



Wastewater and Surface Testing for COVID-19 in the Workplace

Although employees with COVID-19 symptoms are discouraged from going to work, workplace outbreaks continue to occur. Virus spread by asymptomatic infected individuals has been reported to be a significant cause of contamination clusters. Until now, there were few options to detect asymptomatic virus spreaders other than testing every employee each day.

However, certain laboratories are now offering various tests to determine the presence of COVID-19 in the workplace, rather than invasive employee testing. These tests can be done on routine basis and as an indicator of infection and/or the effectiveness of cleaning procedures.

- **Wastewater Testing** - Studies have demonstrated that the presence of the virus in wastewater can be a lead indicator of infection in a community or work site, before any indication of symptoms in infected people. Studies have shown that 1 infected person out of a community of over 1,000 persons is detectable. Results are reported qualitatively as “Detect” or “Not Detect” along with a semi-quantitative Cycle Threshold (Ct) score that can be used as an indication of viral load over time when sampling from the same location.
- **Surface Testing** - Testing for COVID-19 on high touch points and surfaces in your workplace can verify that cleaning and decontamination methods used in your working environment are effective or if additional measures are necessary. Results are reported qualitatively as “Detect” or “Not Detect”.

Results are provided within 48 hours of sample receipt. Positive tests at your workplace could be the basis for triggering subsequent action and/or additional preventative measures, as stipulated within your site-specific COVID-19 assessment and control plan.

Affinity Consultants is experienced in environmental sampling and works with accredited laboratories for sample analysis. If you are interested in conducting wastewater/surface testing or have questions, please contact Keith Gaydosh at 330-854-9066 x21.