Anthrax
SURFACE SAMPLING

HOW TO SAMPLE WITH
# Macrofoam Swab
ON NONPOROUS SURFACES

## ON YOUR MARK

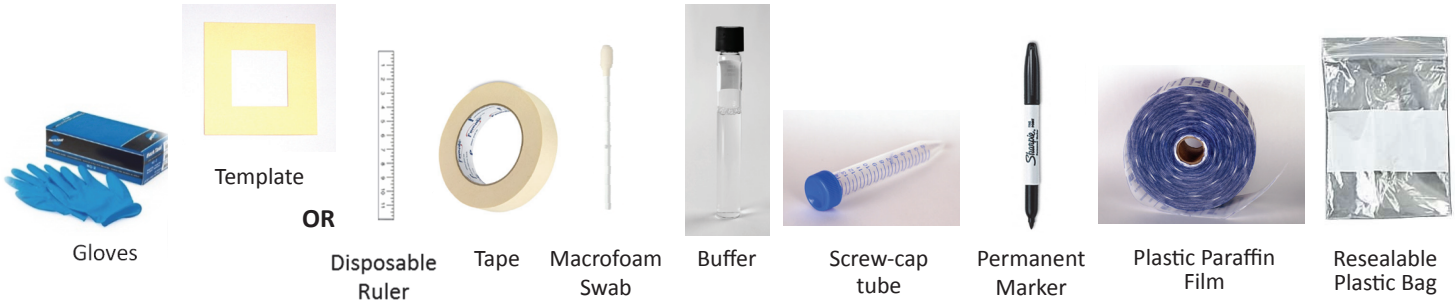
### Know Your Role

It is very important to have an assistant help collect the sample to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Before you begin, make sure that you identify who will sample the surface and who will assist. The assistant will handle all of the sampling supplies and never touch the surface to be sampled. The sampler will touch the supplies only as the assistant hands them over.

## GET SET

### Assemble Sampling Materials

Before we begin the swab procedure, make sure you have the following materials to perform the sampling:




- Gloves
- 2-by-2-inch template or disposable ruler
- Tape
- Macrofoam swab
- Neutralizing buffer solution
- Screw-cap tube
- Preprinted sample labels or a permanent marker to identify the sample
- Plastic paraffin film
- Resealable 1-quart plastic bags

When you select materials, review the specifications for each item at:
**http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/surface-sampling-bacillus-anthracis.html**

This list does not describe any standard personal protective equipment that you will already be wearing (for example: respirator, disposable protective clothing, and disposable gloves).

It is important to remember that all surfaces in the area where you are going to sample could be contaminated with anthrax. You should work out of a clean container or off a clean, disposable towel you bring with you. Experience has shown that three 5-gallon buckets work well. One bucket is for your sampling supplies, one for the collected samples, and one for waste.

Continue to **Steps** on back

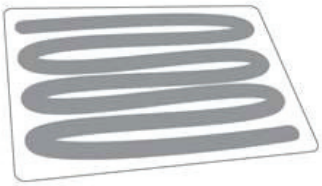
CHECK OFF EACH STEP AS COMPLETED

☐ **1** Wearing a clean pair of gloves over existing gloves, place the template over the area to be sampled and secure it. If a template cannot be used, measure the sampling area with a disposable ruler, and outline the area to be sampled with masking tape. The surface area sampled should be 4 square inches or less.

☐ **2** Remove the sterile swab from its package. Grasp the top of the handle. Do not touch below the thumb stop. If the sterile swab is not premoistened, dip it in the 10-mL container of neutralizing buffer solution. Remove any excess liquid by pressing the swab head against the inside of the buffer solution container.

*Note: Once a sterile swab has been moistened, the remaining neutralizing buffer solution and container must be discarded.*

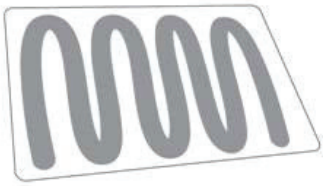
☐ **3**



Swab the surface to be sampled, using the moistened sterile swab. Use an overlapping 'S' pattern to cover the entire surface with horizontal strokes.

*Note: Depending on the design of the swab, a rolling motion can be used when swabbing the surface to maximize swab contact with the surface.*

☐ **4**



Rotate the swab and then swab the same area again, using vertical 'S' strokes.

☐ **5**

Rotate the swab once more and swab the same area using diagonal 'S' strokes.

☐ **6** Place the head of the swab directly into a sterile screw-capped centrifuge tube. Break off the head of the swab by bending the handle. The end of the swab handle, touched by the collector, should not touch the inside of the tube. Close and tighten the cap on the container and securely seal with plastic paraffin film and label the container (for example: unique sample identifier, sample location, initials of collector, and date and time sample was collected).

☐ **7** Place the sample container in a resealable plastic bag. Securely seal and label the bag (for example: unique sample identifier, sample location, initials of collector, and date and time sample was collected).

☐ **8** Remove outer gloves and discard.
*Note: Use new template and gloves for each sample.*

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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