



ERMI Homeowner Sampling Instructions



Step 1

Prepare your house for testing

Maximize quiescent conditions in the home the day before testing and during the test period. Turn off portable fans and the heating or air conditioning to avoid blowing air over the areas to be tested. Keep people away from the areas to be tested. The goal is to avoid disturbing settled dust and having it become airborne shortly before or during the test.

Step 2

Equipment needed

- 1 tape measure
- 1 vacuum cleaner with hose attachment
- 1 extension cord
- 1 roll of duct, paint, or masking tape
- Stopwatch or kitchen timer with 5 minute increments
- 1 vacuum dust kit (purchased from EMSL Analytical, Inc.)

Prepare the test areas

For residential sampling, EPA researchers recommend taking a living room and bed room sample as a composite using the same vacuum dust collector for both rooms. Other areas should be sampled separately.

1. In the Common Living Area (family room or living room), select the sofa. In the absence of a sofa, select another commonly used chair. Using the tape measure and the roll of tape, mark the corners of a 3 foot x 6 foot rectangular sampling area against the long side of the sofa. If the area cannot accommodate the recommended sampling area, adjust the dimensions accordingly (but try to sample a total of 18 square feet). Record the final sampling area you marked with tape on the lines corresponding to the room you sampled on the data sheet.
2. For the Bedroom, select the most frequently used bedroom. If there is more than one bed in the bedroom, select the frequently used bed. Using the tape measure and the roll of tape, mark the corners of a 3 foot x 6 foot rectangular sampling area on the floor immediately against the side of the bed where the resident is most likely to get in and out of the bed. If possible try to have the rectangular sampling area extend under the bed by 3 or 4 inches so that part of the sample goes under the bed. If the area cannot accommodate the recommended sampling area, adjust the dimensions accordingly (but try to sample a total of 18 square feet). Record the final sampling area you marked with tape on the lines next to the bedroom you sampled on the data sheet.
3. Areas other than the Living Room, Family Rooms, or Bedrooms may be sampled. If you choose to sample other areas, a separate vacuum dust collector should be used for each area. Please call the lab if you have any questions.
4. To familiarize yourself with the procedures, read over Step 3 below before you start the test.

Step 3

Taking the test

1. Make sure the hose attachment is connected to your vacuum cleaner properly. Turn on the vacuum cleaner to make sure the hose attachment is pulling air, then turn off the vacuum cleaner.
2. Sometimes the dust collection device will not fit correctly onto the hose attachment. If this is the case, you may use duct tape or electrical tape to hold the dust collector to the hose attachment.



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3. Use the extension cord as needed to reach the marked area with the vacuum hose.
4. Remove both caps from the sampling device. Place the caps in a location so you can find them after the test is completed.
5. Attach the flat, round end of the sampler device to the end of the hose attachment of your vacuum cleaner.
6. Use the slanted end of the sampling device to collect your sample. Keep the slant end of the sampling device flush with the surface to be sampled.
7. Turn on the vacuum cleaner and start the watch or timer. Start timing the vacuuming procedure using the stopwatch. Try not to disturb the tape. Try not to exceed the 5 minute sampling period.
8. Vacuum within the taped off area. Do this by passing the sampling device over slightly overlapping, imaginary parallel lines within the sampling area for about 5 minutes. If necessary, adjust your rate of movement so that a total of 5 minutes is used to vacuum the entire 18 square foot sampling area.
9. Move to the second room and repeat the vacuuming of the target area. After the sampling is completed, hold the sampling device upward toward the ceiling and turn off the vacuum cleaner. Re-cap the slant end of the sampling device so as not to lose any of the dust collected.
10. Avoid vacuuming up any large debris that is not dust. If you accidentally suck up the tape, point the sampling device toward the ceiling and turn off the vacuum cleaner. Pick the tape out of the sampling device. Turn the vacuum cleaner back on the return to vacuuming the sampling area. Be sure to account for any lost sample time when you do this so you get a total of 5 minutes of sample time.
11. Separate the sampling device from the hose of the vacuum cleaner and re-cap the flat end of the device.
12. After the small caps are secured on the dust sampling device, make sure there is dust in the sampling container before you send it to the lab. If no visible dust is noticed, repeat the sampling procedure in both rooms in different locations until visible dust is present in the device.
13. If you lose the small caps, seal the openings completely and securely with duct or electrical tape.

Step 4

Complete the paperwork

1. On the data sheet, fill in the number of the sampling device where necessary (found underneath the bar code on the side of the box)
2. On the data sheet, identify all the areas sampled using that particular sampling device number.
3. Fill out all the information completely accounting for any adjustment of the 18 square foot sampling area.
4. Place the sampling device with its correct data sheet back in the box.
5. Seal the box with tape to prevent opening during shipment.

Step 5

Return the sampling device

1. Mail the box back to EMSL. It is essential that only labs that are licensed by the EPA to use this patented technology perform this analysis. EMSL currently holds this license with the EPA.
2. Results will be ready after 5 business days.
3. Rush results are available subject to a surcharge.

A written report comparing your home to the **ERMI** will be sent to the mailing address identified on the data sheet.



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Step 6

What Next?

If your results indicate that your home has potential mold problem, we recommended that you hire a qualified firm to identify the source of the mold problem. You may refer to your yellow pages under environmental consultants. Also check the following websites for a listing of qualified indoor air quality professionals in your area:

1. www.iaqa.org
2. www.aiha.org

Please keep this section for your records.

The EMSL mold test kit is intended for use only as described in the enclosed instructions. These instructions are applicable for residential use. For non-residential applications, please call EMSL for the appropriate sampling protocols. EMSL is not responsible for user error in sampling. EMSL is not liable for any damage to appliances used in collection of these samples. This kit is not intended to be used in lieu of a visual and complete inspection of the premises sampled. In no event shall EMSL be held liable for direct, special, consequential, or incidental damages, regardless of the negligence (either sole or concurrent) of EMSL and whether EMSL has been informed of the possibility of such damages, arising out of or in connection with EMSL's services hereunder or the delivery, use, reliance upon or interpretation of test results by the client or any third party. EMSL accepts no legal responsibility for the purposes for which client uses the test results. In no event shall EMSL be liable to a client or any third party, whether based upon theories of tort, contract or any other legal or equitable theory, in excess of the purchase price.