

The Florida Department of Health's (DOH) Environmental Laboratory in West Palm Beach operates to support the Division of Environmental Public Health in Palm Beach County and provides microbiological testing services to the public. The laboratory began operations in April of 2022.

The laboratory monitors water by microbiological analyses to assess water potability and contamination that can pose a health hazard. Bacteriological testing includes analyses for total coliform and *E.coli* in drinking water and enterococci in non-potable water.



The FDOH Environmental Laboratory West Palm Beach is certified by the Florida Department of Health's Bureau of Public Health Laboratories and compliant with NELAC Institute (TNI) standards (lab ID: 8473, DOH ID: E261163).



FDOH Environmental Laboratory West Palm Beach

**Florida Department of Health
in Palm Beach County**
Division of Environmental Public Health

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY WEST PALM BEACH



**Florida
HEALTH**

PalmBeach.FloridaHealth.gov

The Florida Department of Health's Environmental Laboratory in West Palm Beach is certified to perform microbiological testing on water. Our trained staff analyze water samples for bacteriological contamination in both drinking water and coastal waters.

The Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County (DOH-Palm Beach) routinely monitors beach water for enterococci bacteria, which is an indicator of fecal pollution. If these bacteria are present in high concentrations in coastal water, and are ingested while swimming or enter the skin through a cut or sore, they may cause disease, infections and rashes.

DOH-Palm Beach also monitors drinking water for fecal contamination by analyzing for total coliform and *E.coli* bacteria.

Although groundwater is generally free of contaminants, contamination from microbes or chemicals can occur which may cause people to become ill. The severity of illness can vary, but individuals with a weakened immune system, such as the very young or the elderly, are at a greater risk for severe health complications.

DOH recommends private well owners be aware of potential health risks from contaminated wells and have their water tested at least once a year. For an additional fee, DOH-Palm Beach staff are available to collect samples.

SERVICES AND PRICING

Fees for laboratory services as established in Chapter 11, Article II, Section 11-24 of the Palm Beach County Code.

Water Sample Collection PER SITE	
Coastal Water	\$100
Potable/Non-Potable Water	\$75

Water Sample Analysis PER SAMPLE	
Coastal Water <i>Enterococci</i>	\$50
Potable Water (drinking) Total coliform and <i>E.coli</i>	
24-Hour Test	\$30
18-Hour Test	\$35

HOURS OF OPERATION

Sample drop off and request for collection:

**Monday through Thursday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

RESULTS

Results for tests are available in as little as 18 to 24 hours, depending on the test ordered.

- Total coliform and *E.coli* are reported as either present or absent
- *Enterococci* is reported as the most probable number (MPN)

The client is notified immediately of results present for total coliform and *E.coli*. Along with the results, instructions for disinfecting a plumbing system and/or well will be provided.

If coastal water results are shown to be greater than the beach action value (BAV) of 70 enterococci per 100 milliliters of sample water, the client will be notified immediately and DOH-Palm Beach staff will provide health advisory information to the public.