

**APPENDIX B**

**FECAL COLIFORM SAMPLING  
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY  
CONTROL PROGRAM, 2009**



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) programs are a set of protocols that are adopted to ensure that the results of any study are valid, internally consistent and comparable with other similar projects. These protocols are set out in writing and are based on the most current and relevant research on the related topics. This appendix discusses the following protocols:

- field sampling methods
- sample handling procedures
- analytical procedures
- field and laboratory replication (quality control)
- data assessment

The data collected for the QA program are used to ensure consistency in field handling and analytical methods. If the data exceed a specified precision criterion then the lab is notified of a potential problem in the procedure and steps are taken to resolve the issue. The QA protocols presented in this appendix are based on two CRD memorandums (Drinnan, 1995 and Hutcheson, 1995).

## **2.0 METHODS FOR FECAL COLIFORM SAMPLING**

All water samples were collected in 500 mL wide-mouth disposable bottles containing 1.5 mL of sodium thiosulphate (a sample preservative). Bottles were supplied by Cantest Ltd in Victoria, BC. Labelled samples were stored in an insulated cooler with ice packs for protection from prolonged exposure to UV light and to hinder biological growth. The samples were delivered the same day to the laboratory. Samples were analyzed for fecal coliform bacteria following the procedures in Standard Methods (APHA, 1998) and reported as colony forming units/100 mL (CFU/100 mL). However, to assist the reader, the more commonly used reporting of fecal coliform per 100 millilitres (FC/100 mL) is used in this survey.

Care was taken to ensure that the weather on sampling days were representative of the sampling season (wet or dry). Conditions such as "first flush", major storms or any other effect that might tend to prejudice the results were avoided.

### **2.1 Stormwater Discharge Sampling**

Where possible, stormwater discharge samples were collected from the point of discharge. Where this was not possible, the watercourse was followed upstream to the nearest point where the sample could be taken. A five metre inflatable boat was used to visit discharges located in areas difficult to access from the shore.

### **2.2 Nearshore Marine Surface Water Sampling**

Nearshore marine surface water samples were collected by boat at 28 sites in Sooke Inlet, Harbour and Basin. All sites were sampled in 2009, where tides permitted, once during wet and once during dry weather conditions. The samples were collected by rapidly submerging an inverted 500 mL sample bottle to a depth of approximately 200 mm and then turning it upright and allowing the bottle to fill.

## 2.3 Quality Assurance

### 2.3.1 Stormwater Sample Replicates (Field Splits)

Ten per cent of the samples collected were replicated and the field replicate samples identified as "field splits". A single sample was collected in a 500 mL sample bottle and inverted 30 times to ensure that the sample was well-mixed. The sample was then split evenly into two separate sample bottles. The two bottles were then labelled and sent to Cantest Ltd. for analysis. These samples were submitted to the laboratory as blind samples (not identified as field splits).

### 2.3.2 Nearshore Surface Water Sampling Replication

Approximately 10% of the surface water samples collected in Sooke Inlet, Harbour and Basin were replicated. Two separate grab samples were collected in 500 mL sample bottles at the same location, one immediately after the other.

### 2.3.3 Quality Control Assessment

In 2009, 18 field splits were collected from six stormwater discharges in the core area of the CRD and analyzed for fecal coliform levels. These field splits were used to establish the 2009 precision criteria (Section 2.3.4) for the CRD core area, District of Sooke and Juan de Fuca Electoral Area sampling programs. The discharges were chosen based on previous (in the core) high, moderate or low levels of fecal coliform concentrations (two discharges sampled for each category) to represent the varying fecal coliform counts that would be analyzed. Three individual 500 mL grab samples were collected at each of the six stations and split into two replicate sample bottles. Three blank samples of potable water were also collected in 500 mL sample bottles as part of the assessment. All samples were submitted with unique identifying numbers to Cantest Ltd.

### 2.3.4 Calculation of Quality Assurance Results

Laboratory precision for fecal coliform analysis (e.g., a measure of consistency by the lab) is determined by analyzing 18 pairs of field samples (field splits). The following, taken from Standard Methods, 18th edition (APHA, 1998), explains the procedure for calculating the precision criteria and determining whether the log ranges for the field splits are "acceptable" or "unacceptable":

- The data are arranged in pairs ( $D_1$  and  $D_2$ ). The log of each field measurement is determined ( $L_1$ ,  $L_2$ ) and the difference (range) in the log value between each pair of field splits is calculated:  $R = (L_2 - L_1)$ . An average range (Mean-R) is then determined for all of the pairs.
- The precision criterion is calculated by multiplying the Mean-R by 3.27 and is rounded to one decimal place.
- The log range (R) is calculated for each of the field splits and compared to the precision criterion, to determine whether the sample is acceptable or not, according to the following criteria:

Acceptable (A) - If the calculation is less than the precision criterion, then the field data are within normal variability.

Unacceptable (U) - If the calculation is greater than the precision criterion, then the field data are outside of the normal variability. All data collected after the last "acceptable" set of data should be discarded and no further analysis should be done until the source of the problem is identified by the lab.

It is important not to put too severe an interpretation on the results from the QA calculation, especially when they are close to the "unacceptable" guideline. Each result represents a value within a 95% confidence interval, which gets proportionately larger as the actual result gets smaller. Therefore, one can expect, through randomness, 5% of the samples to be outside of the precision criterion. Also, any fecal coliform count under 200 FC/100 mL is considered too small an amount to accurately calculate or

compare to a precision criterion (APHA, 1998). It is also important to note that discharges with fecal coliform counts lower than 200 FC/100 mL receive a low public health concern rating.

The results should be rounded to one decimal place and compared to the precision criterion (e.g., 0.3). If the calculated value from the duplicate results still exceeds the criterion (e.g., 0.35 or greater) then an informal investigation of the laboratory should be initiated. If only a few duplicates are unacceptable (e.g., one out of every 20 pairs of duplicates) the lab is probably meeting the guideline.

The overall process is intended to act as an "alarm", alerting the study group to potential problems with the sampling and analytical procedures. As part of the review, the following elements are considered:

- the number of pairs exceeding the criterion
- the actual fecal coliform value of the pairs of data
- field notes on the "field split" procedure
- comments from the laboratory

### **3.0 RESULTS**

#### **3.1 Quality Assurance Results**

For the 2009 QA programs, 18 pairs of stormwater samples were collected in January from six discharges having high, moderate or low levels of fecal coliform bacteria. The samples were sent to the lab for analysis of the fecal coliform concentration and the data used to calculate the precision criteria.

##### **3.1.1 Blanks**

In 2009, three blank samples (Greater Victoria tap water) were submitted to Cantest Ltd. along with the field samples. All blanks were reported as having <10 FC/100 mL. Therefore, the results meet the QA requirements.

##### **3.1.2 Precision Criteria**

###### **2009 PRECISION CRITERIA**

Table 1 shows the lab results of the 18 pairs of samples used to determine the precision criteria for 2009 stormwater monitoring program. The calculated precision criterion for this laboratory, using these 18 sets of duplicates, was 0.16072. For comparison with subsequent field replicates this result was rounded to 0.2.

**Table 1 Laboratory Quality Assurance Exercise Results for 2009**

CRD Data, Batch Samples: 18 pairs,						
Disch. No.	Pair No.	1 <sup>st</sup> Duplicate D1	2 <sup>nd</sup> Duplicate D2	Log D1 L1	Log D2 L2	Range of Logs (Rlog) (Log L1 - Log L2)
211	1	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
	2	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
	3	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
229	4	780	680	2.89209	2.83251	0.05959
	5	640	580	2.80618	2.76343	0.04275
	6	600	750	2.77815	2.87506	0.09691
518	7	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
	8	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
	9	0	0	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
641	13	2900	3700	3.46240	3.56820	0.10580
	14	3200	3300	3.50515	3.51851	0.01336
	15	3600	3000	3.55630	3.47712	0.07918
805	16	48000	39000	4.68124	4.59106	0.09018
	17	28000	40000	4.44716	4.60206	0.15490
	18	23000	32000	4.36173	4.50515	0.14342
813	19	67000	63000	4.82607	4.79934	0.02673
	20	50000	51000	4.69897	4.70757	0.00860
	21	51000	59000	4.70757	4.77085	0.06328
Mean - Rlog (Sum Rlog/18)						0.04915
Precision Criterion (3.27 x Mean - Rlog)						<b>0.16072</b>

### 3.1.3 Field Splits

#### WET WEATHER SAMPLING, 2009

Table 2 presents the results for the four field splits collected from the District of Sooke during the wet period of the 2009 stormwater sampling programs. Data were compared to the precision criteria of 0.2, as described in Section 3.1.2. Two of the field splits collected exceeded the precision criterion; however, they were all below 200 FC/100 mL. Any fecal coliform count under 200 is considered too small an amount to calculate a precision criterion (APHA, 1992). Therefore, the results meet the QA requirements.

#### DRY WEATHER SAMPLING, 2009

Table 3 presents the results for the three field split collected from the District of Sooke during the dry period of the 2009 stormwater sampling programs. Data were compared to the precision criteria of 0.2, as described in Section 3.1.2. One of the field splits collected exceeded the precision criterion; however it was below 200 FC/100 mL. Any fecal coliform count under 200 is considered too small an amount to calculate a precision criterion (APHA, 1992). Therefore, the results meet the QA requirements.

**Table 2 Laboratory Quality Assurance Results, Wet Period 2009**

Date	Discharge Number	Fecal Coliform Counts for Field Splits	Log	Log Range	A/U
17-Feb	2027	0	0	0	A
		0	0		
16-Mar	2043-1B	10	1.0000000	0.3010300	U <sup>2</sup>
		20	1.3010300		
16-Feb	2069	40	1.6020600	0.2521825	U <sup>2</sup>
		90	1.9542425		
16-Feb	2074	0	0	0	A
		0	0		

- 1 It is possible, due to randomness, that 5% of the samples may exceed the precision criteria.
- 2 Any fecal coliform count under 200 is considered too small an amount to calculate a precision criterion (APHA, 1992). However, any discharge lower than 200 FC/100 mL receives a lower rating for public health concern.

**Table 3 Laboratory Quality Assurance Results, Dry Period 2009**

Date	Discharge Number	Fecal Coliform Counts for Field Splits	Log	Log Range	A/U
21-Jul	2030	20	1.3010300	0.5440680	U <sup>2</sup>
		70	1.8450980		
21-Jul	2046	5200	3.7160033	0.0243593	A
		5500	3.7403627		
07-Aug	2071	200	2.3010300	0	A
		200	2.3010300		

- 1 It is possible, due to randomness, that 5% of the samples may exceed the precision criteria.
- 2 Any fecal coliform count under 200 is considered too small an amount to calculate a precision criterion (APHA, 1992). However, any discharge lower than 200 FC/100 mL receives a lower rating for public health concern.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

All requirements for the District of Sooke program QA/QC program were carried out in 2009. All of the 2009 QA/QC results were acceptable for use to rate stormwater discharges for public health concern.

#### 5.0 REFERENCES

APHA, 1998. American Public Health Association, American Water Works Association, Water Pollution Control Federation, 20th Edition. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater.

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