

STERLING NEWS & NOTES

A Technical Update from Sterling Reference Laboratories
Your Complete Drug Testing Resource!

STERLING receives certification by Health and Human Services (SAMHSA)

Third Quarter 2009

STERLING Reference Laboratories has successfully met all of the requirements for laboratory certification as specified in the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs. Dr. Daniel Baker, the Laboratory Director and Responsible Person, was officially notified and congratulated by the Administrator of SAMHSA on April 2, 2009. Having achieved this certification, SRL is now eligible to perform drug testing for Federal Drug-Free Workplace programs.

While any clinical laboratory can test for drugs of abuse, not many meet the requirements of a large-volume forensic testing laboratory as delineated in the 1988 guidelines. A clinical laboratory performs drug testing for medical reasons in support of patient care. A forensic laboratory tests for legal reasons, with results intended for use as evidence in a court of law. Any laboratory that seeks SAMHSA certification must become a forensic laboratory.

All Federal agencies except the armed forces, the postal service, and the executive and legislative branches are subject to the guidelines. Only laboratories certified by SAMHSA may test for Federal agencies. A lab need not be certified to perform testing for any non-Federal organization or private company. Because SAMHSA guidelines have become the benchmark for workplace drug testing, however, many firms prefer to contract with certified labs.

The road to certification is an arduous and expensive process which may reach upwards of \$100,000/year to maintain. Once it has accepted a laboratory's detailed application, SAMHSA enrolls the lab in the National Laboratory Certification Program's (NLCP) proficiency testing program. Each laboratory under consideration must pass three initial performance testing cycles. Proficiency sets consist of drug-free urine and other specimens containing one or two drug analytes at various concentrations. In addition, specimens which have been adulterated or otherwise altered are also included as part of the proficiency testing program. The submissions are processed and analyzed as if they were actual specimens sent for testing. The initial cycles of testing are typically completed in about three months. To pass, a laboratory must meet stringent accuracy requirements.

Certification requires passing the initial three proficiency testing cycles. Thereafter, the laboratory must analyze equally tough proficiency sets every three months. Failure to pass proficiency testing cycles at any time may result in suspension or revocation of certification.

Inspections are similarly ongoing. An inspection team composed of experienced and SAMHSA-trained toxicologists visits each certified laboratory twice a year. During the inspection, each team member derives a complete and

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independent finding. Inspectors review details of testing that affect either the technical quality of the results or their forensic defensibility. SOPs and records pertaining to reagents, equipment, and quality control are closely examined. Additionally, inspectors scrutinize personnel files to make sure the agency's explicit requirements have been met. A consensus report is then prepared from the inspectors' observations. That document forms the basis of SAMHSA's recommendation, made to the Secretary of HHS, to grant or deny certification.

HHS laboratory standards for urine drug testing certification were designed to assure Federal Agencies and their employees that the laboratories and the scientific and methodological procedures used are of the **highest quality**. There are currently only 39 laboratories certified by SAMHSA. STERLING is proud to be able to be counted among those laboratories. - Daniel J. Baker, Ph.D., Laboratory Director, STERLING Reference Laboratories

Your STERLING Advantage What sets us aside from other laboratories?

Customized Testing Services – We provide a full range of testing services, from basic screenings to court admissible/forensic results. Customized test panels are designed to meet your needs, optimizing cost effectiveness. We offer specialty tests, including Ethylglucuronide (EtG), Steroids, and more. Test order forms are printed to your specifications and are simple and easy to use. Test results are user-friendly, and include a comment section for additional, pertinent findings and information from our Scientists. We offer the ability to capture additional information on results, such as Counselor, Program Codes, etc.

Laboratory Testing – All screening tests are performed using the latest Immunoassay technology on state-of-the-art instruments. SRL utilizes the "Gold Standard" in confirmation testing: Gas Chromatography / Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS), Gas Chromatography (GC) and Liquid Chromatography / Tandem Mass Spectroscopy (LC/MS/MS). Full adulterant testing is available: Creatinine, Specific Gravity, pH & Oxidants (Nitrites).

Customer Service – We have live-person operators at your service. This allows you immediate access to SRL personnel. Our Scientists are available to you for Free Scientific consultation! Expert testimony is also provided by our well qualified Scientific Staff.

Accreditations & Licenses – Not all States require laboratory licensing to perform drug testing. SRL maintains the following licenses and accreditations, way beyond what is required, and performs laboratory testing nationwide.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (SAMHSA), College of American Pathologists Laboratory Accreditation Program (CAP), Washington State Department of Health Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) License, U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration - Controlled Substances - Analytical Lab Registration, Washington State Department of Health, Board of Pharmacy - Quality Assurance Division - Controlled Substance License, State of New York Department of Health License, State of California Department of Health Services Methadone Drug Analysis Laboratory License (SRL is the only Lab outside of the State of California licensed to provide Methadone Testing in the State of California), State of Maryland Department of Health Services License, State of Pennsylvania Department of Health Clinical Laboratory License, State of Florida Agency for Health Care Administration Division of Health Quality Assurance - Clinical Laboratory License, State of Oklahoma Department of Health - Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Facility License.

ANNOUNCEMENT

As of September 9, 2009, SRL has changed Opiate Confirmation from GC/MS to LC/MS/MS

As per our earlier faxed flyer, effective September 9th, we have been confirming Opiates by LC/MS/MS. This confirmation methodology has distinct advantages over the past GC/MS confirmation method including enhanced sensitivity and specificity. We now have the capability of detecting and reporting OXYMORPHONE levels. Oxymorphone is a pharmacologically active metabolite of oxycodone. Oxymorphone may also be prescribed (OPANA®, or NUMORPHAN®) as an analgesic drug.

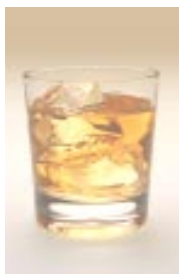
Opiate cut-off levels have not changed, and there is no change to pricing.

If there are any questions regarding this change please contact Dr. Bert Toivola, Jim Heit of one of our other scientist at 800-442-0438.

Cost-Effective Options for 80-Hour Alcohol Tests & Screens EtG Screen as low as \$6.00!

We can now combine your EtG Test or Screen with your Drug Test or Screen to offer you further savings!

Call our Sales Department today for more information on which option is best for you!



Need to screen onsite for Alcohol (Ethanol)?

Screen for Alcohol (Ethanol) in a U.S. made, urine-based, onsite cup or dip strip/card! These devices come with an Alcohol Color Chart for comparison of 0.0% to 0.2% BAC. Call our Sales Department for info!

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THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE LAB

Let us introduce you to our PSC Staff!

Sterling has four Patient Service Centers (PSC) throughout Washington State for the convenience of our clients use. Our sites are located in Tacoma, Seattle, Everett and Spokane. The sites hours of operation are Monday - Friday 1000-1900 in Tacoma, Spokane, and Everett, and Monday - Friday 1000-1800 in Seattle. All sites are closed for lunch 1200-1300. Our PSC's are staffed with a male and female, trained to handle collections for DOT, observed and non-observed UA's, as well as Hair Test collections. Although STERLING does not perform DNA testing, our Tacoma PSC does offer DNA swab collections as well. Our clients range from Contract Observed collections, to DOT/Employment clients, to walk-in clients.

Call our Sales staff today if you are interested in having our trained PSC staff, facilitate your collections. We offer very competitive pricing that can prove a cost savings for your program.

STERLING Reference Laboratories commitment to quality and service provides great opportunities for well qualified and skilled people. If you know of anyone who would compliment our team, please refer them to us. Thank you!

STERLING Reference Laboratories is full-service, nationally renowned toxicology laboratory, testing for drugs of abuse, which has been serving its clients with superior service and unsurpassed quality since 1985. SRL is certified by Health and Human Services (SAMHSA) and the College of American Pathologists Laboratory Accreditation Program (CAP) - rigorous laboratory standards designed to ensure quality testing.