



Rethinking Field Sampling Practices in PFAS Testing: Challenging Conventional Cross-Contamination Assumptions

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As the environmental landscape of contaminants of concern continues to evolve, so do our approaches to PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) testing. Analytical laboratory efforts continuously probe the boundaries of methodology, precision, and accuracy, all while accommodating the continual demand for rapid answers.

However, amidst the quest for ultimate quality, are we inadvertently constraining productivity by imposing overly stringent procedures for field sampling?

The widespread and ubiquitous presence of PFAS in industrial and consumer products poses significant challenges for Environmental practitioners when designing field sampling programs. When the source of cross-contamination is potentially *everything*, how does one mitigate the chances of misrepresentative results?

This discussion challenges the current conventional guidance surrounding PFAS field sampling protocols, particularly in relation to cross-contamination prevention.

Recent laboratory findings have intriguingly demonstrated that exposure to common PFAS sources such as food packaging, sunscreen and Teflon tubing does not necessarily compromise the overall integrity of a sampling program; however various publications and guidance documents suggest otherwise.

Supported with an investigative laboratory study of potential contamination sources, we aim to spark discussion around commonly accepted field protocols that may be overly cautious and cumbersome and suggestion there may be an opportunity to redefine PFAS sampling protocols.

Andrew White

With over 20 years' experience in the Environmental Laboratory space, Andrew has supported customers on a variety of environmental projects. Always passionate about the success of customer projects and the team he is working with, Andrew has held a number of roles within his tenure with Bureau Veritas.

Starting out in client support, Andrew quickly moved into leadership roles and led the development of a number digital solutions that enhanced the customer experience. His relationship building and dedication to customer satisfaction was a natural fit for the Business Development team, where he has spent a number of years supporting customers from across Canada.

More recently focused specifically in Environmental DNA (eDNA) and PFAS markets, Andrew's technical knowledge of laboratory operations, regulatory requirements and customer relationships has allowed him to become an often-relied upon and trusted resource for many of Bureau Veritas' customers.

When not supporting environmental projects, he can usually be found either at a hockey arena for his children's teams or on stage somewhere with his band entertaining partygoers.