

# POLICY ON ACCEPTABLE CERTIFICATION OF LABORATORIES



Approval Date: August 1, 2006 Effective Date: August 1, 2006

Approved By: Hon. Mark Parent, Minister

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| <b>Version Control:</b> | Replaces "Policy for the Accreditation of Laboratories"<br>(November 30, 2000) |
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## I. POLICY STATEMENT

Analytical results reported to Nova Scotia Environment and Labour (NSEL) shall be conducted by laboratories that meet the requirements of this policy. This document describes the requirements for laboratories to be considered acceptable by NSEL or by clients who submit analytical data to the department to fulfil data reporting requirements.

## II. LEGISLATION

Section 8(2)(b) of the *Environment Act* states:

- (2) The Minister, for the purposes of the administration and enforcement of this Act, and after engaging in such public review as the Minister considers appropriate, shall
  - (b) establish and administer policies, programs, standards, guidelines, objectives, codes of practice, directives and approval processes pertaining to the protection and stewardship of the environment;

Section 23(1) of the *Environment Act* states:

- (1) Before accepting results from any laboratory, the Minister may require proof of acceptable certification of the laboratory.

### III. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to achieve the following:

- all analytical data generated or received by the department are reliable and are legally and technically defensible;
- analytical data from different sources and obtained at different times are of consistent quality and that Nova Scotia's analytical data are comparable to high quality analytical data from other jurisdictions;
- procedures are documented so that any anomalies, deficiencies or sources of error can be identified and addressed;
- the department receives full value when purchasing analytical services;
- approval holders and laboratories are given a clear indication of expectations; and
- the analytical data received by NSEL are consistent with national and international standards.

### IV. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to:

- Laboratories providing environmental analytical services directly to NSEL;
- Persons responsible, consultants and their subcontractors submitting analytical data in support of terms and conditions of an approval, registration, order, release of substance reporting and remediation, contaminated site reports, regulations or legislation administered by NSEL.

### V. POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. All analytical test results for bacteria in drinking water submitted to NSEL pursuant to the department's regulatory requirements shall be considered acceptable if conducted by one of the following:
  - (a) Laboratory facilities accredited to ISO/IEC 17025, "General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories". Accreditation shall be granted to the laboratory by an agency that:
    - (1) meets the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011, "Conformity Assessment - General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies"; and

- (2) is a full member signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation.
  - (b) Laboratory facilities accredited by another agency recognized by NSEL to be equivalent to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011.
2. All analytical test results for parameters other than bacteria in drinking water submitted to NSEL pursuant to the department's regulatory requirements shall be considered acceptable if conducted by one of the following:
  - (a) Laboratory facilities accredited to ISO/IEC 17025, "General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories". Accreditation shall be granted to the laboratory by an agency that:
    - (1) meets the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011, "Conformity Assessment - General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies"; and
    - (2) is a full member signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation;
  - (b) Laboratory facilities accredited by another agency recognized by NSEL to be equivalent to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011;
  - (c) Laboratory facilities maintaining an acceptable standard in a proficiency testing program conducted by the Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories for all parameters being reported;
  - (d) Laboratory facilities maintaining an acceptable standard in proficiency or performance testing in another program considered acceptable to NSEL for all parameters being reported.

## VI. POLICY GUIDELINES

NSEL may accept process data from on-line equipment or a laboratory that is not certified provided that:

- 1) the parameters are specified as a condition of an approval, registration, order, or NSEL approved monitoring program;
- 2) the approval holder establishes a quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) program to validate measurements obtained from on-line equipment or for all analyses conducted by the non-certified laboratory for all process parameters specified in the approval, registration, order or NSEL approved monitoring program; and
- 3) the QA/QC program is acceptable to NSEL and a written statement to that effect is obtained prior to measurement and submission of analytical data.

NSEL may require that the QA/QC program include:

- 1) regular calibration and maintenance of on-line equipment;
- 2) retention and training of qualified technical staff;
- 3) participation in a proficiency testing program;
- 4) regular validation of results by an accredited laboratory.

## VII. ACCOUNTABILITY

Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and adhere to this policy.

## VIII. INQUIRIES

Drinking water inquiries should be directed to:

- Supervisor, Drinking Water Management  
(902) 424-2378

All other inquiries should be directed to:

- Manager, Pollution Prevention  
(902) 424-2534

**Dated:** August 1, 2006

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*Original Signed by:*  
Hon. Mark Parent  
Minister