Measuring Total Ammonia using the Hach® Ammonia Nitrogen Pocket Colorimeter™ II Test Kit

1. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

1.1. This method is adapted from the HACH® Ammonia Nitrogen Pocket Colorimeter™ II Test Kits instruction manuals.

1.2. Use of this SOP constitutes acknowledgement that the Hach Ammonia Nitrogen Pocket Colorimeter™ user's manuals have been read and understood by the operator.

1.3. **WARNING** This laboratory is not NELAC certified for this analysis. **Note: Results** of ammonia measurements performed on samples in the Bioassay laboratory **are not reportable for compliance purposes.** The results are used to determine potential causes of observed toxicity.

2. SUMMARY OF METHOD

2.1. Operation of meter is checked. Standards are checked ("0" blank, 0.09 and 0.33 mg/L NH_3). Sample is poured into sample cells. The instrument is blanked. Salicylate reagent is added to the sample cell. Timer is set for three minutes. Cyanurate reagent is added to the sample cell. Timer is set for fifteen minutes. Sample cell is placed into meter and the [Read] button is pressed for the value in mg/L of NH_3.

2.2. Interferences:

2.2.1. Contamination when tubes are not thoroughly rinsed with DI water after each use, resulting in a second reading lower than the first

2.2.2. Damage to the meter by water/liquid entering the cell holder.

2.2.3. If results are unusually high or inconsistent, a replicate is necessary

3. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

3.1. Hach Ammonia Nitrogen Pocket Colorimeter™ II Lot: A8051

3.1.1. Two 1.0 cm (10 ml) sample cells per water sample.

3.1.2. 1 cm sample-cell adapter

3.2. Disposable pipet (10 mL) with manual pipetter

3.2.1. One per sample to be tested (volume of each new lot is checked per SOP MB-03.3)

3.4. Laboratory timer (count-down or count-up with alarm)

3.5 Kimwipe®

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4. REAGENTS AND STANDARDS

4.1. Hach-SpecV™ Secondary

4.1.1. The Hach® secondary standards come four to a box and include a blank, a low-range standard, a mid-range standard, and high-range standard. For laboratory purposes, only the blank, low-range and mid-range are used.

4.2. Ammonia Salicylate Reagent Powder pillows (For 10 ml samples)

4.3. Ammonia Cyanurate Reagent Powder pillows (For 10 ml samples)

5. METHOD

5.1. Meter Calibration

5.1.1. Lab Colorimeters are calibrated before their first use, and periodically throughout service. Colorimeters are also calibrated whenever the standard measurements begin to drift outside the acceptable range (The acceptable value for standard measurements is ±10%).

5.1.2. The colorimeter is turned on by pressing and releasing the [**Power/Backlight Key**] ( ) the display with turn on and show the value of the last reading. If the colorimeter has been calibrated, the [**Calibration Adjusted Icon**] ( ) will display on the right perimeter of the screen.

5.1.3. To enter calibration mode, press and hold the [**Menu Key**] ( ) until "**USER CAL**" is displayed and press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) S0 should appear on the display.

5.1.4. Place the Blank Standard in the cell holder, cap the colorimeter, and press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) if not already at 00.00, using the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ) manually input the standard value of the blank (00.00). The [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) to cycle through the digits. Once the value is correctly entered, **A0** should appear on the display.

5.1.5. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) to measure the absorbance value of the blank. Once the measurement is taken.

5.1.6. Press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ) to move to the next calibration point. **S1** should display on the screen.

5.1.7. Place "**STD 1**" in the cell holder and cap the colorimeter. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) to cycle through the digits and use the [**Zero/Scroll key**] ( ) to manually enter the standard value of "**STD 1**" (Each standard value is written on the inside cap of the Standards box).Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ), **A1** should appear on the display after the standard value is entered.

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5.1.8. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) to measure the absorbance value of "**STD 1**".

5.1.9. Press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ) and "**Add**" should appear on the display (S2 may appear if the meter has already been calibrated). Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) and "**S2**" should appear on the display.

5.1.10. Place "**STD 2**" in the cell holder and cap the colorimeter. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) and use the [**Zero/Scroll key**] ( ) to manually enter the standard value of "**STD 2**". A2 should appear on the display after the standard value is entered.

5.1.11. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( ) to measure the absorbance value of "**STD 2**".

5.1.12. Once the absorbance value of "**STD 2**" is displayed, press the [Menu Key] ( ) twice quickly to return to measurement mode.

5.1.13. The display will flash the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] symbol ( ). Insert the Blank Standard in to the cell holder, and press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ).

5.1.14. The display will show 0.00 and the [**Calibration Adjusted Icon**] ( ) will appear on the right perimeter of the display.

5.1.15. Read Standards 1, 2, and 3 to check the calibration of the Colorimeter.

5.2. REMOVE CALIBRATION

5.2.1. To delete a calibration, turn the colorimeter on, then press and hold the [**Menu Key**] ( ) until "**USER CAL**" appears.

5.2.2. Press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ) until "**dFL**" appears on the screen. This will return the Colorimeter to the factory default calibration setting.

5.2.3. The display will flash the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] symbol ( ). Press the Zero button and the display will show 0.00 and the [**Calibration Adjusted Icon**] ( ) will not appear on the right perimeter of the display.

5.3. CALIBRATION VERIFICATION

5.3.1. Press the power button on the Colorimeter™II. The display will turn on.

5.3.2. Remove the cap from the instrument. Wipe the SpecV™ blank with a clean Kimwipe® and place into the cell holder. Ensure that the [**Alignment Mark**] ( ) is facing the keypad. Securely cover the cell with the instrument cover

5.3.2.1. Ensure that the standards have not expired.

5.3.3. Press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ). The display will show "**0.00**".

5.3.4. Remove the instrument cap. Remove the SpecV™ blank from the cell holder. Place the **STD 1** cell into the cell holder after wiping it with a clean

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Kimwipe®, aligning the alignment mark with the keypad. Securely cover the cell with the instrument cover.

5.3.5. Press [**Read/Enter Key**] (✓ Record the displayed value in the ammonia logbook along with the value of the standard.

5.3.5.1. If the value is not within ±10 % of the standard value (The standard values are written on the inside lid of the standards box). Ensure that the standard cells are clean and repeat the procedure. If values are still out of range, refer to the instrument manual for trouble shooting instructions.

5.3.6. Repeat **STEP 5.4.4.** and **STEP 5.4.5**, with the SpecV™ cell labeled STD 2.

5.4. MEASURING TOTAL NITROGEN, AMMONIA

5.4.1. Use a 10-mL pipet to place 10 mL of sample into a sample cell (blank sample).

5.4.1.1. Use one pipet per sample (do not cross contaminate samples).

5.4.2. Wipe the exterior of the cell with a Kimwipe® to remove any dirt, smudges, fingerprints, etc. which may reduce the amount of light passing through the cell, thereby giving an inaccurate reading.

5.4.3. Place the sample cell containing the blank sample in the cell holder. Place the instrument cap over the sample cell.

5.4.3.1. The [**Alignment Mark**] (◇) on the sample cell should be facing the front of the instrument.

5.4.4. Press the [**Zero/Scroll Key**] ( ) After the display “zeros,” remove the instrument cap from the cell holder and remove the sample cell.

5.4.4.1. This step “zeros” the meter while correcting for any color inherent in the sample. The colorimeter will turn on and the display will show "**---**" followed by "**0.00**."

5.4.5. Open an Ammonium Salicylate powder packet and add the contents to the sample cell and cap the sample cell.

5.4.6. Start a timer for 3 minutes, and gently shake for 20 seconds to mix.

5.4.7. After three minutes, open an Ammonium Cyanurate powder packet and add the contents to the sample cell and cap the sample cell.

5.4.8. Start a timer for 15 minutes and gently shake for 20 seconds to mix.

5.4.8.1. Check the sample cell for bubbles that sometimes form on the sides of the cell. These bubbles will cause a false high result. If bubbles are seen, gently tap the side of the cell and swirl the contents of the cell to dislodge the bubbles.

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5.4.9. After 15 minutes, place the prepared sample in the cell holder. Cover with the instrument cap and read within 1 minute to get an accurate reading.

5.4.10. Press the [**Read/Enter Key**] ( )✓The display will show "---" followed by the total ammonia measurement in mg/L.

5.4.11. Record the displayed reading in the Ammonia Logbook and the appropriate bench sheets.

5.4.11.1. All readings measuring <0.2 mg/L are recorded as <0.2 mg/L.

5.5. Repeat **STEPS 5.5.1-5.5.11** for each sample replicate.

5.5.1. Each sample **MUST** be measured twice, however, if sample replicate measurements >0.2 vary by ≥0.02 mg/L a third replicate must be measured. For replicates measuring ≤0.2, a third replicate is needed **ONLY** when one replicate is >0.2 and another is ≤0.2.

5.5.2. Average the measured values for each sample replicate to get the final value.

5.5.3. If an out-of-range indication is displayed, dilute the sample with DI water. Be sure to record the dilution factor whenever a sample is diluted.

5.5.3.1. For example, if a sample is diluted in half (5 mL of sample and 5mL of D.I. water) the reported dilution factor would be 2.

5.6. Perform **STEPS 5.5.1-5.6** to measure ammonia in the rest of the samples

5.6.1. DI water is tested for ammonia weekly. All bioassay samples, dilution water made in the lab and received organism water are all tested for ammonia.

5.6.2. Organism water may have detectable ammonia. If the level of ammonia is significant, notify lab supervisor immediately and note any dead organisms.

5.6.3. Moderately hard water, artificial saltwater (dilution water) and DI water should be ammonia free. If ammonia is detected in these waters, contact the lab supervisor immediately.

5.7. After all measurements have been taken, replace the cap, turn off the Colorimeter™ II by pressing the [Power/Backlight Key] ( ), and return the instrument to the carrying case. Rinse all sample cells (excluding SpecV™ Standards) with DI water. Allow the cells to dry before returning them to the carrying case. Clean up the work area.

6. DATA ARCHIVAL

6.1. Use a black, waterproof pen for all bench sheets and logbooks.

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6.2. Record information in *Ammonia logbook* and *Bioassay Bench Sheets* logbooks.

6.3. To correct raw data entries, place a single line through the incorrect entry, write the corrected entry near the error and initial and date the correction. Do not overwrite entries.

6.3.1. The corrected entry is written as near its appropriate space as possible or else in the comment box on the appropriate bench sheet.

6.3.2. If the correction requires an explanation, write a comment and reference the error. Initial and date the explanation.

6.3.3. Use sequential alphabetical annotation to identify errors and corresponding comments (use A for first error and use A for corresponding explanatory comment; use B for second error, etc.).

7. QUALITY CONTROL

7.1. Refer to QA manual for corrective action and handling out-of-control data.

8. SAFETY/HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

8.1. Proper laboratory protection, including lab hood or ventilation system, lab coat, gloves and safety glasses, is required when working with chemicals and unprocessed samples.

8.2. Refer to the Laboratory Quality Manual for sample disposal

8.3 Refer to the Laboratory Health and Safety Manual and Hazardous Waste Management

9. REFERENCES

9.1. HACH® Pocket Colorimeter™ Instruction Manual.

9.2. Standards Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition: SM 4500-Cl G.

9.3. Laboratory Quality Manual, https://floridadep.gov/dear/florida-dep-laboratory/content/dep-laboratory-quality-assurance-manual-and-sops

9.4. Laboratory Health and Safety Manual and Hazardous Waste Management, https://www.fldepnet.org/content/dear/bureau-laboratories-safety-documents

9.5. DEP SOP MB-03.03, *Calibration and Use of Mechanical and Disposable Pipettes*.

APPENDIX OF CHANGES

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