

**Overview of the State Public Health Lab  
November 14, 2014  
Questions and Answers**

Presenters: Leon Luebbering, Alan Schaffer  
Panelist: Aaron Winslow, Mark Jenkerson

Below you will find the summary of the questions and answers (Q & A) from the live Webinar Series. For clarity and brevity, the live session of Q & A was trimmed from the original recording. Please keep in mind that this document is meant as a job aide. It does not create or confer any right for or on any person and does not operate to bind federal, state, or local food safety regulatory agencies. If you have questions concerning interpretation or application of various portions, please reach out to your District Supervisor for assistance. A current District Map is posted at the top of the page where you found the recording and Q & A document.

Q: Does the State Public Health Lab distribute sampling kits? Or do the LPHAs need to purchase their own sampling kits?

- SPHL distributes food sampling kits with approval from the Program/Leon Luebbering.
- Because of cost and workflow for a large number of samples, it is not routine for SPHL to accept samples without prior approval.
- Reach out to district Epidemiologists or the Retail/Manufactured Food Program.

Q: We were informed that LPHA EPHS staff are not allowed to collect food samples - we were told it must be BEHS trained staff person only, once state determines it is allowed/necessary. Is it still accurate that only BEHS staff can do this function?

- Mark (BEHS) – Answer varies a bit depending on the situation.
- This is mostly true for aseptic sample collections because it's a skill that our staff have been trained on and they practice effective sampling.
- Not all our staff in BEHS are trained to sample aseptically, we have a team in the Manufactured Food Program that collects aseptic samples.
- Prepackaged foods do not require aseptic sampling.

Q: With the governor declaring a state emergency due to flooding and waiving the testing fee for private wells, how is this expected to be handled? Do they have to call the state number to get a free test or can they walk-in/call the local LPHAs to come

collect the test? If the local LPHAs can collect this test, how would we identify this on the form? Would we mark the "governmental no charge" box?

- On the Bacteriology Private Water Test Request form: check the "other" with FLOOD/Emergency Order as the explanation.
- The \$10 fee will be waived on any sample sent in due to the emergency declaration.
- This will be applied to everyone submitting samples within Missouri.

Q: How long is that (waived fee) in effect?

- Fees will be waived while the Emergency Declaration is active and for about a month after the end of the Declaration.
- Wells with a positive result on the Bacteriology test take time for remediation so the fees will be waived for a time after the Emergency Declaration is over.
- Check website to see if EO is still in effect.

Q: Are drinking water samples prohibited on Fridays?

- The SPHL will do samples submitted on Friday.
- Staff have thousands of sample boxes to go through. Because of logistics, samples are more likely to be done sooner when submitted Monday – Thursday.

Q: Does the lab do asbestos samples from residential housing? (e.g. popcorn ceiling; floor tiles siding)

- The SPHL does not work on asbestos samples.

Q: Can you give a brief update about the SPHL undergoing an expansion?

- A new lab is currently being constructed that will connect to our lab through a walkway connector.
- HWP, DNR, Conservation, and Agriculture will be using this lab for testing.
- Three testing units will be moving some of their testing into the new lab - Immunology, Newborn screening, and Molecular testing.
- Our cannabis and metal testing will be moved into this lab as well.
- The new lab should be finished approximately November 2026 and should not affect any of our current testing. There may be some lag around that November, but testing will stay up and running.

Links and Phone numbers shared during presentation:

[https://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/FOODBORNE\\_DISEASE\\_HANDBOOK.pdf](https://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/FOODBORNE_DISEASE_HANDBOOK.pdf)

Health.Mo.Gov/lab

<https://health.mo.gov/lab/specimentestforms.php#testrequestforms>

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention: 573-751-6102 or 866-628-9891

Lead Poisoning | Lead Poisoning | Health & Senior Services  
573-751-4830 for lead collection kits (Lab Mail Room)

MSPHL Informatics Unit  
[msphlinformatics@health.mo.gov](mailto:msphlinformatics@health.mo.gov)  
573-522-9560

<http://health.mo.gov/lab/bloodleadanalysis.php>

<http://health.mo.gov/lab/environmentalleadanalysis.php>

<http://health.mo.gov/lab/metalsinwater.php>