



Designation: D70/D70M – 21

Standard Test Method for Specific Gravity and Density of Semi-Solid Asphalt Binder (Pycnometer Method)¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D70/D70M; 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 (ϵ) 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.

1. Scope*

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the specific gravity (relative density) and density of semi-solid asphalt binder by use of a pycnometer.

NOTE 1—An alternate method for determining the specific gravity or density of asphalt binder is Test Method [D3289](#). An alternate method for determining density of asphalt binder is Test Method [D8188](#). For materials which are too fluid for use of this test method, use Test Method [D3142/D3142M](#).

NOTE 2—This test method may also be used for the determination of the specific gravity (relative density) and density of soft tar pitches.

1.2 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in nonconformance with the standard.

1.3 **Warning**—Mercury has been designated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and many state agencies as a hazardous material that can cause central nervous system, kidney, and liver damage. Mercury, or its vapor, may be hazardous to health and corrosive to materials. Caution should be taken when handling mercury and mercury-containing products. See the applicable product Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for details and the EPA's website (www.epa.gov/mercury/faq.htm) for additional information. Users should be aware that selling mercury, mercury-containing products, or both, in your state may be prohibited by state law.

1.4 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 This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D04](#) on Road and Paving Materials and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D04.47](#) on Miscellaneous Asphalt Tests.

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

1.6 *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:²

- [C670 Practice for Preparing Precision and Bias Statements for Test Methods for Construction Materials](#)
- [D140/D140M Practice for Sampling Asphalt Materials](#)
- [D3142/D3142M Test Method for Specific Gravity, API Gravity, or Density of Cutback Asphalts by Hydrometer Method](#)
- [D3289 Test Method for Density of Semi-Solid and Solid Asphalt Materials \(Nickel Crucible Method\)](#)
- [D3666 Specification for Minimum Requirements for Agencies Testing and Inspecting Road and Paving Materials](#)
- [D4311/D4311M Practice for Determining Asphalt Volume Correction to a Base Temperature](#)
- [D8188 Test Method for Determination of Density and Relative Density of Asphalt, Semi-Solid Bituminous Materials, and Soft-Tar Pitch by Use of a Digital Density Meter \(U-Tube\)](#)
- [E1 Specification for ASTM Liquid-in-Glass Thermometers](#)
- [E77 Test Method for Inspection and Verification of Thermometers](#)
- [E563 Practice for Preparation and Use of an Ice-Point Bath as a Reference Temperature](#)
- [E644 Test Methods for Testing Industrial Resistance Thermometers](#)

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

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

E879 Specification for Thermistor Sensors for General Purpose and Laboratory Temperature Measurements
E1137/E1137M Specification for Industrial Platinum Resistance Thermometers

2.2 Other:

CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *density, n* —the mass per unit volume of a material.

3.1.2 *specific gravity, n* —the ratio of the mass of a given volume of a material to the mass of the same volume of water at the same temperature (see **Note 3**).

NOTE 3—Specific gravity is also described as relative density.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The sample is placed in a standardized pycnometer. The pycnometer and sample are weighed, then the remaining volume is filled with water. The filled pycnometer is brought to the test temperature and weighed. The specific gravity or density of the sample is calculated from its mass and the mass of water displaced by the sample in the filled pycnometer.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Values of density are used for converting volumes to units of mass, and for correcting measured volumes from the temperature of measurement to a standard temperature using Practice **D4311/D4311M**.

5.2 The quality of the results produced by this standard are dependent on the competence of the personnel performing the procedure and the capability, calibration, and maintenance of the equipment used. Agencies that meet the criteria of Specification **D3666** are generally considered capable of competent and objective testing, sampling, inspection, etc. Users of this standard are cautioned that compliance with Specification **D3666** alone does not completely ensure reliable results. Reliable results depend on many factors; following the suggestions of Specification **D3666** or some similar acceptable guideline provides a means of evaluation and controlling some of these factors.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Pycnometer*, glass, consisting of a cylindrical or conical vessel carefully ground to receive an accurately fitting glass stopper 22 to 26 mm [0.9 to 1.0 in.] in diameter. The stopper shall be provided with a hole 1.0 to 2.0 mm [0.04 to 0.08 in.] in diameter, centrally located in reference to the vertical axis. The top surface of the stopper shall be substantially plane and have no chips, and the lower surface shall be concave to allow all air to escape through the bore. The height of the concave section shall be 4.0 to 18.0 mm [0.16 to 0.71 in.] at the center. The stoppered pycnometer shall have a capacity of 24 to 30 mL [0.8 to 1.0 fl oz] and shall weigh not more than 40 g [1.4 oz]. Suitable pycnometers are illustrated in **Fig. 1**.

6.2 *Water Bath*, constant-temperature, capable of maintaining the temperature within 0.1 °C [0.2 °F] of the test temperature. The water bath shall be equipped with a thermometer as described in **6.3**.

6.3 *Thermometer*—The thermometer shall be one of the following:

6.3.1 A liquid-in-glass partial immersion thermometer of suitable range with subdivisions and maximum scale error of 0.1 °C [0.2 °F] which conforms to the requirements of Specification **E1**. Calibrate the thermometer in accordance with one of the methods in Test Method **E77** or verify its original calibration at the ice point (**Notes 4 and 5**). A thermometer commonly used is an ASTM 63C.

NOTE 4—Practice **E563** provides instructions on the preparation and use of an ice-point bath as a reference temperature.

NOTE 5—If the thermometer does not read 0.0 ± 0.1 °C [32.0 ± 0.2 °F] at the ice point, then the thermometer should be recalibrated.

6.3.2 A platinum resistance thermometer (PRT) with sensor which conforms to the requirements of Specification **E1137/E1137M**. The thermometer shall be calibrated annually as a single unit and have a three- or four-wire connection configuration. The sensing element shall be immersed to the depth specified by the manufacturer. Calibrate the PRT system (sensor and readout) in accordance with Test Methods **E644** or verify its original calibration at the ice point (**Notes 4 and 5**). Corrections shall be applied to ensure accurate measurements within 0.1 °C [0.2 °F].

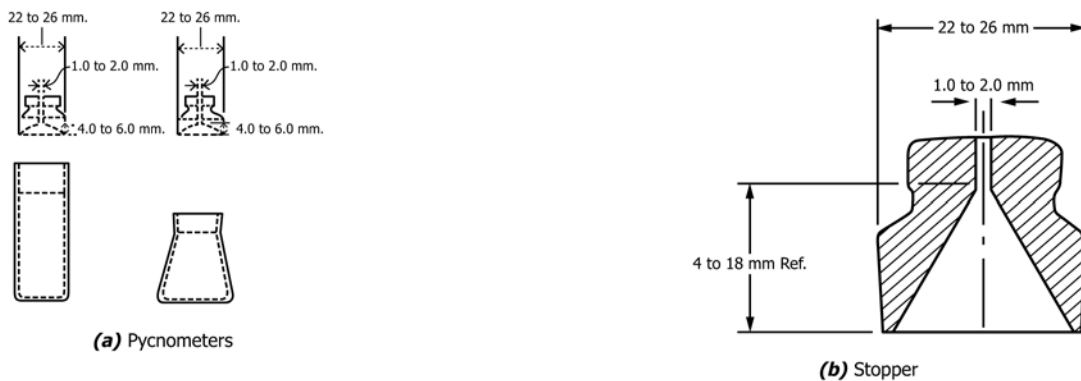


FIG. 1 Suitable Pycnometers and Stopper