

Selecting an Accredited Environmental Laboratory

Not all laboratories can serve every need. Just because they can test for something doesn't mean their data is acceptable.

Several state rules require the use of a state-accredited laboratory. This accreditation assures that minimum requirements for quality are being met and provides a greater level of confidence in the results.

These steps will help you obtain what you need when selecting a laboratory.

- For convenience, or for samples with short holding times, you may want to choose a laboratory located nearby. Call the DEQ Laboratory Accreditation Program to find a commercial laboratory in your area.
- Ask the laboratory for their current scope of accreditation so you can verify if they are accredited for the specific parameters you need.
- Be sure to understand the scope for the specific matrix that you need tested: drinking water, non-potable water (wastewater), or solids/chemical materials such as sludge, soil and hazardous waste.
- If you do not know the specific parameters you need, ask the laboratory.
- Check for the expiration date of the scope. Laboratory Accreditation Program scopes expire August 31 of each year.
- An accredited laboratory will have the following documents you can ask to review if you have concerns:
 - a quality assurance plan;
 - results for proficiency testing samples; and
 - a copy of the most recent laboratory assessment by their primary accreditation body.

If results for any sample are outside your expectation, ask for specifics. You can have the laboratory send you a data packet related to the results. For assistance with interpreting the packet, or other questions regarding laboratory accreditation, please contact our Laboratory Accreditation Program at **404.702.1000**, option 4 or **LabAccreditation@deq.ok.gov**.

