



# Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E119; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

*This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.*

## INTRODUCTION

The performance of walls, columns, floors, and other building members under fire-exposure conditions is an item of major importance in securing constructions that are safe, and that are not a menace to neighboring structures or to the public. Recognition of this is registered in the codes of many authorities, municipal and other. It is important to secure balance of the many units in a single building, and of buildings of like character and use in a community; and also to promote uniformity in requirements of various authorities throughout the country. To do this it is necessary that the fire-resistive properties of materials and assemblies be measured and specified according to a common standard expressed in terms that are applicable alike to a wide variety of materials, situations, and conditions of exposure.

Such a standard is found in the test methods that follow. They prescribe a standard exposing fire of controlled extent and severity. Performance is defined as the period of resistance to standard exposure elapsing before the first critical point in behavior is observed. Results are reported in units in which field exposures can be judged and expressed.

The test methods may be cited as the “Standard Fire Tests,” and the performance or exposure shall be expressed as “2-h,” “6-h,” “1/2-h,” etc.

When a factor of safety exceeding that inherent in the test conditions is desired, a proportional increase should be made in the specified time-classification period.

## 1. Scope\*

1.1 The test methods described in this fire-test-response standard are applicable to assemblies of masonry units and to composite assemblies of structural materials for buildings, including loadbearing and other walls and partitions, columns, girders, beams, slabs, and composite slab and beam assemblies for floors and roofs. They are also applicable to other assemblies and structural units that constitute permanent integral parts of a finished building.

1.2 It is the intent that classifications shall register comparative performance to specific fire-test conditions during the

period of exposure and shall not be construed as having determined suitability under other conditions or for use after fire exposure.

1.3 *This standard is used to measure and describe the response of materials, products, or assemblies to heat and flame under controlled conditions, but does not by itself incorporate all factors required for fire hazard or fire risk assessment of the materials, products or assemblies under actual fire conditions.*

1.4 These test methods prescribe a standard fire exposure for comparing the test results of building construction assemblies. The results of these tests are one factor in assessing predicted fire performance of building construction and assemblies. Application of these test results to predict the performance of actual building construction requires the evaluation of test conditions.

1.5 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.6 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the*

<sup>1</sup> These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E05 on Fire Standards and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E05.11 on Fire Resistance.

Current edition approved May 1, 2020. Published June 2020. Originally approved in 1917 as C19-1917 T. Last previous edition approved in 2019 as E119 – 19. DOI: 10.1520/E0119-20.

These test methods, of which the present standard represents a revision, were prepared by Sectional Committee on Fire Tests of Materials and Construction, under the joint sponsorship of the National Bureau of Standards, the ANSI Fire Protection Group, and ASTM, functioning under the procedure of the American National Standards Institute.

\*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.

1.7 The text of this standard references notes and footnotes which provide explanatory material. These notes and footnotes (excluding those in tables and figures) shall not be considered as requirements of the standard.

1.8 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

[C569 Test Method for Indentation Hardness of Preformed Thermal Insulations \(Withdrawn 1988\)](#)<sup>3</sup>

[D6513 Practice for Calculating the Superimposed Load on Wood-frame Walls for Standard Fire-Resistance Tests](#)

[E176 Terminology of Fire Standards](#)

[E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods](#)

[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

[E814 Test Method for Fire Tests of Penetration Firestop Systems](#)

[E2226 Practice for Application of Hose Stream](#)

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms found in this test method, refer to Terminology [E176](#).

## 4. Significance and Use

4.1 These test methods are intended to evaluate the duration for which the types of building elements noted in [1.1](#) contain a fire, retain their structural integrity, or exhibit both properties during a predetermined test exposure.

4.2 The test exposes a test specimen to a standard fire controlled to achieve specified temperatures throughout a specified time period. When required, the fire exposure is followed by the application of a specified standard fire hose stream applied in accordance with Practice [E2226](#). The test provides a relative measure of the fire-test-response of comparable building elements under these fire exposure conditions. The exposure is not representative of all fire conditions because conditions vary with changes in the amount, nature and distribution of fire loading, ventilation, compartment size and configuration, and heat sink characteristics of the compartment. Variation from the test conditions or test specimen construction, such as size, materials, method of assembly, also

<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

affects the fire-test-response. For these reasons, evaluation of the variation is required for application to construction in the field.

4.3 The test standard provides for the following:

4.3.1 For walls, partitions, and floor or roof test specimens:

4.3.1.1 Measurement of the transmission of heat.

4.3.1.2 Measurement of the transmission of hot gases through the test specimen.

4.3.1.3 For loadbearing elements, measurement of the load carrying ability of the test specimen during the test exposure.

4.3.2 For individual loadbearing members such as beams and columns:

4.3.2.1 Measurement of the load carrying ability under the test exposure with consideration for the end support conditions (that is, restrained or not restrained).

4.4 The test standard does not provide the following:

4.4.1 Information as to performance of test specimens constructed with components or lengths other than those tested.

4.4.2 Evaluation of the degree by which the test specimen contributes to the fire hazard by generation of smoke, toxic gases, or other products of combustion.

4.4.3 Measurement of the degree of control or limitation of the passage of smoke or products of combustion through the test specimen.

4.4.4 Simulation of the fire behavior of joints between building elements such as floor-wall or wall-wall, etc., connections.

4.4.5 Measurement of flame spread over the surface of test specimens.

4.4.6 The effect on fire-resistance of conventional openings in the test specimen, that is, electrical receptacle outlets, plumbing pipe, etc., unless specifically provided for in the construction tested. Also see Test Method [E814](#) for testing of fire stops.

## 5. Test Specimen

5.1 The test specimen shall be representative of the construction that the test is intended to assess, as to materials, workmanship, and details such as dimensions of parts, and shall be built under conditions representative of those applied in building construction and operation. The physical properties of the materials and ingredients used in the test specimen shall be determined and recorded.

5.2 The size and dimensions of the test specimen specified herein shall apply for classifying constructions of dimensions within the range employed in buildings. When the conditions of use limit the construction to smaller dimensions, the dimensions of the test specimen shall be reduced proportionately for a test qualifying them for such restricted use.

5.3 Test specimens designed with a built-up roof shall be tested with a roof covering of 3 ply, 15 lb (6.8 kg) type felt, with not more than 120 lb (54 kg) per square 100 ft<sup>2</sup> (9 m<sup>2</sup>) of hot mopping asphalt without gravel surfacing. Tests with this covering do not preclude the field use of other coverings with a larger number of plies of felt, with a greater amount of asphalt or with gravel surfacing.

5.4 Roofing systems designed for other than the use of built-up roof coverings shall be tested using materials and details of construction representative of field application.

**6. Protection and Conditioning of Test Specimen**

6.1 Protect the test specimen during and after fabrication to ensure its quality and condition at the time of test. The test specimen shall not be tested until its required strength has been attained, and, until an air-dry condition has been achieved in accordance with the requirements given in 6.2 – 6.4. Protect the testing equipment and test specimen undergoing the fire-resistance test from any condition of wind or weather that is capable of affecting results. The ambient air temperature at the beginning of the test shall be within the range of 50 to 90°F (10 to 32°C). The velocity of air across the unexposed surface of the test specimen, measured just before the test begins, shall not exceed 4.4 ft (1.3 m/s), as determined by an anemometer placed at right angles to the unexposed surface. When mechanical ventilation is employed during the test, an air stream shall not be directed across the surface of the test specimen.

6.2 Prior to the fire-resistance test, condition test specimens with the objective of providing moisture condition within the test specimen representative of that in similar construction in buildings. For purposes of standardization, this condition is established at equilibrium resulting from conditioning in an ambient atmosphere of 50 % relative humidity at 73°F (Note 1).

6.2.1 With some constructions it is difficult or impossible to achieve such uniformity. Where this is the case, test specimens are tested when the dampest portion of the test specimen, or the portion at 6-in. (152-mm) depth below the surface of massive constructions, has achieved a moisture content corresponding to conditioning to equilibrium with air in the range of 50 to 75 % relative humidity at 73 ± 5°F (23 ± 3°C).

6.2.2 When evidence is shown that test specimens conditioned in a heated building will fail to meet the requirements of 6.2 after a 12-month conditioning period, or in the event that the nature of the construction is such that it is evident that conditioning of the test specimen interior is prevented by hermetic sealing, the moisture condition requirements of 6.2 are permitted to be waived, and either 6.2.2.1 or 6.2.2.2 shall apply.

6.2.2.1 Alternative conditioning methods are permitted to be used to achieve test specimen equilibrium prescribed in 6.2 (Note 2), or

6.2.2.2 The specimen tested when its strength is at least equal to its design strength after a minimum 28 day conditioning period.

6.3 Avoid conditioning procedures that will alter the structural or fire-resistance characteristics of the test specimen from those produced as the result of conditioning in accordance with procedures given in 6.2.

6.4 Information on the actual moisture content and distribution within the test specimen shall be obtained within 72 h prior to the fire. Include this information in the test report (Note 3).

NOTE 1—A recommended method for determining the relative humidity within a hardened concrete test specimen with electric sensing elements is

described in Appendix I of the paper by Menzel, C. A., “A Method for Determining the Moisture Condition of Hardened Concrete in Terms of Relative Humidity,” *Proceedings*, ASTM, Vol 55, 1955, p. 1085. A similar procedure with electric sensing elements is permitted to be used to determine the relative humidity within test specimens made with other materials.

With wood constructions, the moisture meter based on the electrical resistance method can be used, when appropriate, as an alternative to the relative humidity method to indicate when wood has attained the proper moisture content. Electrical methods are described on page 12-2 of the 1999 edition of the *Wood Handbook of the Forest Products Laboratory*, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The relationships between relative humidity and moisture content are given in Table 3-4 on p. 3-7. This indicates that wood has a moisture content of 13 % at a relative humidity of 70 % for a temperature of 70 to 80°F (21 to 27°C).

NOTE 2—An example where alternative conditioning may be employed is where concrete specimens are conditioned at elevated temperatures in a “heated building” to more rapidly obtain the conditions described in 6.2. In such cases, temperatures other than 73°F are used to reach a maximum 50 % relative humidity.

NOTE 3—If the moisture condition of the test specimen is likely to change drastically from the 72-h sampling time prior to test, the sampling should be made not later than 24 h prior to the test.

**7. Control**

*7.1 Fire-Resistance Test:*

*7.1.1 Time-Temperature Curve:*

7.1.1.1 The furnace temperatures shall be controlled to follow the standard time-temperature curve shown in Fig. 1. The points on the curve that determine its character are:

1000°F (538°C)	at 5 min
1300°F (704°C)	at 10 min
1550°F (843°C)	at 30 min
1700°F (927°C)	at 1 h
1850°F (1010°C)	at 2 h
2000°F (1093°C)	at 4 h
2300°F (1260°C)	at 8 h or over

7.1.1.2 For a more detailed definition of the time-temperature curve, see Appendix X1.

NOTE 4—*Recommendations for Recording Fuel Flow to Furnace Burners*—The following provides guidance on the desired characteristics of instrumentation for recording the flow of fuel to the furnace burners. Fuel flow data may be useful for a furnace heat balance analysis, for measuring the effect of furnace or control changes, and for comparing the

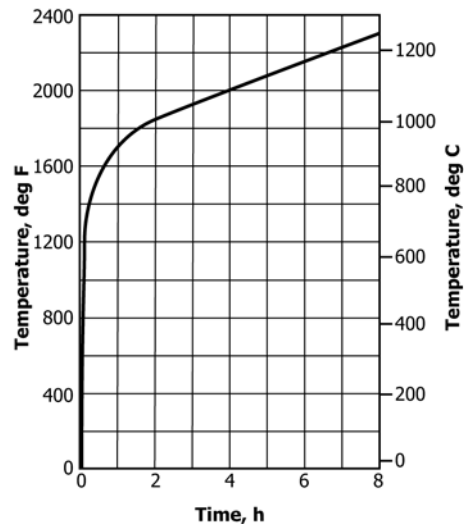


FIG. 1 Time-Temperature Curve