



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
MAINE VOLUNTEER RIVER MONITORING PROGRAM
METHODS FOR USING THE YSI DO200 HANDHELD
METER IN RIVERS AND STREAMS



Note: The mention of brand names does not constitute recommendation of a specific company.



Volunteer River Monitoring Program

Standard Operating Procedure Methods for using the YSI DO200 Handheld Meter

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1. Applicability. This standard operating procedure (SOP) is used by the Volunteer River Monitoring Program (VRMP) of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Watershed Management. It applies to the collection of dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature from rivers and streams in Maine using an YSI DO200 handheld meter.

2. Purpose. The purpose of this SOP is to provide standardized methods for volunteer groups to determine temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO) of rivers and streams as an instantaneous reading using the YSI DO200 handheld meter.

3. Definitions.

A. YSI. Yellow Springs International, manufacturer of water quality monitoring meters.

B. Probe. Sensing device located at the end of a cable that is attached to the meter.

C. KCl solution. Potassium Chloride solution used to fill the probe, also referred to as Oxygen Probe solution

D. Calibration. Set of procedures established by the manufacturer to ensure that the meter is operating properly; a critical quality assurance step in meter preparation prior to use.

E. Membrane. A clear, transparent and paper-thin substance similar to cellophane on the end of the probe. The membrane is permeable and allows gases such as oxygen to pass through into probe sensors while at the same time isolating most other undesirable substances.

F. Jigging. To move the probe under water using steady movements. Unless the probe is being held in swiftly flowing water, the probe shall be moved ("jigged") approximately 1/2 ft per second to overcome the inherent consumption of oxygen by the sensor.



4. Responsibilities.

A. *Volunteer Monitors & Volunteer Groups*

- **Certification.** It is the responsibility of the individual obtaining this data to maintain current certification for the parameter(s) they collect if they wish their data to be entered into the VRMP database. Training will be provided to volunteers on an annual basis by VRMP/DEP staff, and certification will last for one year from the date of training.
- **Data Recording.** It is the responsibility of the individual obtaining this data to record the results and additional qualifying information on current VRMP field sheets obtained from their affiliated watershed association or through the VRMP program of the DEP.
- **Data Quality Checks and Data Submission.** The data manager for the volunteer group will collect and enter volunteer field sheet data into the appropriate computer file, perform quality assurance checks (Refer to Section 5.10 of the Quality Assurance Program Plan), and submit data to the VRMP following protocols outlined in the volunteer group's latest sampling and analysis plan (SAP) that has been approved by the VRMP.

B. *Volunteer River Monitoring Program (VRMP) Staff*

- **Oversight of Volunteer Groups and Volunteers.** VRMP staff will oversee volunteer groups and volunteers through a variety of ways including maintaining an up-to-date VRMP quality assurance program plan (QAPP); reviewing sampling and analysis plans (SAPs) of the volunteer groups; providing annual training/certification sessions for volunteers; conducting quality assurance checks on data submitted by volunteer groups and laboratories; and uploading data into the DEP's EGAD database. These tasks are described in greater detail in the VRMP's latest QAPP.

5. Guidelines and Procedures.

A. *YSI DO200 Meter Preparation.*

- **First time use.** Follow manufacturer's instructions for preparing meter for first time use. (Refer to Appendix A; sections "General Introduction", "Initial Inspection", "Precautions", "Probe Preparation", and "Battery Installation"; pgs. 2 – 3).
- **Beginning of field season.** Before each field season, volunteer monitoring groups shall conduct a full inspection of the meter. If membrane has been stored dry, follow manufacturer's instructions for first-time use (see above). A new membrane cap and



- batteries shall be installed on the probe at the start of the sampling season and additionally, as needed.
- Each meter “setup” should be equipped with the following items so that field repairs can be undertaken as necessary:
- Extra KCL fluid and membrane caps for probe
 - Extra batteries
 - Field data sheet
 - Screwdriver for removing back of meter to replace batteries
 - Pencil with eraser
- **Prior to field sampling.** Before each field sample collection, the volunteer shall inspect the meter including an inspection of the condition of the probe membrane or membrane cap and batteries.
 - (1) Check the membrane for air bubbles and wrinkles. If bubbles or wrinkles are present, remove membrane cap, refill with KCL solution and replace membrane cap.
 - (2) Check to make sure no drops of water are clinging to the membrane. If drops are present, blow on membrane to gently remove droplets. Don't tap; these probes are very fragile. Replace probe into the calibration bottle.
 - (3) Batteries should be checked and meter should be calibrated according to manufacturer's instructions (see next paragraph).
 - (4) Power on the meter and allow sufficient warm-up time (20 min) prior to initial use for the day.
 - **Dissolved Oxygen Calibration.** The YSI DO200 meter shall be calibrated each time the unit is turned on. Meters shall be calibrated to a 100% water-saturated air environment. (For instructions, refer to Appendix A, section “Calibration Set-Up”, pgs. 4-5).
 - **Dissolved Oxygen Check Against “Zero Dissolved Oxygen” Standard.** Volunteers shall check their DO meter using zero oxygen solution at least once a month, typically at the beginning of the month. The zero oxygen solution can be obtained from VRMP/DEP staff as needed. Volunteers shall record the dissolved oxygen value they measure with their meter in the appropriate blank on the field data sheet. (See section 5-B of this SOP for instructions on how to make measurements with the YSI DO200 meter.)

B. Dissolved Oxygen/Temperature Measurements.

- **Sampling Period and Location.** Sampling period and site location information will be documented in the volunteer groups' SAPs (that require approval by the VRMP) which are submitted by the volunteer groups prior to the beginning of a sampling season. (Detailed information regarding how volunteer groups are to obtain and document site location information can be found in VRMP SOP-02 [Documenting Site Location].)



- **Sample Timing.** Dissolved oxygen data collected between dawn and 8 am are important for assessment of attainment of DO criteria within Maine’s Water Quality Standards. But, except as naturally occurs, DO concentrations below the applicable DO criteria at any time of day signal non-attainment. If there are no DO concentrations below the criteria after 8 am, then data between dawn and 8 am must be collected to assess attainment of the criteria.
- **Familiarize Yourself With the Meter.** Familiarize yourself with the basic operation, keypad, and readouts of the meter (Appendix A; sections “The Keypad”, “The LCD Display”, “Operational Procedures”, and “Measurement Modes”; pgs. 3-4.)
- **General Sampling Protocol.**
 - Record site location on data sheet.
 - Remove probe from calibration bottle.
 - Submerge probe in the water at the site where you are monitoring, as described in your group’s approved SAP.
 - Allow the dissolved oxygen (DO) reading to stabilize (at least 15 seconds) before recording the value on the field sheet.
 - Follow the instructions specific to measuring DO and temperature below.
 - The meter should remain turned on between stations, unless time between samplings exceeds 30-60 minutes. If meter is turned off, the field probe should be stored inside the calibration chamber during transport, sufficient time (20 min) should be allowed for warm-up, and the meter should be re-calibrated.
- **Dissolved Oxygen Measurements**
 - (1) Review and follow the instructions for making DO measurements in section “Operational Procedures” and “Measurement Modes” (Appendix A, pg. 4). Make sure units are taken in mg/L (or ppm).
 - (2) *Note of caution:* Unless the probe is equipped with a stirrer, jiggling of the probe is extremely important for obtaining accurate dissolved oxygen readings, unless you have placed the probe in a swiftly-moving section of stream or river. (The probe is dependent on the amount of oxygen that passes across the membrane, and the probe actually consumes oxygen as it is making measurements.) An up-and-down motion (jiggling) creating movement of 1/2 ft per second is recommended.
- **Temperature Measurements.**
 - (1) Review and follow the instructions for making temperature measurements in Section “Operational Procedures” and “Measurement Modes” (Appendix A, pg. 4).
- **Quality Control**



- (1) At the beginning of each field season, all VRMP staff and VRMP volunteers who will collect dissolved oxygen and temperature data will have a training/refreshers/certification session to (re)familiarize themselves with the contents of this SOP.
- (2) For every volunteer, a field duplicate shall be obtained for all parameters for at least 10% of their own sampling efforts. A field duplicate will be collected for every 10 samples monitored.
- (3) Refer to the VRMP quality assurance project plan (QAPP) for more QA/QC details.

6. Equipment Care.

A. *Start of field season.*

1. Follow manufacturer's directions for preparation of a new probe or renewing probe in the spring (refer to Appendix A; section "Probe Preparation", pg. 3).
2. Use new batteries at start of each sampling season. An extra set of appropriate size batteries should be included in the meter carrying case.
3. Each D.O. meter should have the following items for making repairs in the field. See item 5-A (under "Beginning of field season") for details.

B. *Field Season*

1. Ideally the meter should be in water-resistant case with padding to protect it from damage.
2. Always store the probe in the calibration/storage bottle with a small wet sponge to keep the electrolyte from drying out and the membrane cap from being damaged.
3. Allow the case and contents to air-dry at end of each day. This may be accomplished by simply propping the protective case's lid open. When contents are very wet, remove the contents and spread out to facilitate drying.
4. Keep meter from freezing.
5. Refer to Appendix A (sections "Precautions" {pgs, 2-3} and "Probe Maintenance" {pg. 5}) for manufacturer's recommendations for maintenance requirements.

C. *End of field season*

1. Completely dry meter and case and all items in the case before storing.
2. Remove batteries.
3. Remove membrane cap.
4. Rinse entire probe and probe chamber with distilled water.
5. Cover top of probe to keep dust and dirt out for winter.
6. Keep meter dry and at room temperature to prevent corrosion of electronic parts.
7. Review Appendix A (sections "Precautions" {pgs, 2-3} and "Probe Maintenance" {pg. 5}) for more tips.
8. Record winterization date and equipment repairs in your volunteer group's Equipment Log.



9. Label the meter and case as 'WINTERIZED' in an obvious manner (so users will know the current status of the unit).



7. Specifications

Display	Range	Accuracy	Resolution
Dissolved Oxygen (ppm or mg/L)	0 to 20.00 ppm (mg/L)	±2% of the reading or ± 2% air saturation, whichever is greater	0.01 mg/L
Dissolved Oxygen % air-sat	0 to 200.0 %	±2% of the reading or ±0.2 ppm, whichever is greater	0.1 %
Temperature (°C)	-6.0 to 46.0 °C	±0.3 °C ± 1 digit	0.1 °C

8. Appendix

A. Dissolved Oxygen Meter owner's manual:

YSI Incorporated. 2004. Operations Manual: YSI EcoSense® DO200 Field/Lab
 Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature Instrument. Yellow Springs, Ohio.

9. References.

A. DEP Standard Operating Procedures:

- Document number #:DEP-LW0890: Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature, Instantaneous Measurement using Electronic Meters
- Document number#: DEPLW0636: Protocols for using Hanna Dissolved Oxygen and Specific Conductance/Temperature/pH Meters

B. *Maine VRMP QAPP:*

- Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP). 2009. Maine Volunteer River Monitoring Program (VRMP) Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP). Portland, ME. DEPLW-0984.