



Culturable Bulk Sampling Guide



Benefits

- Bulk sampling is inexpensive and surface materials can be quickly sampled.
- A useful test for initial site investigation.
- Species level identification possible.
- Viability of the fungi is determined.

Disadvantages

- Areas of fungal growth are often small and scattered, so they may not all be picked up in the bulk sample. Multiple samples will be needed to help overcome this problem.
- Health problems related to indoor microbial growth are generally caused by the inhalation of substantial numbers of airborne spores, sometimes over a long period of time. The presence of biological materials on a particular surface may not be a direct indicator of what is in the air.
- This method detects only viable spores and hyphae but cannot detect nonviable or difficult to culture fungi. It is advisable to combine direct exam samples with culture methods if knowing the presence of non-viable fungi is important to your project.
- Cultures cannot distinguish between spores, hyphae and other fungal cells; the results are reported as colony forming units.

Materials

- Sterile sampling bags (Ziplock) to collect and transport specimen (provided at your request by EMSL).
- Latex/nitrile gloves

Sample Collection

1. Wearing gloves and using clean tools remove a representative area of growth along with the building material (sheetrock, wood, etc). 1 inch square is sufficient.
2. Place bulk material into sampling bag and label the outside of the bag with sampling location or description.

Complete an EMSL Chain of Custody (COC), available on our website (www.emsl.com), detailing client name and information, project name or number, sample #, and a description of the area.

Sample Shipment

- Place samples in a cooler with reusable ice packs
- Overnight shipping recommended