

# Accurate News

"Accurate News" is a publication of Accurate Labs  
Stillwater, OK 74074

Accurate Labs



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## Open House a Huge Success

On December 12, 1997 Accurate Labs held its open house and ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the new lab expansion and grand opening of the new Training Center. Attendance was almost three times what we anticipated at about 125 people. Present were many of our customers as well as friends and officials from cities and the state. Many of those who could not attend sent flowers and cards, which were displayed prominently in the reception area.

Our guests were treated to a variety of food and drink as well as personalized tours of the new facility. It was very rewarding to get to put our lab and training center on display and answer many questions asked by our guests. We would like to thank those who attended and extend an invitation to any of our associates who were not able to attend to visit us at any time.

Dan Labus  
Marketing Manager



City and State Officials Attend Accurate Open House and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

## Sample Preservation

by: Doug Gable, Pretreatment Coordinator  
Environmental & Safety Services  
City of Stillwater, OK

It is often said that sample preservation refers only to pH adjustment by chemical addition to a sample. This is a common belief that is not shared by EPA. 40 CFR 403.12 (b)(v)(vi) states that "Sampling and analysis shall be performed in accordance with the techniques prescribed in 40 CFR part 136 and amendments thereto."

Temperature adjustment to 4 deg C is clearly seen as a preservation technique in 40 CFR 136.3, Table II. Furthermore, EPA & ODEQ inspectors have historically looked for verification of temperature and chemical preservation on chain of custody documents during Pretreatment Compliance Inspections and program audits. Inspectors say that if temperature preservation verification is not indicated on the chain of custody document, the sample was not properly preserved.

Let's say, for example, that a sample is taken to a laboratory for analysis. Since the sample could be delivered to the laboratory within a relatively short time period, the sample is not chilled during transport. Was this sample properly preserved? No, 40 CFR 136.3 Table II, Note 2 states that, "Sample preservation should be performed immediately upon sample collection."

(We would like to thank Doug for being a guest columnist and to invite our readers to submit articles of interest.)



## Pretreatment Reporting of pH Critical

One of the most commonly required tests in the area of pretreatment monitoring is pH. This test is very important for corrosion control and plant operations. For this reason the test must not only be performed correctly but documented as well.

In past years these activities were often not strongly enforced by regulatory agencies. This has recently changed. Most pretreatment coordinators are now requiring pH be done within the fifteen minute holding time (which means it must be done on site) and that the calibration of the pH instrument be documented on the chain of custody. The effect of this is that many industries will no longer be able to perform their own pH testing unless they have access to a pH meter and are able to calibrate it before every use. Taking pH with a pH paper strip is not an acceptable alternative.

With the cost of a pH meter and calibration buffers being hundreds of dollars it may not be practical for an industry to maintain this capability if they are only required to perform the test a few times a year. In this case, it may make more sense to have the laboratory that handles the other analytical work also come on site to complete the pH test, even if there is a small charge for this activity.

George Drye  
Lab Manager

## News from the Field

Accurate is pleased to announce the expansion of our route service once again! Our customers obviously love this service and demand continues to grow. To fill this need we have added a NEW Thursday route. This route will serve the Tulsa area in the morning and Oklahoma City area in the afternoon. This expands our Tulsa coverage to Tuesday and Thursday and Oklahoma City to Wednesday and Thursday.

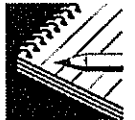
Our route service is so popular that it requires a lot of our time and attention and is a constant effort to keep organized. Our field service crew works

very hard to be helpful and they have a lot to keep straight. They also have a responsibility to our clients to pick up their samples in a timely manner. If one pick up is delayed it causes a chain reaction of tardiness throughout the remainder of the day. Because of this, our drivers are instructed to spend no more than ten minutes on site at each stop. We would appreciate it if route customers would have their samples and chains-of-custody ready when the driver arrives.



John Russell  
Field Services Manager

## Chain of Custody of Critical Importance



Accurate Labs believes your sample is of the utmost importance. However, the integrity of the sample can be challenged when the chain-of-custody (COC) is not properly filled out. The COC is the main source of information we have about your sample. To insure that your sample is logged, analyzed, and reported correctly, the COC must be filled out in detail. Even the smallest piece of information can cause compliance problems if it is missing.

COC's contain a lot of information such as analysis to be performed, sample date and time, date the report is needed and who receives the report and invoice. If the sample date and time are missing, the laboratory cannot tell whether a holding time is being missed. When any blank in the COC is not filled out properly, you do not have legal proof that these activities were carried out correctly. We have even included a comment section on our COC which is a good place to put any information you think would be helpful, including RUSH requirements. Please do not rely on a phone call for this kind of information. Write it on the COC.

Ken Crawford  
QA/QC Coordinator



## What's the Rush?

It seems like everybody is in a hurry these days. We eat fast foods, we drive too fast, and we all expect fast service from our vendors. It wasn't too long ago that standard turn around time for most labs was three to four weeks. Now many customers are not satisfied with this length of time.

About four years ago Accurate was one of the first labs in the area to strive for ten working day turn around time. We have routinely achieved this time and have been working to lower it even more. However, there are limits to how fast some tests can be accomplished without loss of quality. When there are tests that we can regularly offer faster without a rush charge, we do. In general, though, we do charge more for work that is required in less than the standard time.

We do not mean to discourage customers from requesting rush work, as long as they realize that it is not routine to turn out data this quickly and upcharges may apply. It is a good idea to check into what rush work will actually cost before requesting it. This will avoid an unpleasant shock and a potential disagreement down the line. Quite often a substantial amount of money can be saved by waiting just one extra day, so you should look at several options before deciding. It is particularly expensive to request very quick turn around, as the following chart indicates.

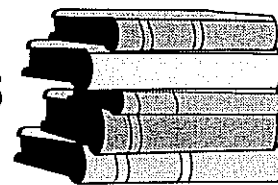
Turn around	% Upcharge
24 hour	200
48 hour	100
72 hour	50

Also, our turn around time is based on working days, and does not include weekends or holidays.



Dan Labus  
Marketing Manager

## Training and Renewal Classes



The Accurate Training Center personnel have been quite busy since the last newsletter. We have been busy compiling and organizing the curriculum and hands-on activities for the classes, while Clarke Hodson, Training Administrator, has been contacting many of the operators in the water and wastewater treatment plants, pretreatment operations, distributions and collections.

Accurate Training Center's goals are to provide classes that will improve the operator's

- working knowledge and skills;
- awareness on the importance of water and the treatment of water;
- operation and laboratory safety techniques;
- basic math and chemistry skills;
- motivation to continue to improve their knowledge and skills.

Every one of our classes will have

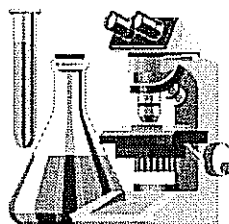
- hands-on activities,
- in-depth curriculum,
- low tuition,
- quality instructors,
- state-of-the-art classroom training and multimedia equipment,
- free lunch and snacks.

Each class counts as eight hours towards Continuing Education and/or Renewal Hours.

Enrollment is limited to sixteen participants per class.

Classes are starting soon. Please call Clarke Hodson at 405-372-5300 for further information and to make a class reservation.

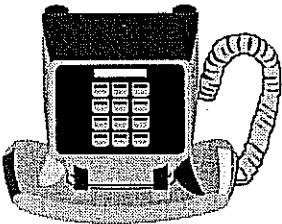
Clarke L Hodson  
Training Administrator



Accurate Labs

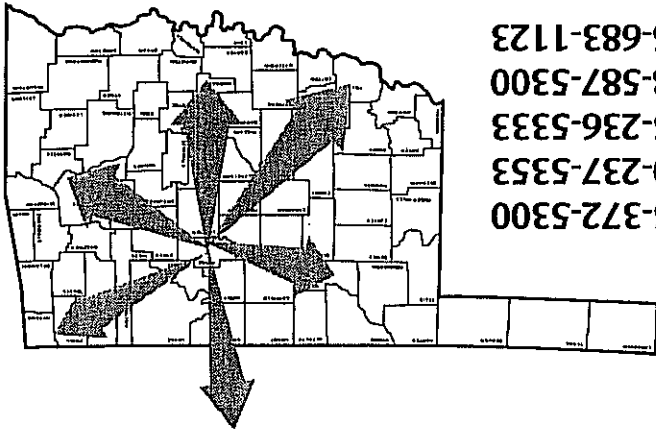


Accurate Labs will pick up your samples along seven statewide routes. Please call.



Stillwater  
Enid  
Oklahoma City  
Tulsa  
Wichita

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