

DRINKING WATER LABORATORY CERTIFICATION



Your quick guide to updates, reminders, and resources to support your laboratory operations provided by the Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) Virginia Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (VELAP).

Proficiency Testing (PT) Reminder

1VAC30-41-130 B requires certified laboratories to complete proficiency testing (PT) studies each calendar year for each drinking water contaminant and by each method for which the laboratory seeks certification. DCLS procedures require laboratories to perform the studies prior to **September 30 of each calendar year** to provide time for any necessary corrective action and repeat studies within the calendar year.

If you have not already done so, plan now by ordering or scheduling your 2026 Proficiency Testing samples, choosing a study that will ensure results are received by VELAP prior to September 30.



Spotlight on Resources

Tools and links to support your laboratory operations

Virginia Town Hall Registration

Sign up to get notifications about updates to 1VAC30-41

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/>

[Choose Public Sign Up, then look under Administration / Dept of General Services for regulations of interest.]

VELAP Payment Portal

Invoices from VELAP now provide a link for electronic payments. Bookmark the link today for easy access. VELAP-issued invoices also include the link: <https://cert.dgs.virginia.gov>

TNI Training Materials

Training resources available on the TNI website can provide helpful information for laboratories certified under 1VAC30-41. Check out what's available ~ some are free, some must be purchased.

<https://eds.nelac-institute.org/>



Spotlight on Assessments

Common Findings and How to Avoid Them

Keeping Thorough and Accurate Records

The most common assessment findings for Chapter 41 laboratories relate to not keeping thorough and accurate records supporting legal defensibility of testing ([EPA Manual, V.8.1](#))

Some common gaps occur in these places:

- Recording lot numbers for reagents, media, and QC organisms
- Recording serial numbers (or other unique identifiers) of thermometers used to take temperature readings
- Recording both the observed and the corrected temperature readings or indicating in temperature records that no correction factor is applicable
- Recording the analyst who reads temperatures from thermometers
- Recording the date/time samples were removed from an incubator
- Recording the unique identifier of samples throughout all analysis stages

Compliance Tips:

- For self-auditing recordkeeping systems for completeness, someone who does not do the test routinely often has the best “eyes” for an audit of all of the details because they will approach the data with no previous knowledge or assumptions.
- Try picking a final report and moving backward through the process all the way to sample receipt - this “different direction” for auditing creates a fresh look at a process you may see every day.

Required Elements of a QA Plan

The EPA Manual provides a detailed list of the required content in a laboratory's Quality Assurance Plan. ([EPA Manual, III.11.1 through 11.13.](#)) The EPA Manual specifies that if a particular item is not relevant, the QA plan should state this and provide a brief explanation.

Laboratories frequently omit required content or omit the notation that a particular item is not relevant. Using the list specified in Section III.11 of the EPA Manual to self-audit the QA Plan, and making edits and updates as needed, will ensure the laboratory's QA Plan is fully compliant.



Questions? Suggestions? Ideas?

If you have recommendations on educational information for future newsletters, please let us know at Lab_cert@dgs.virginia.gov.

Contact Us

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Phone: (804)648-4480 & request to speak to a member of the laboratory certification team