

Tips on using the Product Testing Database

How to understand the numbers

When you explore this data, keep in mind its limitations. Here are a few things to look for.

Analysis value

Labs report a number called the **analysis value** for each chemical it looks for in a sample. However, each chemical they look for isn't positively identified.

Reporting limit and detection

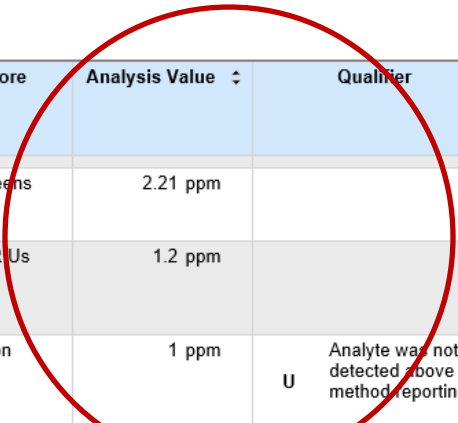
Lab test methods can only *confidently* find, or detect, the amount of a chemical in a sample down to a level called the **reporting limit**. The reporting limit depends on the chemical, the instrument, the analysis method, and other factors. We've gotten better at detecting smaller amounts of chemicals in samples as technologies advance.

When labs can't detect a chemical above the reporting limit, they put the reporting limit value in the analysis value column. How do you know when this is the case?

Data qualifiers

Labs use standard letter codes called **data qualifiers** to tell you how to interpret analysis values. "U" is a common qualifier meaning a chemical wasn't detected in the sample above the reporting limit. We call these "non-detects."

In Figure 1, the chemicals in the first two rows have no qualifier, meaning they were detected in the samples (at 2.21 and 1.2 ppm). The chemical in the third row has an analysis value of 1 ppm, but the U qualifier means it wasn't detected above the reporting limit of 1 ppm. The chemical *might* be in the sample, but not above this limit. For a complete list of data qualifiers, see Table 1 below.



Chemical	Product Description	Component Description	Component Material	Brand	Store	Analysis Value	Qualifier
Antimony 7440-36-0	Wind Up Bunny	Wind Up Bunny - Eyes	Synthetic Polymers - Plastic	Walgreens	Walgreens	2.21 ppm	
Antimony 7440-36-0	Old ID: TR082-a00, 15 piece Police Figures	Old ID: TR082-c02, torso of police dog	Historical Record - material was not recorded	playmobil	Toys R Us	1.2 ppm	
Antimony 7440-36-0	Old ID: AM034-a00, Slimy Slugs	Old ID: AM034-c01, yellow slime (in plastic bag)	Historical Record - material was not recorded	Horrible Science	Amazon	1 ppm	U Analyte was not detected above the method reporting limit.

Figure 1: Example of data with and without Qualifiers.

Table 1: Data qualifiers - Product Testing Database

Qualifier Code	Description
E	The chemical was found, but there is some uncertainty about the reported amount because the instrument was not calibrated with a high enough standard.
J	The chemical was found in the sample but there is some uncertainty about the reported amount. The uncertainty could be due to a range of factors, most often because one or more of the quality control tests were outside of acceptable limits.
N	There is some uncertainty regarding the identification of the chemical found but the amount reported is accurate.
NJ	There is some uncertainty regarding both the identification of and amount of the chemical. These results should be used with caution.
REJ	Data are unusable for all purposes. Sample results rejected due to serious deficiencies in the ability to analyze the sample and meet quality control criteria. The presence or absence of the analyte cannot be verified.
U	The chemical was not found in the sample above the reporting limit. The amount shown in the Analysis Value is the reporting limit.
UJ	The chemical was not found in the sample above the reporting limit. This limit has some uncertainty to it.
(blank)	The absence of a code means the chemical was found in the amount shown without errors or concerns.

How to see more info about each test

Each row of data in the results grid has more information about the product and the test. Click “View” in the “Detail” column.

Detail	Chemical	Product Description	Component Description	Component Material	Brand	Store	Analysis Value
View	Antimony 7440-36-0	Old ID: TR082-a00, 15 piece Police Figures	Old ID: TR082-c02, torso of police dog	Historical Record - material was not recorded	playmobil	Toys R Us	1.2 ppm

Figure 2: Link to detail about a result.

On the Result Detail screen, see details about the product and the test, including pictures and a link to a published report (under “Collected for Study”). The report provides more context about what the results mean.

Component Details						
Product Description	Component Description	Component Material Name	Duplicate Quantity	Composite Of Components	Processing Method Code	
Old ID: TR082-a00, 15 piece Police Figures	Old ID: TR082-c02, torso of police dog	Historical Record - material was not recorded	1		UNKNOWN	Unknow where tl
Sent To Lab Date	Returned By Lab Date	Collected for Study Metals and Phthalates in Tier 3 Children's Products	QAPP Phthalates and Metals in Tier 3 Children's Products	RCW 70.240	WAC 173-334	

Figure 3: Result Detail screen, showing link to published report.