



December 18, 2014

Office of Water Quality Water-Quality Information Note 2015.03

Subject: Field Supplies Contamination – Sulfuric Acid Preservative

The purpose of this WaQI-Note is to alert all water-quality field staff that contamination has been detected in Sulfuric Acid Preservative for Whole Water Nutrients and Carbon (NFSS stock number Q438FLD) with vendor lot number SA-4232120 (with NWIS lot number 40163 and expiration date 08/20/2015).

History/Background:

- Some environmental samples preserved with this lot and received by the National Water Quality Laboratory (NWQL) indicate gross contamination from nitric acid.
- [Initial Quality Assurance](#) of this lot did not indicate any contamination from nitric acid. Subsequent testing of the lot confirmed that a portion of the lot is contaminated with nitric acid.
- This lot was shipped to Wyoming, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, Colorado, Iowa, Mississippi, and Oregon, but may have been shipped to other Centers as well.

Action for field staff, project chiefs and NWQL

- **Immediately discontinue** the use of Sulfuric Acid Preservative (stock number Q438FLD) with vendor lot number SA-4232120 (NWIS lot number 40163) and contact National Field Supply Services by email (nfss@usgs.gov) for replacement.
- Identify samples that may have been treated with this preservative. If proper meta-data were stored in NWIS, questionable samples can be identified quickly in the database by including parameter code 99156 in the retrieval. The NWIS lot number that corresponds with the Vendors lot number is 40163.
- Analytical results for Total Nitrogen, (NO₂+NO₃+NH₃+Organic-N), Water, Unf, acidified, mg/L as N, alkaline persulfate (lab code 2756) are invalid for samples preserved with contaminated acid. The effect of contaminated acid on the analytes listed below is not known. The NWQL will distribute a Rapi-Note with additional guidance after additional testing and research.

<u>Lab Code</u>	<u>Analyte</u>
2188	Nitrogen, ammonia as N WCA
3552	Nitrogen, ammonia as N - KONE - Unfiltered acidified water – Custom
1986	microkjeldahl digestion, N, ammonia + organic nitrogen, WWR, acidified
2612	Organic Carbon, Dissolved, (DOC), 0.45 micron capsule filter
2613	Organic Carbon, Dissolved, (DOC), Water, Filtered, GLASS FIBER
2333	Low Level Total Phosphorus - Whole Water Recoverable, Acidified
2759	Total Phosphorus, Water, Unfiltered, Acidified, mg/L as P, Alkaline persulfate digestion
3403	Total Phosphorus - KONE - Unfiltered acidified water -- Custom
1984	Microkjeldahl Digestion, P, Phosphorus as P, WWR, acidified

- Review sample results and contact the NWQL regarding any concerns with sample results in which this lot was associated.

Please send questions and comments to Stan Skrobialowski, sski@usgs.gov.

WaQI Notes are archived on the Office of Water Quality web site, <http://water.usgs.gov/usgs/owq/WaQI/index.html>

Signed,

The Office of Water Quality 12/18/14

This WaQI note does not supersede any previous guidance.

Distribution: All WMA Employees