



Food and Environmental Proficiency Testing Unit

The final date for return of results is indicated on the accompanying request/report form

Contact details:

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Results should be returned on-line using the web-based reporting system. Go to: www.phe-ega.org.uk. You will need your log-in details for this process. Please contact us if you experience problems with the on-line system.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/external-quality-assessment-ega-and-proficiency-testing-pt-for-food-water-and-environmental-microbiology#environmental-swab-scheme>

Instruction Sheet for Swab Samples

The LENTICULE® discs are provided in screw-cap plastic vials (with a desiccant). Each LENTICULE disc rests on the filter support containing the desiccant. The **desiccant** should be orange in colour. Please contact us if this is not the case. Each LENTICULE disc requires reconstitution by a process of rehydration and dispersion prior to examination, as described below.

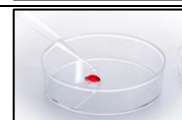
Refer also to the Safety Data Sheet: www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-data-sheet-for-lenticules

Storage:

- Store the samples at **-20 ± 5°C** on receipt.
- Allow the LENTICULE discs to reach ambient temperature (5 - 10 minutes) **before** rehydrating in diluent.

Reconstitution:

- Open the sample container and transfer the LENTICULE disc to a sterile petri dish.
- Add 100µL of maximum recovery diluent (MRD) to the LENTICULE that has been allowed to reach ambient temperature. Leave for 10 minutes.
- The swab consists of a sponge moistened in 10mL of neutralising buffer.
- Open the swab packet and absorb the dissolved LENTICULE disc solution onto the swab.
- Place the swab back into its original packet and snap off the handle by bending the handle back and forth and discard the handle. Close the bag. This is equivalent to a 1/10 dilution. For laboratories following the PHE method this is considered a neat sample.



Examination:

- For examination of organisms by an enumeration method make a further dilution by adding 90mLs of broth (e.g. MRD or BPW).
- For pathogen detection add 90mLs of the relevant broth for the pathogen being investigated.
- Participants will be asked to report enumeration of indicator organisms, either as cfu per swab or as cfu per cm².
- Undertake the sample examinations between 30 - 45 minutes of reconstitution.
- Examine in accordance with your routine procedures.

Return of Results:

- Return your results on-line using the web-based reporting system.
- The distribution will be closed on the deadline date for return of results.
- Results cannot be accepted after the distribution has closed.