

Title: Chain of Custody for Legal Samples		Copy No: ##
SOP No.: 3.12/3.5/S	Effective Date: December 8, 2009	Location: ###

QSM Approval: _____

Chain of Custody for Legal Samples

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe the special procedures that must be employed by all Analysis and Air Quality Section staff when handling a “legal sample”.

2. Procedure

2.1 General Requirements

- 2.1.1 All analysts assigned to legal samples must be designated under Section 217 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act 99 or have demonstrated proficiency in carrying out the method through the use of control samples and/or method performance tests.
- 2.1.2 Prior to analysis, a Chain of Custody form, as well as the legal sample logbook should be available to the analyst.
- 2.1.3 Secure storage areas must be available to store legal samples.
- 2.1.4 Where a camera is available, photos should be taken of the samples received and stored on a CD. The photos should include the unopened package as well as the individual samples and should provide evidence of sample integrity (i.e., custody seals, sample IDs, labels etc.).
- 2.1.5 All data, photos, reports and logbooks pertaining to legal analyses must be kept in secure areas.

2.2 Providing Field Supplies for Legal Samples

- 2.2.1 When requested by the client, the Analysis and Air Quality Section can provide field supplies for legal samples.
- 2.2.2 Prior to proofing any field supplies, a LIMS code should be assigned and a chain of custody form initiated. Sample LIMS code and field supplies proofed must be recorded in the legal sample logbook.
- 2.2.3 All field supplies must be properly sealed with custody seals (available in the laboratory) on which the date the supplies were proofed, the assigned LIMS code for the proofing analysis and the signature of the technician who took the proof sample prior to shipment are recorded. The analyst must ensure that all proofed supplies are securely sealed for transport and that the client is made aware of the shipment date.

Title: Chain of Custody for Legal Samples		Copy No: ##
SOP No.: 3.12/3.5/S	Effective Date: December 8, 2009	Location: ###

2.3 Prior to Receipt of Legal Samples

- 2.3.1 When possible the Section Head or Supervisor is contacted by the client prior to receiving legal samples. The client is informed as to whom the sample should be sent to. Also the client is asked to provide a chain of custody form with the sample or use AAQS's chain of custody form.
- 2.3.2 The shipping and receiving clerk is notified of the upcoming arrival of legal sample(s) by the appropriate Supervisor or Section head and must in turn notify the Section Head or Supervisor when the shipment arrives.
- 2.3.3 When available, shipping invoices are archived by the laboratory responsible for the samples. If no paperwork (ie. invoices, packing slips) is available, then the lab is to download the waybill from the courier which will indicate the time the samples were received at Shipping and Receiving. The time that the samples are received by the lab should be clearly documented in the lab notebook.

2.4 Processing Legal Sample

- 2.4.1 Designated staff receiving legal samples must ensure all seals are intact, or noted otherwise, starting with the outside packaging and continuing to the actual sample packaging. Any special handling instructions should be followed (e.g., taking the temperature of pulp mill effluent samples upon arrival and recording the temperature in the legal logbook). The client is immediately notified by the Supervisor or Section Head if sample integrity appears compromised in any way. The sample is secured until the client gives the approval to process.
- 2.4.2 The chain of custody form must be completed and include: a unique identifier to the sample, the appearance of the package and contents (including the condition of the seals and number and condition of containers) the appearance of the sample, and signature of the analyst who received the package. The signatures of all analysts involved in processing the sample should be present on the chain of custody form if more than one person is going to handle the sample.
- 2.4.3 The sample is kept in the presence of the analyst or locked in a secure location at all times. Only the analyst and/or Supervisor and/or Section Head involved in processing the sample has access to the key. At all times, the storage conditions of the sample must be appropriate to the type of sample to ensure that sample integrity is preserved.
- 2.4.4 All personnel handling the sample must sign over the chain of custody form with the time and date that the sample passes from one analyst to another.
- 2.4.5 The sample should be processed as per validated analytical methodology, and include appropriate quality control measures. All technical

Title: Chain of Custody for Legal Samples		Copy No: ##
SOP No.: 3.12/3.5/S	Effective Date: December 8, 2009	Location: ###

information associated with the sample must be recorded in the laboratory legal sample logbook.

2.4.6 Once the sample has been analysed and the results have been reported, samples are stored under lock and key. All associated documentation is retained for a minimum of three years.

2.5 Certificate of Analyst

2.5.1 If requested by the client, the analyst must complete a “Certificate of Analyst” form (See attached form 3.12//*.*/S/F). The information contained in the certificate of analyst should include:

- 1) the date the sample was received;
- 2) the inspection number from the packaging;
- 3) the registration number or customer code;
- 4) laboratory sample number;
- 5) custody seals
- 6) analyst name and
- 7) date of issuance.

2.6 Results

The results (and all associated QC data, if requested) may be faxed to the client. Also at the client’s request, a hard copy is sent by registered mail or by courier. A covering letter is included indicating the person to contact if more information is required. A copy of the report is kept on file by the Section Head.

3. Revisions

September 1997: Author: Alka Steenkamer. New Document.

July 1999: Minor wording changes

Author of document changed (Gary Poole)

Throughout document, “certificate of analysis” changed to "certificate of analyst.”

Added a form

October 2001: New header added

Section 2.1.1 changed reference to CEPA section

Changed form #

2.5.1 changed form reference

November 2003: Minor changes to wording

New Sections (2.1.4 and 2.1.5)

Section 2.4.3 (access to key includes Supervisor and Section Head)

November 2005: Minor changes to wording

October 2009: Changed all AAQD references to AAQS

THIS DOCUMENT MUST NOT BE PHOTOCOPIED

Any hard copies of this document missing any pages, or without a copy number and the initials of the Quality Systems Manager is uncontrolled. Any electronic copy of this document anywhere but on SharePoint is uncontrolled.

DO NOT USE THIS DOCUMENT FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES IF IT IS AN UNCONTROLLED COPY

Title: Chain of Custody for Legal Samples		Copy No: ##
SOP No.: 3.12/3.5/S	Effective Date: December 8, 2009	Location: ###

December 2009: Added Section 2.3.3
 May 2011: Lead Reviewers: Michael Lister and Gary Poole
 June 2013: Lead Reviewers: Jennifer Verner
 Reviewed with no changes

Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Verner **Date:**
Title: Technologist, Organic Laboratory

Approved By: May Siu **Date:**
Title: Supervisor, Organic Laboratory

UNCONTROLLED IF PRINTED