Settle Plate Method for Environmental Monitoring

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# Purpose

<<<< This SOP is left in DOCX format so that you may edit it for your own laboratory and your own microbes>>>

The purpose of this SOP is to lay out the responsibilities, equipment and procedures required for using the settle plate method for environmental monitoring.

# Scope

This SOP applies to all persons prescribing and requiring to perform on-bench microbiological procedures.

# Responsibilities

## Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

* **Reviewing this SOP on a regular basis. Review is to consider and mitigate the risks of spill, loss of containment and exposure or other harm. Refer to Performing Risk Assessments SOP.**
* Ensuring the equipment is in good working order.
* Ensuring that all workers under their supervision are trained on and are proficient in performing the steps of this SOP.

## Workers

Workers are responsible for:

* Following this SOP as approved by their supervisor
* Reporting any broken equipment or spills immediately to their supervisor.

# Equipment Needed

* Solid media plates appropriate for growing the target bacteria or fungus prepared per lab SOPs
* Incubator
* Laboratory map

# When Environmental Monitoring is Required

1. When a worker is learning new on-bench microbiological techniques.
2. When contamination of reagents, cultures or equipment is suspected.
3. At regular intervals prescribed by the supervisor.

# Settle Plate Procedure

1. Remove settle plates from fridge and allow to come to room temperature.
2. Mark on the map, the proposed locations of the settle plates.
3. Label lids appropriately.
4. Remove lids and place settle plates at the proposed locations.
5. Have the worker perform their assigned microbiological procedure of contamination is suspected to be a result of work habits.
6. Once finished, the worker cleans up their area according to lab SOP.
7. Settle plates are left exposed for an additional 60 minutes.
8. No other on bench work should take place during this 60 minutes.
9. Collect plates, label and incubate under conditions and for the time appropriate for target microorganism.
10. Assess plates for type and amount of microorganisms present.
11. Record worker, procedure, maps and settle plate results.
12. Based on the settle plate results, the Supervisor may require the worker to be mentored until proficiency is achieved.

# Training

1. Each lab member is to read, agree and sign off on this SOP.
2. Upon revision or re-write, this SOP is to be re-circulated and re-signed by all lab members.