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## SAMPLE PRESERVATION 5.4

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Sample preservation is the measure or measures taken to prevent reduction or loss of target analytes. Analyte loss can occur between sample collection and laboratory analysis because of physical, chemical, and biological processes that result in chemical precipitation, adsorption, oxidation, reduction, ion exchange, degassing, or degradation. Preservation stabilizes analyte concentrations for a limited period of time. Some samples have a very short holding time. **Verify that time-dependent samples were received in proper condition, at the correct temperature, and that holding times were not exceeded by contacting the laboratory.**

Some samples must be preserved by filtration (section 5.3) and (or) chilling and (or) chemical treatment (Appendixes A5-A through A5-C). The preservation required for a given sample is described by the analyzing laboratory; for the NWQL, consult the laboratory for sample-preservation instructions.

- ▶ Before going to the field site and again at the field site:
    - Check the sample-designation code required for each sample.
    - Check sample requirements for chilling and chemical treatment.
    - Check with the laboratory and make note of holding time restrictions.
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