

Standard Operating Procedure 630

Sample Shipping – Peer or Local Carrier

Purpose

Proper packaging methods and shipment of samples by Peer or a local carrier will:

- ◆ Minimize the potential for sample breakage, leakage, or cross contamination.
- ◆ Provide a clear record of sample custody from collection to analysis.

Safety Equipment

Wear clean nitrile gloves when handling coolers or sample containers to reduce the incidence of skin contact with contaminants.

Required Equipment

- Coolers or similar shipping containers
- Ice or cold packs
- Temperature blank bottle
- Sample containers with media
- Sealable plastic bags
- Protective wrapping and packaging materials
- Paper towels
- Chain of custody forms

Procedure

1. Verify that each sample container has been labeled with unique sample identification. The sample identification should also correspond to the chain of custody record that will accompany the sample to the laboratory (see SOP 620 Chain of Custody Procedures).
2. Ensure that a temperature blank bottle is in each cooler and included on the chain of custody form.

3. Any dirt on the outside of sample containers should be wiped clean with a paper towel.
4. Optionally, place sample containers inside of sealable plastic bags to reduce the potential for cross contamination or breakage during sample transport. If necessary, protective material should be placed between sample containers to prevent breakage during transport.
5. Reusable cold packs or ice placed in sealable plastic bags should be distributed over the top of the samples. Frozen cold packs or ice must remain in the cooler until the samples reach the laboratory.
6. Place the chain of custody record on top of or inside the cooler.
7. The filled cooler and completed chain of custody form must be delivered to the laboratory before the close of the next business day after sample collection (never longer than 72 hours). One of the following methods will be used:
 - a. The sampling technician will personally deliver the samples to the laboratory.
 - b. The sampling technician will bring the samples to the Peer office for later pickup by laboratory representative or bonded courier. The technician may either contact the laboratory directly to arrange pickup or transfer custody of the samples to the Peer receptionist. If custody is transferred to the receptionist, the receptionist will contact the laboratory and maintain responsibility for the sample custody, sample condition, and timely pickup.