

Title: Storage and Shelf Life of 3M™ Petrifilm™ Plates

Number: TB.002.02
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Technology Platform: Indicator Organism Testing
Originating Location: St. Paul, Minnesota

Storage

*Original Sealed
Foil Pouches* Store unopened pouches refrigerated or frozen at temperatures equal to or below 8° C (46° F). Just prior to use, allow 3M™ Petrifilm™ plates to equilibrate to room temperature. Return unused plates to pouch.

Open Pouches To prevent exposure to moisture, do not refrigerate opened pouches. Reseal opened pouches by folding back the open end of the pouch and taping or clipping it shut. Store resealed pouches in a cool, dry place for no longer than a month.

Opened pouches may also be stored in a freezer. It is recommended that opened pouches of 3M Petrifilm Plates are stored at frozen temperatures if the laboratory temperature exceeds 25° C (77° F) and/or the laboratory is located in a region where the relative humidity exceeds 50% (with the exception of air conditioned premises). Tape the pouch shut and place in a resealable container.

To remove frozen Petrifilm Plates for use, open the container, remove only the number of plates that are needed and immediately return remaining plates to the freezer in the sealed container. Plates should not be used past their expiration date. The freezer used for storing open pouches of Petrifilm Plates must not have an automatic defrost cycle. Freezers with automated defrost cycles repeatedly expose the plates to moisture that can degrade nutrients and decrease plate performance.



3M Microbiology
Technical Bulletin

Shelf Life

The lot code and expiration date are stamped on the outside of the cardboard box, the back of each foil pouch and on each individual plate across the top (hinged edge) of the plate. The lot code appears as 4 numbers, 2 numbers and 2 letters. The expiration date is incorporated into the lot code in that the first four numbers represent the year and the next two numbers represent the month. In the example of lot code 2010-12 KB, expiration would be at the end of December, 2010 when stored appropriately.

- Shelf life of an **opened** pouch stored at room temperature is one month from the date it was opened.
- **Unopened** pouches stored at or below 8° C (46° F) or **opened** pouches stored frozen have a shelf life up to the date shown on the pouch or plates.

Product (in original sealed foil pouch)	Shelf Life from Date of Manufacture
Petrifilm Aerobic Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm Coliform Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm E. coli/Coliform Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm Enterobacteriaceae Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm Environmental Listeria Plates	18 months
Petrifilm High-Sensitivity Coliform Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm Rapid Coliform Count Plates	12 months
Petrifilm Select E.coli Count Plate	18 months
Petrifilm Staph Express Count Plates	18 months
Petrifilm Staph Express Disks	18 months
Petrifilm Yeast & Mold Count Plates	18 months

Please refer to the appropriate 3M™ Petrifilm™ Plate package insert for more information.

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