytical parameter. For specific test groups, such as semi-volatiles, organochlorine pesticides, or asbestos, mandatory requirements may include sample sealing, light protection, or use of specialised containers to ensure analyte stability.



SUBMISSION TIMING AND LOGISTICS

To support timely and valid analysis, we recommend that samples arrive at the laboratory with at least 50% of their allowable holding time remaining. This buffer helps ensure that results remain scientifically defensible and compliant with regulatory standards. For parameters with short holding times, we kindly ask that samples not be submitted late on Fridays or immediately before weekends, unless prior arrangements have been made with the laboratory.

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SOLID SAMPLES (SOIL, SEDIMENT, BIOSOLID, SOLID WASTES)

Parameter	Container Type	Lab Analysis Portion ⁽¹⁾	Label	Preferred Preservation	Recommended Holding Time ⁽⁵⁾
Acid Sulfate Soil (ASS)					
Field pH (pH _f) & Field pH Peroxide (pH _{fOX})	P	50 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, Exclude air	24 hours #
Chromium Reducible Sulfur Suite	P	50 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, Exclude air	24 hours #
SPOCAS	P	50 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, Exclude air	24 hours #
Alcohols (Ethanol, Methanol)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, Zero headspace	14 days *
Asbestos (AS 4964-2004 & AS 5370:2024)					
Asbestos (AS4964/AS5370) – Bulk	PB / P	2 cm x 2 cm (minimum)	●	None, Separate sample required	indefinite
Asbestos (AS4964/AS5370) – Mulch	PB / P	1000 g ⁽⁶⁾	●	None, Separate sample required	indefinite
Asbestos (AS4964/AS5370) – Soil	PB / P	50 g ⁽⁶⁾	●	None, Separate sample required	indefinite
Asbestos (NEPM / WA Guidelines) – Soil	PB / P	500 g ⁽⁶⁾	●	None, Separate sample required	indefinite
Acid Volatile Sulfide (AVS) / AVS-SEM	PB	100 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, Exclude air	24 hours #
Bromide	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Bulk Density	G	500 g	●	None, Separate sample required	14 days *
Carbon, Total Organic (TOC)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Cation Exchange Capacity, Exchangeable Sodium Percentage, Exchangeable Cations	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Cations (Na, Mg, K, Ca)	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	6 months
Chloride	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Clay Content	G	100 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days

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- (2) Soil samples for cyanide analysis (in cores or jars) must be wrapped in dark plastic and kept cool at < 6°C without further treatment.
- (3) Samples may need to be extracted as soon as possible if NFDHA (Nonafluoro-3,6-dioxahexanoic acid) is an important analyte.
- (4) Contact the laboratory for specific advice and specially cleaned containers in accordance with US EPA Method 1633A
- (5) References: US EPA SW846, NEPM, NAGD, EPA VIC, ISO5667, Queensland Acid Sulfate Soils Management Advisory Committee (QASSMAC), US EPA Methods 821, 23, 533 & 1633A
- (6) Whole bottle extraction is required.
- (7) Do not fill the bottle past the shoulder, to allow room for expansion during frozen storage.
- (8) Ideally, these should be shipped within 14 days; however, no validated holding times are published for these sampling matrices. If kept in a clean plastic holder under the recommended conditions, samples have an indefinite holding time as the matrices themselves contain growth inhibitors to prevent unimpeded microbial growth.
- * Extract within 14 days and analyse within 40 days (Eurofins preference is to extract within 7 days for volatiles where sufficient time is available).
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- # Where acidity (hence liming rates) is captured in actual and potential acidity, analysis within one week should be satisfactory. Samples can be dried at 80°C to extend the holding time
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- ### Except Metals / OCP / PCB 28 days
- ^ Excepting vinyl chloride, styrene or 2-chloroethyl vinyl ether, for which the holding time is 7 days with the same preservation
- α If whole fish, field-filleted fish, or other seafood samples are frozen within 48 hours of the time of collection (i.e., either in the field or as soon as the samples are received at the laboratory or other storage facility), the holding time for tissue samples does not begin at the time of collection, but when further processing for analysis begins (e.g., lab-filleting, grinding, or removal of specific tissues for analysis).

CONTAINERS

- PP Plastic (polypropylene, No Teflon liner)
- G Glass (Teflon-lined lid)
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- PB Zip-Lock Plastic Bag
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Coal Tar (Qualitative)	G	150 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	N/A
Coal Tart (Quantitative)	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	N/A
Conductivity (EC)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	7 days
Cyanide ⁽²⁾	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days
Dioxins & Furans / Dioxin-like PCBs	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	12 months
Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) & Nitrilotriacetic acid (NTA)	G	100 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	7 days
Explosives	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Extractable Organofluorine (EOF)	PP / HDPE	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Florfenicol (incl. Florfenicol Amine)	HDPE	10 g	●	Freeze ≤-10°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner ⁽⁷⁾	14 days
Fluoride	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Foreign Materials (RMS NSW T276)	PB	6 kg ##	○	None, Separate sample required	14 days
Grain Size	G	250 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Hexavalent Chromium (Cr ⁶⁺)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Iodide	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Loss on Ignition	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	7 days
Metals / Metalloids					
Metals (Mercury)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Metals (Other)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	6 months

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Microbiological Analysis					
Micro – E. Coli / Coliforms	PET/S	30 g	●	Sterile, Cool ≤6°C	48 hours
Micro – Salmonella	PET/S	50-250 g	●	Sterile, Cool ≤6°C	48 hours
Micro – Other Microbiological Test	PET/S	30 g	●	Sterile, Cool ≤6°C	48 hours
Spore-Traps	Cassette	1	N/A	<40°C	14 days ⁸
Tape-Lifts	Tape-Lift	2 x 2 cm	N/A	In a sealed slide mailer	14 days ⁸
Swabs	Swab	1	●	Sterile, Cool 2 - 5°C	48 hours
Moisture Content	G	25 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days
Microplastics	G	100 g	●	Metal Lids	N/A ⁽⁸⁾
Net Acid Generation (NAG) & Net Acid Production Potential (NAPP)	PB / P	50 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, Exclude air	7 days
Nitrogen					
Nitrogen – Ammonia	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Nitrogen – Nitrite	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Nitrogen – NOx	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Nitrogen – TKN	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Nitrogen – Total N	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Organophosphorus Pesticides (OPP)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *

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Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)	HDPE	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner	90 days
Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)	HDPE	10 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner ⁽⁷⁾	90 days ⁽³⁾
pH	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	7 days **
Phenolics (Total)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Phenoxy Acid Herbicides	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Phosphorous (Total)	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDE)	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	12 months
Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) Aroclors	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (SVOC)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Organochlorine Pesticides (OCP)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Phenols – Speciated	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Phthalate Esters	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Semi-Volatile Chlorinated Hydrocarbons	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds – Other	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	14 days *
Sodium Adsorption Ratio (SAR)	G	50 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	5 days
Sulfate	G	10 g	●	Cool ≤6°C	28 days
Total Recoverable Hydrocarbons (TRH)	G	20 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *

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Total Recoverable Hydrocarbons (TRH) with Silica Gel Clean-up	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *
Tributyltin (TBT)	G	50 g		Cool ≤6°C	14 days
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days * ^
BTEXN	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *
Halogenated Volatile Organics (HALVOL)	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days * ^
Monocyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *
Trihalomethanes (THM)	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) – Other	G	20 g		Cool ≤6°C, Zero Headspace	14 days *
TRH C6-C10 / BTEX for Trip Spikes / Blanks – Prepared in the Lab	G	Full jar		Freeze ≤-10°C ⁽⁷⁾	14 days ***

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Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)					
Fish (Fillets or Whole)	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	25 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner ⁽⁷⁾	90 days ^(3, a)
Crustacea (Whole, White flesh or hepatopancreas)	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	25 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner ⁽⁷⁾	90 days ^(3, a)
Shellfish (Whole or Edible flesh)	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	25 g	●	Freeze ≤-20°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner ⁽⁷⁾	90 days ^(3, a)
Milk [Bovine, Ovine, Caprine]	PP	500 mL	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Cheese [Bovine, Ovine, Caprine]	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	250 g	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Eggs [Chicken] (White, Yolk or Whole)	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	6 each	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Vegetables [Lettuce, Cabbage]	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	250 g	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Fruit [Avocado, Tomato, Olive, Mango]	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	250 g	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Crops [Sorghum, Wheat, Corn, Canola]	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	250 g	●	Cool ≤6°C (DO NOT FREEZE), No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Microplastics					
Biota	G	100 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, Metal Lid	Not defined ⁽⁸⁾

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- ^ Excepting vinyl chloride, styrene or 2-chloroethyl vinyl ether, for which the holding time is 7 days with the same preservation
- a If whole fish, field-filleted fish, or other seafood samples are frozen within 48 hours of the time of collection (i.e., either in the field or as soon as the samples are received at the laboratory or other storage facility), the holding time for tissue samples does not begin at the time of collection, but when further processing for analysis begins (e.g., lab-filleting, grinding, or removal of specific tissues for analysis).

CONTAINERS

- PP Plastic (polypropylene, No Teflon liner)
- G Glass (Teflon-lined lid)
- T Tube
- C Canister
- PB Zip-Lock Plastic Bag
- PET/S Plastic Sterile
- FH Filter holder with cowl (Mixed Cellulose Ester Filter)

AIR SAMPLES

Parameter	Container Type	Lab Analysis Portion ⁽¹⁾	Label	Eurofins Preferred Preservation	Recommended Holding Time ⁽⁵⁾
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Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and/or CRC Care TR23

Summa Canister	T	1 L or 6 L		Ambient Temperature	30 days
Low Uptake Waterloo Membrane Sampler (LU-WMS™)	T	1		Cool ≤6°C	30 /28 days
US EPA Method 325B Passive Sampler	T	1		Cool ≤6°C	30 days
Radiello® Passive Sampler RAD130	T	1		Cool ≤6°C	30 /28 days
Radiello® Passive Sampler RAD145	T	1		Cool ≤6°C	30 days

Dioxins & Furans / Dioxin-like PCBs

XAD-2 Resin	T	1		Cool ≤6°C	30 days
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Asbestos	FH	1		Ambient Temperature	Not defined ⁽⁶⁾
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PRODUCT SAMPLES

Parameter	Container Type	Lab Analysis Portion ⁽²⁾	Label	Eurofins Preferred Preservation	Recommended Holding Time ⁽⁵⁾
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Total Fluorine (TF)

Cosmetics	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	25 g	●	Cool ≤6°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Food Packaging	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	2 cm x 2 cm	●	Cool ≤6°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days
Textiles	PP / PB ⁽⁴⁾	2 cm x 2 cm	●	Cool ≤6°C, No Teflon (PTFE) liner	28 days

NOTES

- (1) The specified sample volume is based on the amount sufficient for a single test, not the capacity of the sample containers provided by Eurofins. We recommend that you provide additional samples on the 1st, 11th, 21st, 31st, etc., for the performance of Duplicates/Matrix Spikes. (Note, however, that Matrix Spike determinations are not appropriate for all tests.
- (2) Soil samples for cyanide analysis (in cores or jars) must be wrapped in dark plastic and kept cool at < 6°C without further treatment.
- (3) Samples may need to be extracted as soon as possible if NFDHA (Nonafluoro-3,6-dioxahexanoic acid) is an important analyte.
- (4) Contact the laboratory for specific advice and specially cleaned containers in accordance with US EPA Method 1633A
- (5) References: US EPA SW846, NEPM, NAGD, EPA VIC, ISO5667, Queensland Acid Sulfate Soils Management Advisory Committee (QASSMAC), US EPA Methods 821, 23, 533 & 1633A
- (6) Whole bottle extraction is required.
- (7) Do not fill the bottle past the shoulder, to allow room for expansion during frozen storage.
- (8) Ideally, these should be shipped within 14 days; however, no validated holding times are published for these sampling matrices. If kept in a clean plastic holder under the recommended conditions, samples have an indefinite holding time as the matrices themselves contain growth inhibitors to prevent unimpeded microbial growth.
- * Extract within 14 days and analyse within 40 days (Eurofins preference is to extract within 7 days for volatiles where sufficient time is available).
- ** Eurofins preference is to analyse as soon as possible
- *** Shelf life in matrix (sand) is low if not frozen; therefore, freeze if storing or return to lab with samples immediately
- # Where acidity (hence liming rates) is captured in actual and potential acidity, analysis within one week should be satisfactory. Samples can be dried at 80°C to extend the holding time
- ## A minimum of 6 kg of sample is required on an air-dried basis. If the sample is not air-dried, a larger quantity will be required to ensure sufficient material is available for analysis.
- ### Except Metals / OCP / PCB 28 days
- ^ Excepting vinyl chloride, styrene or 2-chloroethyl vinyl ether, for which the holding time is 7 days with the same preservation
- α If whole fish, field-filleted fish, or other seafood samples are frozen within 48 hours of the time of collection (i.e., either in the field or as soon as the samples are received at the laboratory or other storage facility), the holding time for tissue samples does not begin at the time of collection, but when further processing for analysis begins (e.g., lab-filleting, grinding, or removal of specific tissues for analysis).

CONTAINERS

PP	Plastic (polypropylene, No Teflon liner)
G	Glass (Teflon-lined lid)
T	Tube
C	Canister
PB	Zip-Lock Plastic Bag
PET/S	Plastic Sterile
FH	Filter holder with cowl (Mixed Cellulose Ester Filter)



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