Potable water is our most important nutrient, used for both drinking and cooking. The water being used for personal hygiene and all types of cleaning requires the same high quality. It is therefore important to have enough water of satisfactory quality to cover all types of usage. Safe potable water secures good health, but water can also contain hazardous microbes that cause infectious disease or food poisoning.

Coliforms and E.coli are good indicators of general bacterial contamination and, because they are easy to test for, make ideal indicator bacteria to monitor in water courses, tanks and pipe work. WHO guidelines on potable water quality state that zero Colony Forming Units (CFU) of coliforms and E.coli should be present per 100ml of water sample. The Lovibond® system tests 100ml samples and will indicate the presence of just one CFU/100 ml.

The test uses a pre-dispensed dry blended reagent formulation for total coliform and E.coli. Positive samples are detected by a visible colour change. Performing the coliform test is simple. Add one sachet to 100ml of water, incubate and note the colour change. The formation of a blue colour in 24 hours or less indicates the presence of total coliforms. Positive tubes are then checked for the presence of E.coli by looking for fluorescence under UV light.

A simple, reliable technique which enables the rapid, confirmed enumeration of both total coliforms and pathogenic E.coli.

The Lovibond® DI 10 dipslide incubator is ideal for correct incubation of samples prior to reading, see page 22 for information.