

DEMAND QUALITY

This is a brief message from our Laboratory Director to environmental laboratory clients everywhere.

You are the end-user in what is many times a complex array of interconnected events that eventually may impact someone's health. You take your role very seriously when designing a project, sampling scheme, and engineering remediation. That sense of professional integrity extends to the laboratory – a key component in your project's success.

You extend lessons learned over the years into your consultations with your clients. You maintain professional due diligence. You trust your instincts about employing an analytical laboratory. Do you know your laboratory?

Too many environmental engineering and consultants look at the bare minimum “shingle” that hangs outside a laboratory and are satisfied with whatever product is produced - relying on accrediting bodies to discern quality. This is certainly the easy way to go. It requires no effort on your part outside of trusting the accrediting body. However, this may not meet higher standards of due diligence that many institutional customers (banks, property trusts, government, etc.) now demand.

Here are a few brief examples of what you can do to demand and insure laboratory quality:

- Download Accreditation Certificates from National and State Authorities.
- Ask for annual Statement of Qualifications to include organizational chart. Assure that it is current.
- Ask for a recent copy of last Technical Evaluator's Report from AIHA, NVLAP, etc.
- Ask for Annual and/or Monthly QA Summary of any laboratory department including calibrations.
- Ask for recent Proficiency Testing results from the laboratory.
- Submit field blanks with any industrial hygiene sampling.
- Submit spike samples* to check on laboratory recoveries and competence.
- Demand superior customer service!
 - Humans answering phones,
 - Electronic status reports and access to analytical results in real time,
 - Ability to connect to Quality Manager, Sample Manager, or Laboratory Management. and
 - Easy to read data.

Any commercial laboratory worth having a relationship with will instantly be able to meet these requirements and, in fact, will be excited that you place value on their professional product!

If you have any questions or comments, our Laboratory Director would like to hear from you...

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* iATL can assist you in setting up blind submittals for all lead and asbestos matrices.