

Petroleum and Petrochemical Bulletin

Sealing of samples

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IFIA members have become aware of instances where samples retained on their premises for the purpose of dispute resolution are being rejected on the basis that the samples were not sealed at the time the samples were taken.

It should be noted that sealing of **all** samples has never been industry practice and, indeed, with an estimated 15 million samples drawn annually, the time involved and most importantly the environmental impact of the packaging and sealing materials required to seal all samples would not be supportable.

There is no guidance on this topic in standards but IFIA member companies' position on the sealing of samples is noted in the current IFIA Code of Practice, was reflected in previous editions and also in the original IFIA Guidelines. Current wording is as follows:

8.1 Sample Sealing

Samples drawn by an IFIA Member Company and maintained under their control are not normally sealed unless specifically requested. Where sampling is to be done jointly, the sealing of the samples must bear the marks of all interested parties. If an interested party is not equipped to perform such sealing, their signature on labels may be accepted.

Samples leaving the control of the IFIA Member Company shall be sealed and records kept of the respective seal numbers should they be required for future reference.

In accordance with this code it is IFIA members' position that samples for retention will only be sealed if they are to leave the control of the IFIA member or upon specific request from the client.

Note: Sample "sealing" in practice involves the fitting of numbered anti-tamper indicators, usually to close a heavy-duty polythene bag holding the sample container.

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Revisions/Reaffirmations

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