Accurate News

"Accurate News" is a publication of Accurate Labs & Training Center
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Accurate
Labs & Training Center

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October-December 1998

Tulsa, Here We Come!

We are excited to announce the opening of Accurate Laboratory and Training Center in Tulsa. We expect to have the doors open in early November and are looking forward to serving our customers in eastern Oklahoma from this location. Our Tulsa facility will serve as a marketing office, a satellite laboratory, and an extension of our Training Center.

Accurate has been considering a move to the Tulsa area for some time and we have been researching market demand closely for many months. Our research has exposed the need for a high quality, high service environmental laboratory in this area. It is our intent to build a laboratory which will perform both quick turnaround and short hold time tests, and continue to perform other, more demanding, tests in our Stillwater facility.

Our new Tulsa facility will have the capacity to run wet chemistry tests such as COD, BOD, TSS, TDS, pH, Conductivity, Chloride, and Nitrate as well as bacteria tests such as Total and Fecal Coliform on both wastewater and drinking water. We also intend to have an organics section on site that will be capable of running BTEX and TPH analysis with a turnaround time less than five (5) working days. Samples which may require more 'instrument intensive' analysis will continue to be transported to Stillwater daily for completion.

Also planned for the Tulsa facility is a conference room for use by our Training Center. This will allow us to offer classes for operators and laboratory personnel in both Tulsa and Stillwater. We anticipate our first classes to be held in Tulsa sometime in 1999.

Accurate's sample pick up service will continue to be available to our eastern Oklahoma customers. However, our new location in Tulsa will allow our customers easy access when they wish to drop off samples or pick up sample containers. The new laboratory is located conveniently near the Broken Arrow Expressway and 51st Street. The address is 12121 E. 51st Street in suite 102 of Tandem Business Park. Our current Tulsa phone number, 918-587-5300 will still be in effect, ringing in Stillwater. If you wish to call the Tulsa office directly the number will be 918-307-1115. Fax number will be 918-307-1116.

We are also happy to introduce you to two of our new staff who will be in the Tulsa laboratory. They are Mike Butler and Kelli Smith. Mike is an original employee of Accurate, having started in 1990. Since 1992, he has been a QA/QC and project officer for several large environmental laboratories. He brings with him a wealth of experience as he returns to the Accurate family and assumes the management of the new Tulsa operation. Kelli also has several years' experience in a large laboratory in data management and review. She will be taking on these duties as well as working as an analyst. Mike and Kelli look forward to doing business with you in Tulsa and they hope to bring our customers in this area the same high levels of service Accurate has become known for.

Dan Labus
Marketing Manager

Accurate

Labs & Training Center

Whole Lot of Foamin' Going On

Industrial pretreatment has succeeded in improving the quality of wastewater our POTWs are having to treat. However, from the number of calls I receive and the samples we analyze related to those calls, it is clear that there are still many unauthorized discharges occurring. One of the most common complaints I hear is about foaming at the treatment plant. While there can be some naturally occurring foam generators in a treatment plant, many foaming problems are attributable to something being dumped in the sewer.

When a foaming problem presents itself suddenly, it is usually related to this type of event. Especially when there are odors and changes in appearance in the influent it is wise to suspect a contaminant. Although these discharges are usually from an industrial source they can also be from uninformed homeowners who decide to dispose of some unused product by dumping it down the drain. Generally, though, the homeowner does not dump enough quantity of chemical to cause a large or long lasting problem at the POTW. When a large quantity of foaming is observed or the foaming lasts for many hours, it usually means dozens or even hundreds of gallons of chemical are involved...and this is more likely an indicator of industrial discharge.

If it is desired to find the source of the discharge, it is critical when foaming occurs that POTW personnel attempt to take a sample of the influent, and particularly the foam, as soon as possible. Even if analysis is not necessary at the time, it is a good idea to take a sample in case it needs to be pursued later. A glass container is preferable since most chemicals that cause foaming are organic and will stick to plastic. Also, visual observation of upstream manholes can sometimes lead searchers back to the discharger if done quickly enough.

One of the most common sources of foaming from an industrial source is the water soluble oil coolants used by many machine shops to keep parts cool during machining operations. Because they are "water soluble" many people assume it is acceptable to put them down the sewer. While it is true they are not extremely toxic and in fact are somewhat biodegradable, in large quantities the POTW is not capable of handling them. They tend to sweep through a plant quickly without being broken down. This causes not only foaming but also high effluent BOD5. The reason they cause foaming in the POTW is that they are long chain oils that have been given a water-soluble nature by adding certain functional groups to one end of the molecule. This makes them have a surfactant/detergent like quality and when these materials go through an aerator the foaming is predictable.

There are several things that make finding the source of these discharges difficult. For one thing they tend to be very brief. Often, by the time foaming occurs and POTW personnel can respond, it is already too late to do anything about it. Also, there are many sources. Large industries are obvious places to look but many small machine shops exist which are not regulated by permit and do not realize the havoc they are causing when they dump a five gallon bucket of something down the drain. It may be necessary for POTW or pretreatment personnel to locate and educate these industries so they can find alternate ways of disposing of their wastes.

George Drye
Laboratory Manager

Clarification

We would like to clarify a pricing issue that has caused some confusion. Drinking water samples for Total Coliform testing are invoiced at twenty dollars ($20.00) per sample when a single sample is received in our laboratory. This includes both monthly compliance samples as well as line/tank tests, etc. When more than one sample is received in the same day and they can be included on a single report, pricing reverts back to the normal fee. Also, as of October 1, 1998, there will be a minimum charge of twenty dollars for any report generated, regardless of matrix or analysis requested. If you have any questions about this policy please give us a call.

Jane Wheeler
Accounting Manager

Preservation Confusion

If you have recently sampled for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) analysis, then you likely are aware of the confusion over method 624 and its two options for sample preservation.

Option #1 - sample must be chilled to < or = 4 degrees C directly after a sampling event. No chemical preservation is necessary, but the sample must be analyzed within seven days.

Option #2 - regarding a water sample containing residual chlorine, the sample must be dechlorinated with Sodium Thiosulfate ($Na_2S_2O_3$) then acidified with HCl to a pH of less than 2. This option will allow a 14-day holding time.

At Accurate Labs, every effort is made to run all volatiles within seven days. We prefer that you use option #1 on method 624, simply chilling the sample until delivery. However, if transportation times are a concern and option #2 is necessary, please contact us in advance so we may discuss this method with you.

John Russell
Field Service Manager

Why Bottled Water?

Americans now spend over three billion dollars a year on bottled water. Many feel they are getting a better or "safer" water this way. Depending on the quality of their local water this may be the case. However, it is very difficult to know what the quality of the bottled water we buy really is.

About 25% of the bottled water we buy is not from a natural source such as a spring or well but is in fact just regular water from a local municipal treatment plant. This water may or may not have additional treatment before bottling. How do you know? Look at the label. Some of this information may be provided by the bottler. If it is not on the label it should be available at your request. One thing to look for is the word spring in the name of the product. Bottled water cannot be referred to as spring water unless it is actually from a spring.

Accurate is now able to perform most of the testing on bottled water that is recommended by EPA, state agencies, and the bottled water associations. These tests include heavy metals, volatile organic compounds, salts, and even more exotic things like herbicides and pesticides. We would be happy to work with bottled water manufacturers who need this test as well as individuals or agencies that would like to confirm the quality of a bottled water product.

George Drye
Laboratory Manager

Accurate Offers Sample Pickup

Accurate's sample pickup service continues to be very popular. It was established to better serve our clients and provide them with a savings of both time and money. It eliminates the cost of shipping and the time it takes to package samples for shipping. Also helpful is the personal service of our field service technicians who realize the importance of taking care of your samples.

We would like to thank our clients who are currently taking advantage of this service for their cooperation. Our routes are often very busy and require constant adjustment when we receive last minute calls. This pickup service is different from UPS, FEDEX, and others. Sometimes our technicians not only pick up samples on route but are required to do field sampling as well. This means the schedules are very tight and it is important that customer's samples be ready when the driver arrives. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter and we hope this reliable (and usually free) service continues to be helpful. If you are not currently on our pickup route please call to see if you are within our service area.

John Russell
Field Services Manager

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505 S. Lowry St.
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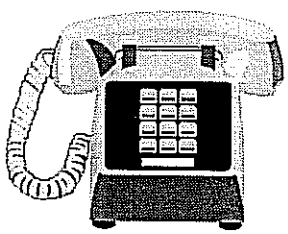
Accurate Labs will pick up your samples along seven statewide routes. Please call.



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