TANK SAMPLING

CONTENTS

SUPERCEDES: SOP #2010; Revision 1.0; 08/16/91; U.S. EPA Contract 68-03-3482.

1.0 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to provide technical guidance for the implementation of sampling protocols for tanks and other confined spaces from outside the vessel.

These are standard (i.e., typically applicable) operating procedures which may be varied or changed as required, dependent on site conditions, equipment limitations or limitations imposed by the procedure or other procedure limitations. In all instances, the ultimate procedures employed should be documented and associated with the final report.

Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute U.S. EPA endorsement or recommendation for use.

2.0 METHOD SUMMARY

The safe collection of a representative sample should be the criteria for selecting sample locations. A representative sample can be collected using techniques or equipment that are designed for obtaining liquids or sludges from various depths. The structure and characteristics of storage tanks present problems with collection of samples from more than one location; therefore, the selection of sampling devices is an important consideration.

Depending on the type of vessel and characteristics of the material to be sampled, one can choose a bacon bomb sampler, sludge judge, subsurface grab sampler, glass thief, bailer or Composite Liquid Waste Sampler (COLIWASA) to collect the sample. A sludge judge, bacon bomb or COLIWASA can be used to determine if the tank contents are stratified. Various other custom-made samplers may be used depending on the specific application.

All sample locations should be surveyed for air quality prior to sampling. At no time should sampling continue with an LEL reading greater than 25%.

3.0 SAMPLE PRESERVATION, CONTAINERS, HANDLING, AND STORAGE

Samples collected from tanks are considered waste samples and as such, addition of preservatives is not required due to the potential reaction of the sample with the preservative. Samples should however, be cooled to 4°C with ice and protected from sunlight in order to minimize any potential reaction due to the light sensitivity of the sample.

Sample bottles for collection of waste liquids, sludges, or solids are typically wide mouth amber jars with Teflon-lined screw caps. Actual volume required for analysis should be determined in conjunction with the laboratory performing the analysis.

Waste sample handling procedures should be as follows:

1. Place sample container in two ziplock plastic bags.

2. Place each bagged container in a 1-gallon covered can containing absorbent packing material. Place the lid on the can.

3. Mark the sample identification number on the outside of the can.

4. Place the marked cans in a cooler, and fill remaining space with absorbent packing material.

5. Fill out chain of custody record for each cooler, place in plastic, and affix to inside lid of cooler.

6. Secure and custody seal the lid of cooler.

7. Arrange for the appropriate transportation mode consistent with the type of hazardous waste involved.

4.0 INTERFERENCES AND POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Sampling a storage tank requires a great deal of manual dexterity, often requiring climbing to the top of the tank upon a narrow vertical or spiral stairway or ladder while wearing protective clothing and carrying sampling equipment.

Before climbing onto the vessel, a structural survey should be performed. This will ensure appropriate consideration of safety and accessibility prior to initiation of any field activities.

As in all opening of containers, extreme caution should be taken to avoid ignition or combustion of volatile contents. All tools used must be constructed of a non-sparking material and electronic instruments must be intrinsically safe.

All sample locations should be surveyed for air quality prior to sampling. At no time should sampling continue with a lower explosive limit (LEL) reading greater than 25%.

5.0 EQUIPMENT/APPARATUS

Storage tank materials include liquids, sludges, still bottoms, and solids of various types. The type of sampler chosen should be compatible with the waste. Samplers commonly used for tanks include: a bacon bomb sampler, sludge judge, glass thief, bailer, COLIWASA, and subsurface grab sampler.

Tank Sampling Equipment Checklist:

- Sampling plan
- Safety equipment
- Tape measure
- Weighted tape line, measuring stick or equivalent
- Camera/film
- Stainless steel bucket or bowl
- Sample containers
- Ziplock plastic bags
- Logbook
- Labels
- Field data sheets
- Chain of Custody records
- Flashlight (explosion proof)

- Coolers
- Ice
- Decontamination supplies
- Bacon bomb sampler
- Sludge judge
- Glass thieves
- Bailers
- COLIWASA
- Subsurface grab sampler
- Water/oil level indicator
- OVA (organic vapor analyzer or equivalent)
- Explosimeter/oxygen meter
- High volume blower

6.0 REAGENTS

Reagents are not typically required for the preservation of waste samples. However, reagents will be utilized for decontamination of equipment. Decontamination solutions required are specified in ERT/SERAS SOP #2006, Sampling Equipment Decontamination.

7.0 PROCEDURE

7.1 Preparation

1. Determine the extent of the sampling effort, the sampling methods to be employed, and the types and amounts of equipment and supplies needed.

2. Obtain necessary sampling and monitoring equipment.

3. Decontaminate or preclean equipment, and ensure that it is in working order.

4. Prepare scheduling and coordinate with staff, clients, and regulatory agency, if appropriate.

5. Perform a general site survey prior to site entry in accordance with the site specific Health and Safety Plan.

6. Identify and mark all sampling locations.

7.2 Preliminary Inspection

1. Inspect the external structural characteristics of each tank and record in the site logbook. Potential sampling points should be evaluated for safety, accessibility and sample quality.

2. Prior to opening a tank for internal inspection, the tank sampling team shall:

   - Review safety procedures and emergency contingency plans with the Health and Safety Officer.
   - Ensure that the tank is properly grounded.
   - Remove all sources of ignition from the immediate area.

3. Each tank should be mounted using appropriate means. Remove manway covers using non-sparking tools.

4. Collect air quality measurements for each potential sample location using an explosimeter/oxygen meter for a lower explosive limit (LEL/O_2) reading and an OVA/HNU for an organic vapor concentration. Both readings should be taken from the tank headspace, above the sampling port, and in the breathing zone.

5. Prior to commencing sampling, the tank headspace should be cleared of any toxic or explosive vapor concentration using a high volume explosion proof blower. No work shall start if LEL readings exceed 25%. At 10% LEL, work can continue but with extreme caution.

7.3 Sampling Procedure

1. Determine the depth of any and all liquid, solid, and liquid/solid interface, and depth of sludge using a weighted tape measure, probe line, sludge judge, or equivalent.

2. Collect liquid samples from one (1) foot below the surface, from mid-depth of liquid, and from one (1) foot above the bottom sludge layer. This can be accomplished with a subsurface grab sampler or bacon bomb. For liquids less than five (5) feet in depth, use a glass thief or COLIWASA to collect the sample.

   If sampling storage tanks, vacuum trucks, or process vessels, collect at least one sample from each compartment in the tank. Samples should always be collected through an opened hatch at the top of the tank. Valves near the bottom should not be used, because of their questionable or unknown integrity. If such a valve cannot be closed once opened, the entire tank contents may be lost to the ground surface. Also, individual strata cannot be sampled separately through a valve near the bottom.

3. Compare the three samples for visual phase differences. If phase differences appear, systematic iterative sampling should be performed. By halving the distance between two discrete sampling points, one can determine the depth of the phase change.

4. If another sampling port is available, sample as above to verify the phase information.

5. Measure the inside diameter of the tank and determine the volume of wastes using the depth measurements (Appendix A). Measuring the external diameter may be misleading as some tanks are insulated or have external supports that are covered.

6. Sludges can be collected using a bacon bomb sampler, glass thief, or sludge judge.

7. Record all information on the sample data sheet or site logbook. Label the container with the appropriate sample tag.

8. Decontaminate sampling equipment as per ERT/SERAS SOP #2006, Sampling Equipment Decontamination.

7.4 Sampling Devices

7.4.1 Bacon Bomb Sampler

The bacon bomb sampler (Figure 1, Appendix B) is designed for the collection of material from various levels within a storage tank. It consists of a cylindrical body, usually made of chrome-plated brass and bronze with an internal tapered plunger that acts as a valve to admit the sample. A line attached to the top of the plunger opens and closes the valve. A line is attached to the removable top cover which has a locking mechanism to keep the plunger closed after sampling.

Procedures for Use:

1. Attach the sample line and the plunger line to the sampler.

2. Measure and then mark the sampling line at the desired depth.

3. Gradually lower the sampler by the sample line until the desire level is reached.

4. When the desired level is reached, pull up on the plunger line and allow the sampler to fill before releasing the plunger line to seal off the sampler.

5. Retrieve the sampler by the sample line being careful not to pull up on the plunger line and thereby prevent accidental opening of the bottom valve.

6. Rinse or wipe off the exterior of the sampler body.

7. Position the sampler over the sample container and release its contents by pulling up on the plunger line.

8. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.

9. Replace the flange or manway or place plastic over the tank.

10. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.

11. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.

12. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

7.4.2 Sludge Judge

A sludge judge (Figure 2, Appendix B) is used for obtaining an accurate reading of settleable solids in any liquid. The sampling depth is dependent upon the length of the sludge judge. The sampler consists of 3/4" plastic pipe in 5-ft. sections, marked at 1-ft. increments, with screw-type fittings.

Procedures for Use:

1. Lower the sludge judge to the bottom of the tank.

2. When the bottom has been reached, the pipe is allowed to fill to the surface level. This will seat the check valve, trapping the column of material.

3. When the unit has been raised clear of the tank liquid, the amount of sludge in the sample can be read using the one foot increments marked on the pipe sections.

4. By touching the pin extending from the bottom section against a hard surface, the material is released from the unit.

5. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.

6. Replace the flange or manway or place plastic over the tank.

7. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.

8. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.

9. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

7.4.3 Subsurface Grab Sampler

Subsurface grab samplers (Figure 3, Appendix B) are designed to collect samples of liquids at various depths. The sampler is usually constructed of aluminum or stainless steel tubing with a polypropylene or Teflon head that attaches to a 1-liter sample container.

Procedures for Use:

1. Screw the sample bottle onto the sampling head.

2. Lower the sampler to the desired depth.

3. Pull the ring at the top which opens the spring-loaded plunger in the head assembly.

4. When the bottle is full, release the ring, lift sampler, and remove sample bottle.

5. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.

6. Replace the flange or manway or place plastic over the tank.

7. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.

8. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.

9. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

7.4.4 Glass Thief

The most widely used implement for sampling is a glass tube commonly referred to as a glass thief (Figure 4, Appendix B). This tool is simple, cost effective, quick, and collects a sample without having to decontaminate. Glass thieves are typically 6mm to 16mm I.D. and 48 inches long.

Procedures for Use:

1. Remove cover from sample container.
2. Insert glass tubing almost to the bottom of the tank or until a solid layer is encountered. About one foot of tubing should extend above the drum.
3. Allow the waste in the tank to reach its natural level in the tube.
4. Cap the top of the sampling tube with a tapered stopper or thumb, ensuring liquid does not come into contact with stopper.
5. Carefully remove the capped tube from the tank and insert the uncapped end in the sample container. Do not spill liquid on the outside of the sample container.
6. Release stopper and allow the glass thief to drain until the container is approximately 2/3 full.
7. Remove tube from the sample container, break it into pieces and place the pieces in the tank.
8. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.
9. Replace the bung or place plastic over the tank.
10. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.
11. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.
12. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

In many instances a tank containing waste material will have a sludge layer on the bottom. Slow insertion of the sample tube down into this layer and then a gradual withdrawal will allow the sludge to act as a bottom plug to maintain the fluid in the tube. The plug can be gently removed and placed into the sample container by the use of a stainless steel lab spoon.

7.4.5 Bailer

The positive-displacement volatile sampling bailer (Figure 5, Appendix B) (by GPI) is perhaps the most appropriate for collection of water samples for volatile analysis. Other bailer types (messenger, bottom fill, etc.) are less desirable, but may be mandated by cost and site conditions. Generally, bailers can provide an acceptable sample, providing that the sampling personnel use extra care in the collection process.

Operation

1. Make sure clean plastic sheeting surrounds the tank.

2. Attach a line to the bailer.

3. Lower the bailer slowly and gently into the tank so as not to splash the bailer into the tank contents.

4. Allow the bailer to fill completely and retrieve the bailer from the tank.

5. Begin slowly pouring from the bailer.

6. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.

7. Replace the flange or manway or place plastic over the tank.

8. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.

9. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.

10. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

7.4.6 COLIWASA

Sampling devices are available that allow collection of a sample from the full depth of a tank and maintain its integrity in the transfer tube until delivery to the sample bottle. The sampling device is known as a Composite Liquid Waste Sampler (COLIWASA) (Figure 6, Appendix B). The COLIWASA is a much cited sampler designed to permit representative sampling of multiphase wastes from tanks and other containerized wastes.

One configuration consists of a 152 cm by 4 cm I.D. section of tubing with a neoprene stopper at one end attached by a rod running the length of the tube to a locking mechanism at the other end.

Manipulation of the locking mechanism opens and closes the sampler by raising and lowering the neoprene stopper.

The major drawbacks associated with using a COLIWASA concern decontamination and costs. The sampler is difficult to decontaminate in the field, and its high cost in relation to alternative procedures (glass tubes) makes it an impractical throwaway item. Disposable COLIWASA's are a viable alternative. However, the COLIWASA is still the sampling device of choice for specific applications, especially in instances where a true representation of a multiphase waste is absolutely necessary.

Procedures for Use:

1. Put the sampler in the open position by placing the stopper rod handle in the T-position and pushing the rod down until the handle sits against the sampler's locking block.

2. Slowly lower the sampler into the liquid waste. Lower the sampler at a rate that permits the levels of the liquid inside and outside the sampler tube to be about the same. If the level of the liquid in the sample tube is lower than that outside the sampler, the sampling rate is too fast and will result in a non-representative sample.

3. When the sampler stopper hits the bottom of the waste container, push the sampler tube downward against the stopper to close the sampler. Lock the sampler in the closed position by turning the T-handle until it is upright and one end rests tightly on the locking block.

4. Slowly withdraw the sample from the waste container with one hand while wiping the sampler tube with a disposable cloth or rag with the other hand.

5. Carefully discharge the sample into a suitable sample container by slowly pulling the lower end of the T-handle away from the locking block while the lower end of the sampler is positioned in a sample container.

6. Cap the sample container tightly and place prelabeled sample container in a carrier.

7. Replace the bung or place plastic over the tank.

8. Log all samples in the site logbook and on field data sheets and label all samples.

9. Package samples and complete necessary paperwork.

10. Transport sample to decontamination zone for preparation for transport to analytical laboratory.

8.0 CALCULATIONS

There are no specific calculations for these procedures. Refer to Appendix A regarding calculations utilized in determining tank volumes.

9.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL

There are no specific quality assurance activities which apply to the implementation of these procedures. However, the following general QA procedures apply:

1. All data must be documented on field data sheets or within site logbooks.

2. All instrumentation must be operated in accordance with operating instructions as supplied by the manufacturer, unless otherwise specified in the work plan. Equipment checkout and calibration activities must occur prior to sampling/operation and they must be documented.

10.0 DATA VALIDATION

This section is not applicable to this SOP.

11.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

When working with potentially hazardous materials, follow U.S. EPA, OSHA, and corporate health and safety procedures. More specifically, the hazards associated with tank sampling may cause bodily injury, illness, or death to the worker. Failure to recognize potential hazards of waste containers is the cause of most accidents. It should be assumed that the most unfavorable conditions exist, and that the danger of explosion and poisoning will be present. Hazards specific to tank sampling are:

1. Hazardous atmospheres which are either flammable, toxic, asphyxiating, or corrosive.

2. If activation of electrical or mechanical equipment would cause injury, each piece of equipment should be manually isolated to prevent inadvertent activation while workers are occupied.

3. Communication is of utmost importance between the sampling worker and the standby person to prevent distress or injury going unnoticed.

4. Proper procedures to evacuate a tank with forced air and grounding of equipment and tanks should be reviewed.

12.0 REFERENCES

Guidance Document for Cleanup of Surface Tank and Drum Sites, OSWER Directive 9380.0-3.

Drum Handling Practices at Hazardous Waste Sites, EPA-600/2-86-013.

APPENDIX A
Calculations
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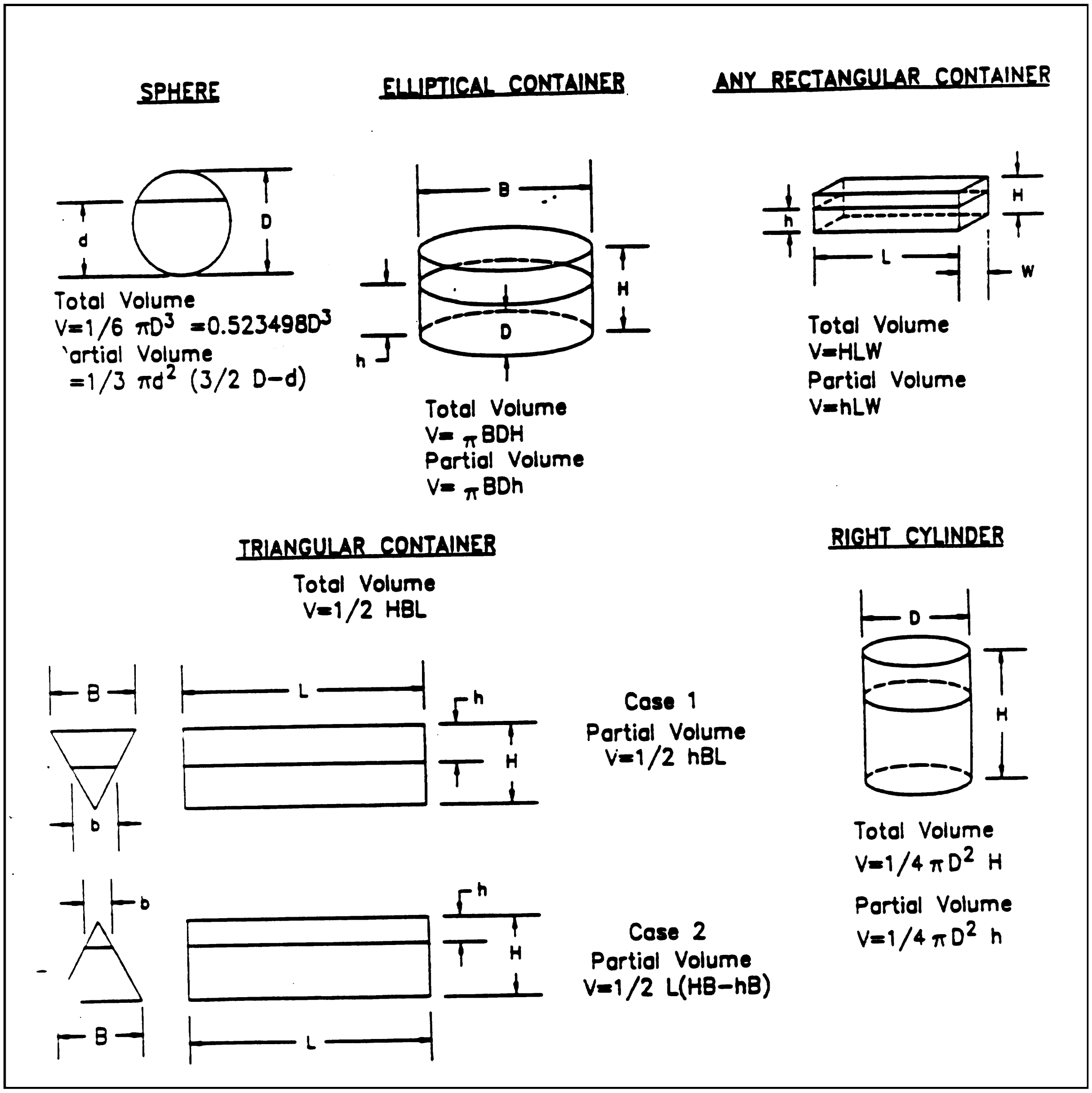
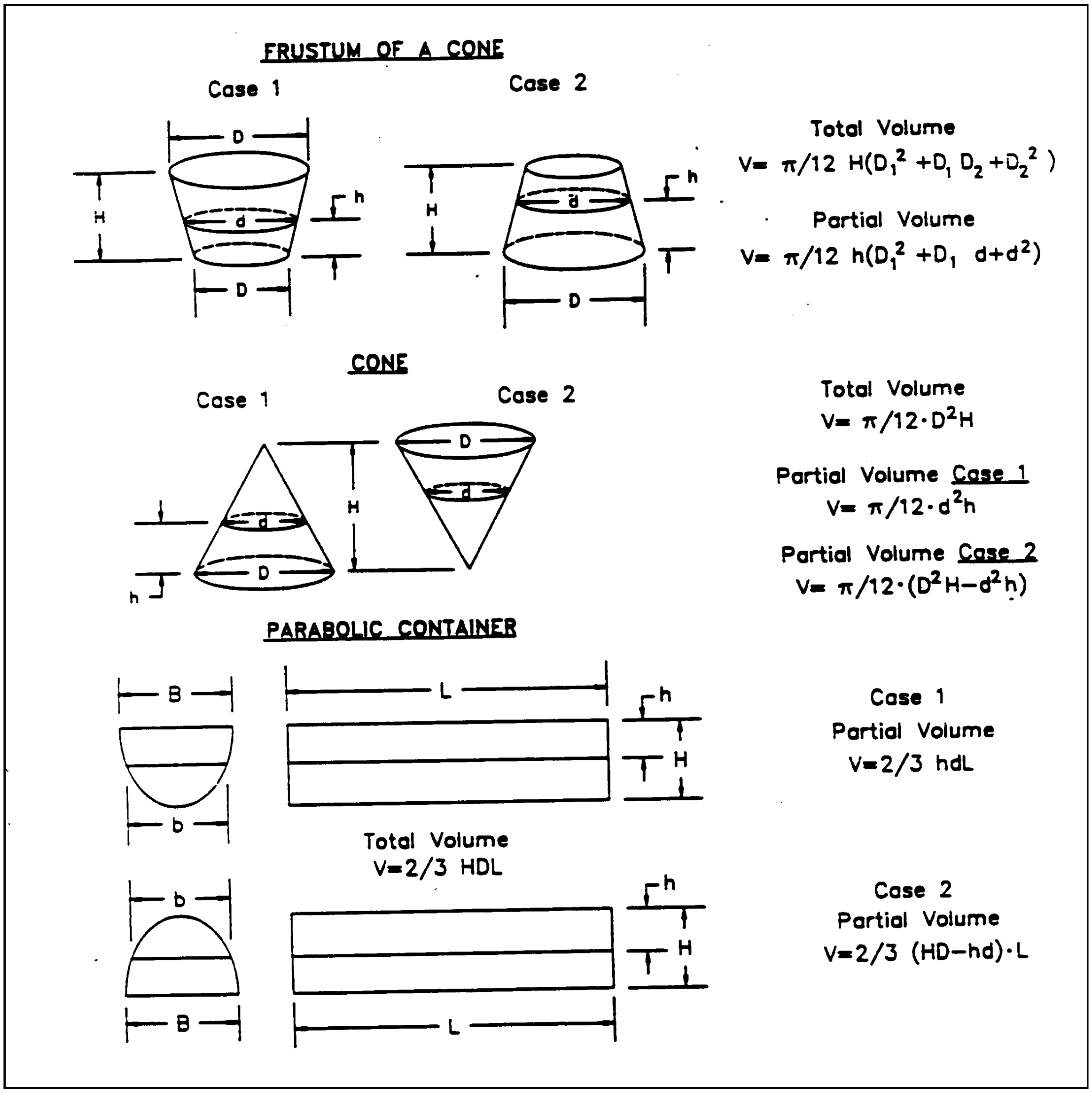
Various Volume Calculations



Various Volume Calculations (Cont'd)



APPENDIX B
Figures
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FIGURE 1. Bacon Bomb Sampler

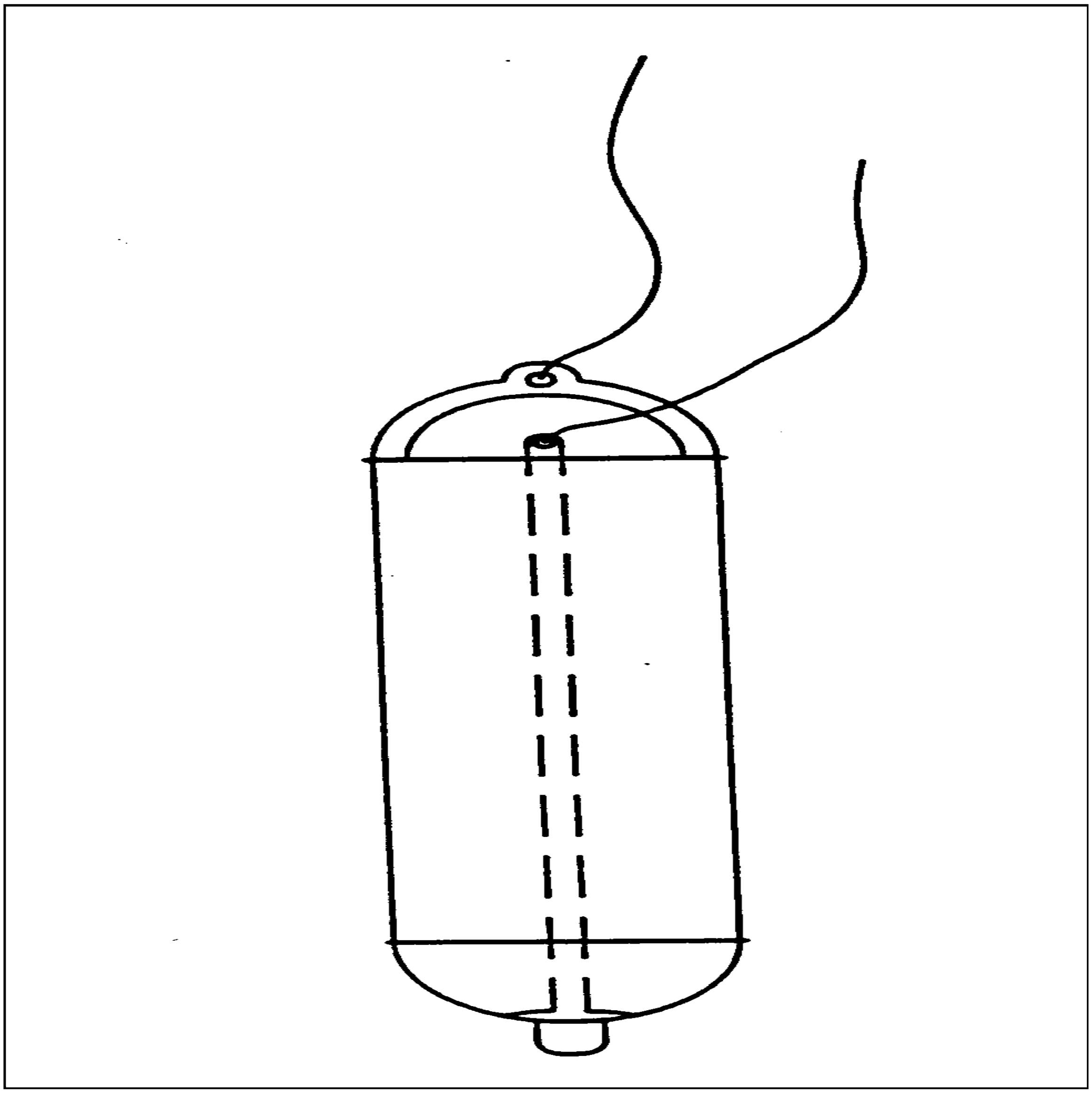

FIGURE 2. Sludge Judge

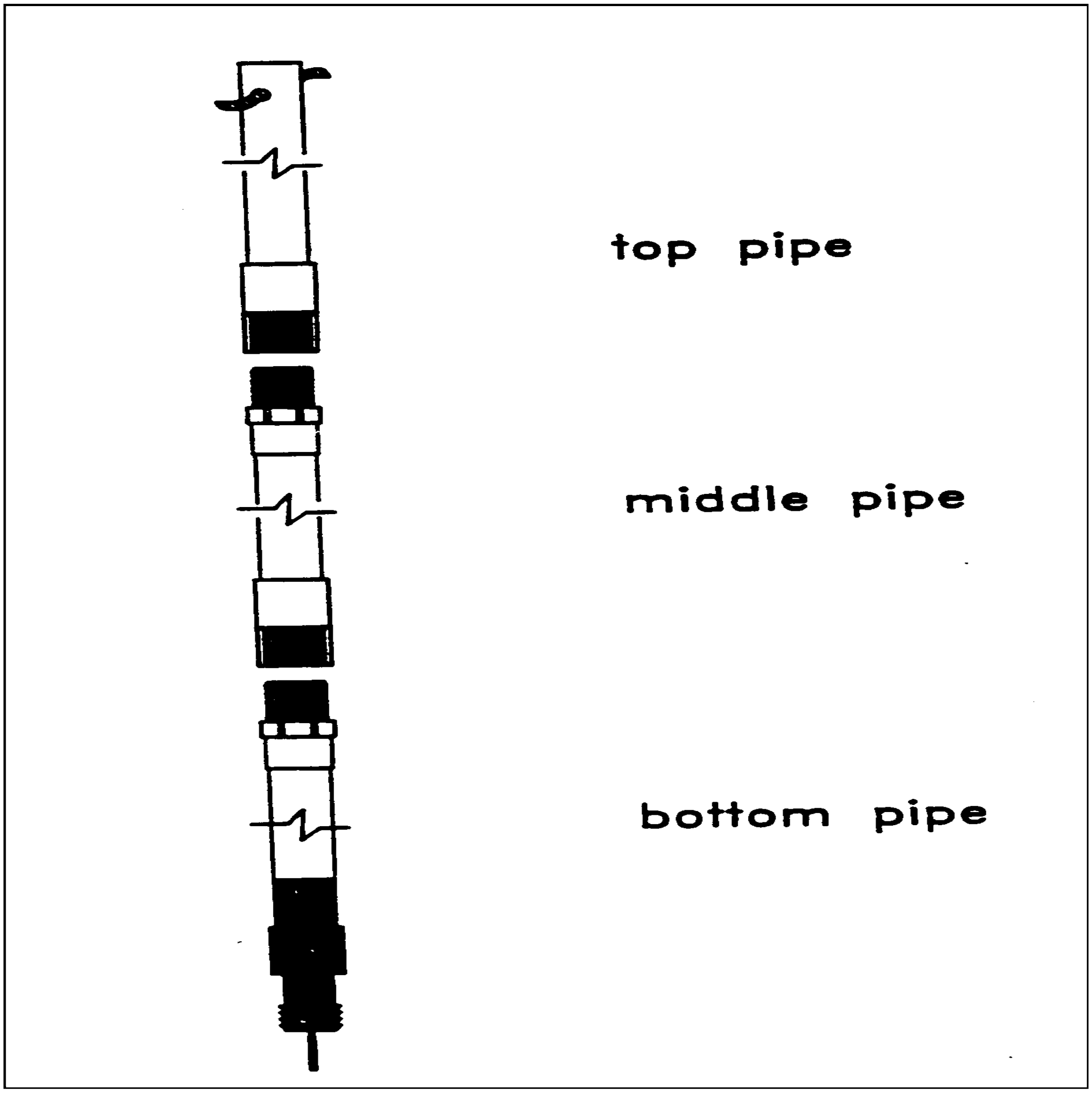

FIGURE 3. Subsurface Grab Sampler

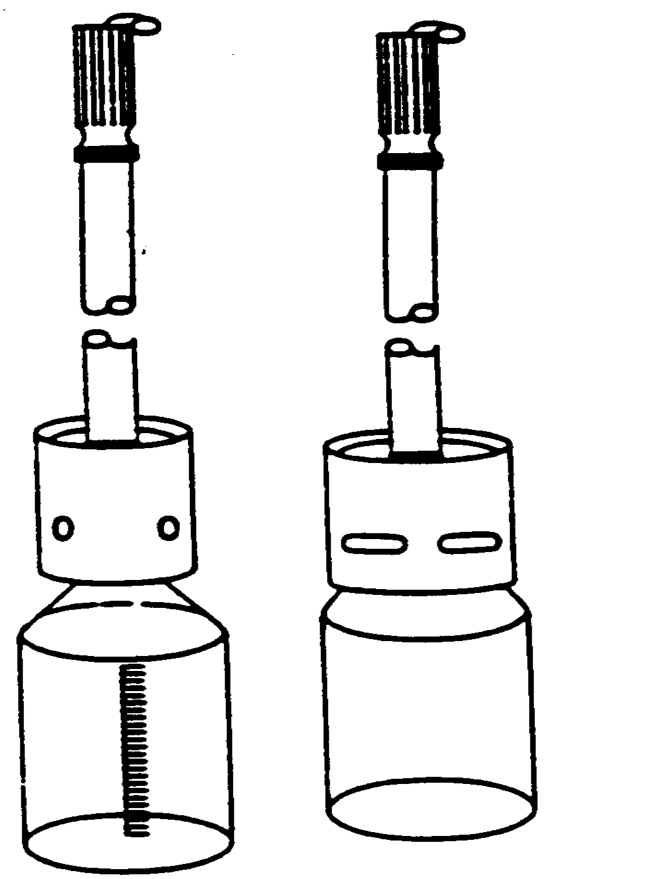

FIGURE 4. Glass Thief

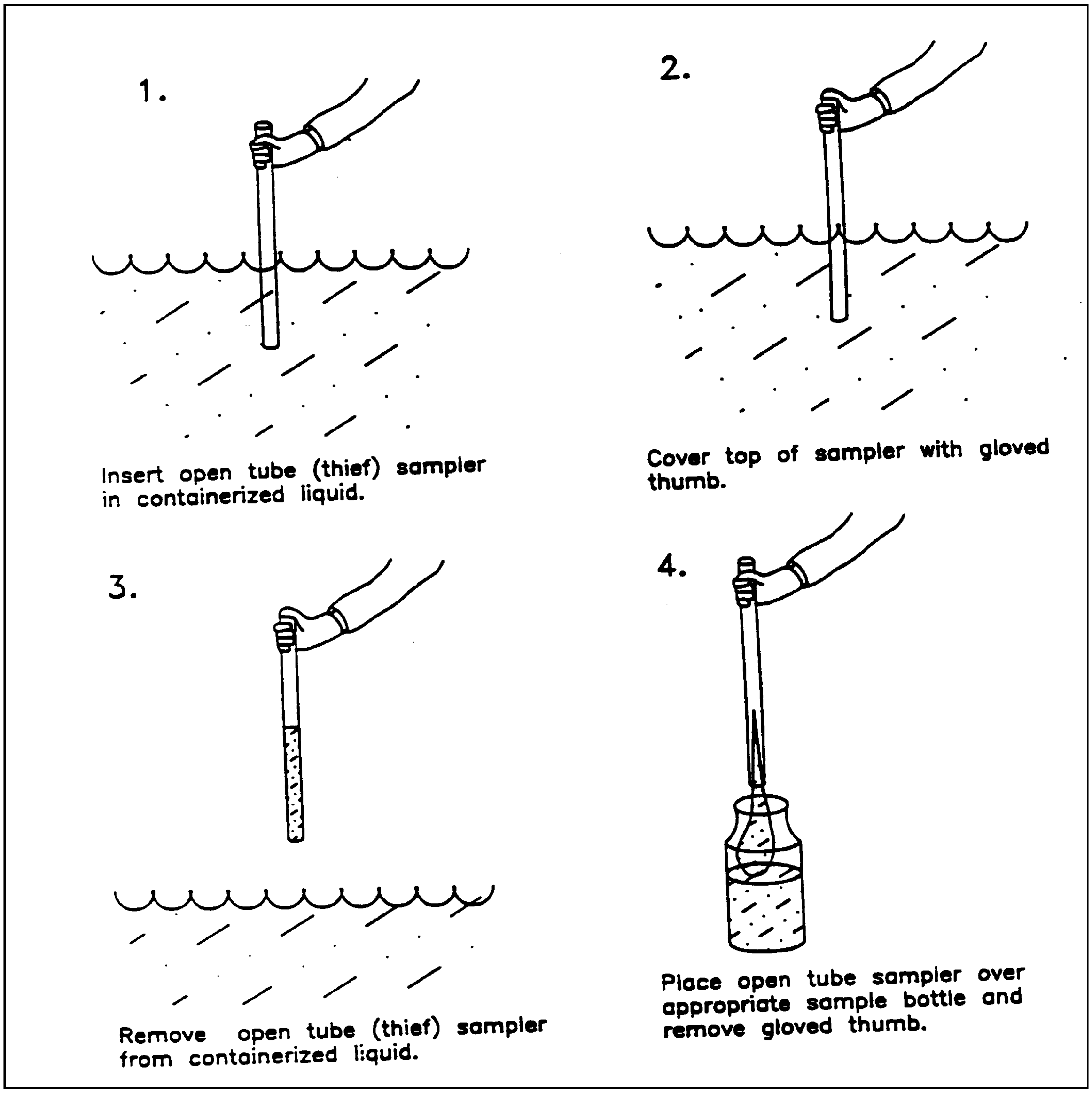

FIGURE 5. Bailer

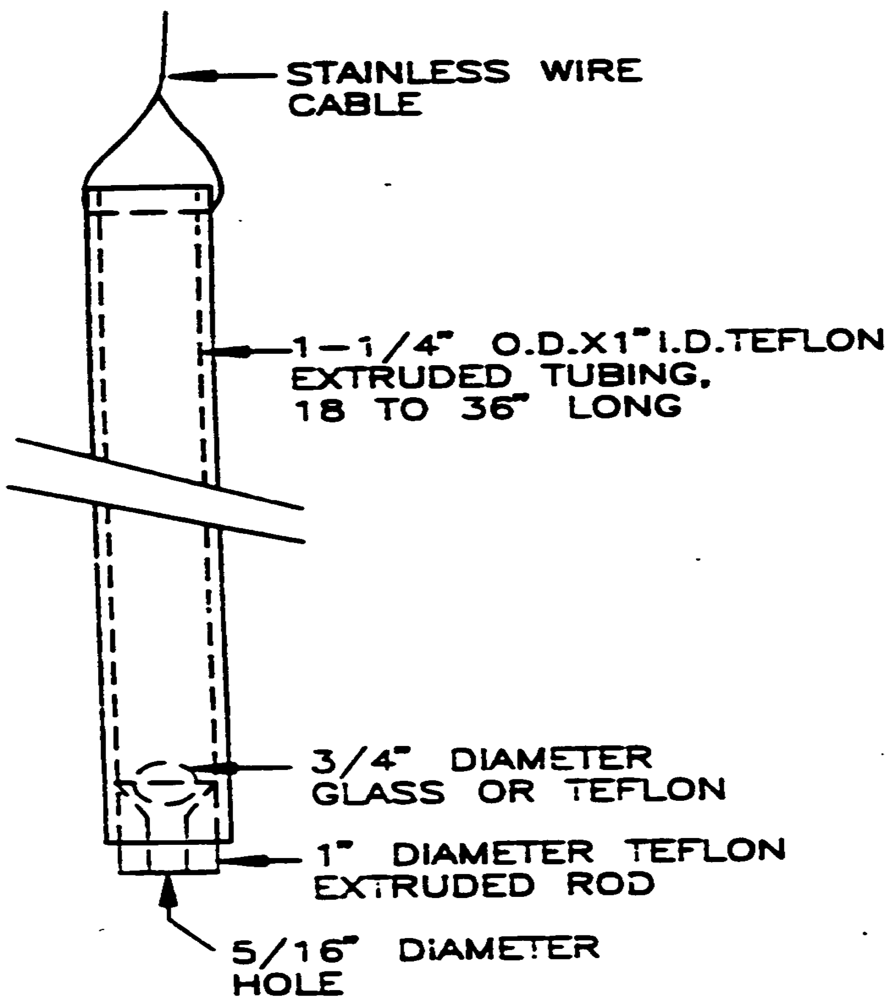

FIGURE 6. COLIWASA