



# Standard Test Methods for Cadmium in Water<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3557; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

## 1. Scope\*

1.1 These test methods cover the determination of dissolved and total recoverable cadmium in water and wastewater by atomic-absorption spectrophotometry and differential pulse anodic stripping voltammetry.<sup>2</sup> Four test methods are included as follows:

	Concentration Range	Sections
Test Method A—Atomic Absorption, Direct	0.05 to 2.0 mg/L	7 to 15
Test Method B—Atomic Absorption, Chelation-Extraction	5 to 200 $\mu\text{g/L}$	16 to 24
Test Method C—Differential Pulse Anodic Stripping Voltammetry	1 to 100 $\mu\text{g/L}$	25 to 34
Test Method D—Atomic Absorption, Graphite Furnace	2 to 10 $\mu\text{g/L}$	35 to 43

1.2 Test Method B can be used to determine cadmium in brines. It is the user's responsibility to ensure the validity of these test methods for waters of untested matrices.

1.3 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system are mathematical conversions and may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other.

1.4 *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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:<sup>3</sup>

[D858 Test Methods for Manganese in Water](#)

[D1066 Practice for Sampling Steam](#)

<sup>1</sup> These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D19 on Water and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D19.05 on Inorganic Constituents in Water.

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<sup>2</sup> Platte, J. A., and Marcy, V. M., "A New Tool for the Water Chemist," *Industrial Water Engineering*, May 1965.

<sup>3</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.

[D1068 Test Methods for Iron in Water](#)

[D1129 Terminology Relating to Water](#)

[D1193 Specification for Reagent Water](#)

[D1687 Test Methods for Chromium in Water](#)

[D1688 Test Methods for Copper in Water](#)

[D1691 Test Methods for Zinc in Water](#)

[D1886 Test Methods for Nickel in Water](#)

[D2777 Practice for Determination of Precision and Bias of Applicable Test Methods of Committee D19 on Water](#)

[D3370 Practices for Sampling Water from Closed Conduits](#)

[D3558 Test Methods for Cobalt in Water](#)

[D3559 Test Methods for Lead in Water](#)

[D3919 Practice for Measuring Trace Elements in Water by Graphite Furnace Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry](#)

[D4841 Practice for Estimation of Holding Time for Water Samples Containing Organic and Inorganic Constituents](#)

[D5810 Guide for Spiking into Aqueous Samples](#)

[D5847 Practice for Writing Quality Control Specifications for Standard Test Methods for Water Analysis](#)

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*: For definitions of terms used in these test methods, refer to Terminology [D1129](#).

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard*:

3.2.1 *spiking solution, n*—the standard solution added to the polarographic cell that is used to quantitate the sample.

3.2.2 *stripping peak potential, n*—the applied potential versus SCE at which the stripping peak current is a maximum.

3.2.3 *SCE, n*—saturated calomel electrode.

3.2.4 *stripping peak signal, n*—the current measured at the stripping peak maximum for a metal.

## 4. Significance and Use

4.1 The test for cadmium is necessary because it is a toxicant and because there is a limit specified for cadmium in potable water in the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations. This test serves to determine whether the cadmium content of potable water is above or below the acceptable limit.

## 5. Purity of Reagents

5.1 Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall

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

conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society.<sup>4</sup> Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

5.2 Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water conforming to Specification **D1193**, Type I. Other reagent water types may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the water is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without adversely affecting the bias and precision of the test method. Type II water was specified at the time of round-robin testing of this test method.

## 6. Sampling

6.1 Collect the samples in accordance with the applicable ASTM standard as follows: Practices **D3370** and **D1066**.

6.2 Samples shall be preserved with HNO<sub>3</sub> (sp gr 1.42) to a pH of 2 or less immediately at the time of collection, normally about 2 mL/L of HNO<sub>3</sub>. If only dissolved cadmium is to be determined, the sample shall be filtered through a 0.45- $\mu$ m (No. 325) membrane filter before acidification. The holding time for samples may be calculated in accordance with Practice **D4841**.

NOTE 1—Alternatively, the pH may be adjusted in the laboratory if the sample is returned within 14 days. This could reduce hazards of working with acids in the field when appropriate.

## TEST METHOD A—ATOMIC ABSORPTION, DIRECT

### 7. Scope

7.1 This test method covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable cadmium in most waters and wastewaters.

7.2 This test method is applicable in the range from 0.05 to 2.0 mg/L of cadmium. The range may be extended to concentrations greater than 2.0 mg/L by dilution of the sample.

7.3 This test method has been used successfully with reagent grade water, river water, wastewater, ground water, tap water, lake water, and refinery effluent. The information on precision and bias may not apply to other water. It is the user's responsibility to ensure the validity of this test method for waters of other matrices.

### 8. Summary of Test Method

8.1 Cadmium is determined by atomic absorption spectrophotometry. Dissolved cadmium is determined by aspirating a portion of the filtered sample directly with no pretreatment. Total recoverable cadmium is determined by aspirating the sample following hydrochloric-nitric acid digestion and filtration. The same digestion procedure may be used to determine total recoverable nickel (Test Methods **D1886**), chromium (Test Methods **D1687**), cobalt (Test Methods **D3558**), copper

(Test Methods **D1688**), iron (Test Methods **D1068**), lead (Test Methods **D3559**), manganese (Test Methods **D858**), and zinc (Test Methods **D1691**).

### 9. Interferences

9.1 Calcium concentrations above 1000 mg/L suppress the cadmium absorption. At 2000 mg/L of calcium the suppression is 19 %.

9.2 Sodium, potassium, sulfate, and chloride (9000 mg/L each), magnesium (4500 mg/L), iron (4000 mg/L), nitrate (100 mg/L), and nickel, lead, copper, zinc, cobalt, and chromium (10 mg/L each), do not interfere.

9.3 Background correction or a chelation-extraction procedure (see Test Method B) may be necessary to determine low levels of cadmium in some waters.

NOTE 2—Instrument manufacturer's instructions for use of the specific correction technique should be followed.

### 10. Apparatus

10.1 *Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer*, for use at 228.8 nm.

NOTE 3—The manufacturer's instructions shall be followed for all instrumental parameters. A wavelength other than 228.8 nm may be used if it has been determined to be equally suitable.

10.2 *Cadmium Light Source*—Either cadmium hollow-cathode lamps or multielement hollow-cathode lamps, or electrodeless-discharge lamps.

10.3 *Pressure-Reducing Valves*—The supplies of fuel and oxidant shall be maintained at pressures somewhat higher than the controlled operating pressure of the instrument by suitable valves.

### 11. Reagents and Materials

11.1 *Cadmium Solution, Stock* (1 mL = 1.0 mg Cd)—Dissolve 1.000 g of cadmium metal in a minimum quantity of HNO<sub>3</sub> (sp gr 1.42) and dilute to 1 L. A purchased cadmium stock solution of appropriate known purity is also acceptable.

11.2 *Cadmium Solution, Standard* (1 mL = 0.1 mg Cd)—Dilute 100.0 mL of the cadmium stock solution and 1 mL of HNO<sub>3</sub> (sp gr 1.42) to 1000 mL with water.

11.3 *Hydrochloric Acid* (sp gr 1.19)—Concentrated hydrochloric acid (HCl).

NOTE 4—If the reagent blank concentration is greater than the method detection limit, distill the HCl or use spectrograde acid. (**Warning**—When HCl is distilled, an azeotropic mixture is obtained (approximately 6 N HCl). Therefore, whenever concentrated HCl is specified for the preparation of a reagent or in the procedure, use double the volume specified if distilled acid is used.)

11.4 *Nitric Acid* (sp gr 1.42)—Concentrated nitric acid (HNO<sub>3</sub>).

NOTE 5—If the reagent blank concentration is greater than the method detection limit, distill the HNO<sub>3</sub> or use a spectrograde acid.

11.5 *Nitric Acid* (1 + 499)—Add 1 volume of HNO<sub>3</sub> (sp gr 1.42) to 499 volumes of water.

11.6 *Oxidant*:

<sup>4</sup> *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For Suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Annual Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

11.6.1 *Air*, which has been passed through a suitable filter to remove oil, water, and other foreign substances is the usual oxidant.

11.7 *Fuel*:

11.7.1 *Acetylene*—Standard, commercially available acetylene is the usual fuel. Acetone, always present in acetylene cylinders, can affect analytical results. The cylinder should be replaced at 345 kPa (50 psi). (**Warning** —“Purified” grade acetylene containing a special proprietary solvent rather than acetone should not be used with poly(vinyl chloride) tubing as weakening of the tubing walls can cause a potentially hazardous situation.)

**12. Standardization**

12.1 Prepare 100 mL each of a blank and at least four standard solutions to bracket the expected cadmium concentration range of the samples to be analyzed by diluting the standard cadmium solution (11.2) with HNO<sub>3</sub> (1 + 499). Prepare the standards each time the test is to be performed.

12.2 When determining total recoverable cadmium, add 0.5 mL of HNO<sub>3</sub> (sp gr 1.42) to each blank and standard solution and proceed as directed in 13.2 through 13.4. After the digestion of the blank and standard solutions has been completed in 13.4, return to 12.3 to complete the standardization for total recoverable determinations. When determining dissolved cadmium, proceed with 12.3.

12.3 Aspirate the blank and standards and record the instrument readings. Aspirate HNO<sub>3</sub> (1 + 499) between each standard.

12.4 Prepare an analytical curve by plotting the absorbance versus the concentration for each standard on the instrument software. Alternatively, read directly in concentration if this capability is provided with the instrument.

**13. Procedure**

13.1 Measure 100.0 mL of a well-mixed acidified sample into a 125-mL beaker or flask.

NOTE 6—If only dissolved cadmium is to be determined, start with 13.5.

13.2 Add 5 mL of HCl (sp gr 1.19) to each sample.

13.3 Heat the samples on a steam bath or hotplate in a well-ventilated hood until the volume has been reduced to 15 to 20 mL, making certain that the samples do not boil.

NOTE 7—For samples containing appreciable amounts of suspended matter or dissolved solids, the amount of reduction in volume is left to the discretion of the analyst.

NOTE 8—Many laboratories have found block digestion systems a useful way to digest samples for trace metals analysis. Systems typically consist of either a metal or graphite block with wells to hold digestion tubes. The block temperature controller must be able to maintain uniformity of temperature across all positions of the block. For trace metals analysis, the digestion tubes should be constructed of polypropylene and have a volume accuracy of at least 0.5%. All lots of tubes should come with a certificate of analysis to demonstrate suitability for their intended purpose.

13.4 Cool and filter the samples through a suitable filter such as fine-textured, acid-washed, ashless, paper into 100-mL

volumetric flasks. Wash the filter paper two or three times with water and adjust to volume.

13.5 Aspirate each filtered and acidified sample and determine its absorbance or concentration at 228.8 nm. Aspirate HNO<sub>3</sub> (1 + 499) between each sample.

**14. Calculation**

14.1 Calculate the concentration of cadmium in the sample, in milligrams per litre, using the analytical curve prepared in 12.4.

**15. Precision and Bias<sup>5</sup>**

15.1 The precision of this test method was tested by 17 laboratories in reagent water, river water, wastewater, ground water, tap water, lake water, and refinery effluent. The overall bias and precision of this test method, within its designated range, varies with the quantity being measured in accordance with Table 1.

15.2 These data may not apply to waters of the matrices, therefore, it is the responsibility of the analyst to ensure the validity of the test method in other matrices.

15.3 Precision and bias for this test method conforms to Practice D2777 – 77, which was in place at the time of collaborative testing. Under the allowances made in 1.4 of Practice D2777 – 08, these precision and bias data meet existing requirements for interlaboratory studies of Committee D19 test methods.

**TEST METHOD B—ATOMIC ABSORPTION, CHELATION-EXTRACTION**

**16. Scope**

16.1 This test method covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable cadmium in most waters and brines.

16.2 This test method is applicable in the range from 5 to 200 µg/L of cadmium. The range may be extended to concentrations greater than 200 µg/L by dilution of the sample.

16.3 This test method has been used successfully with reagent grade water, river water, wastewater, ground water, tap water, lake water, and refinery effluent. The information on precision and bias may not apply to other water.

<sup>5</sup> Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:D19-1030.

**TABLE 1 Determination of Bias and Precision for Cadmium by Atomic Absorption, Direct**

Amount Added, mg/L	Amount Found, mg/L	S <sub>T</sub> , mg/L	S <sub>O</sub> , mg/L	% Bias	Statistically Significant, 95 % Level
Reagent Water					
0.20	0.200	0.033	0.033	0.0	No
0.60	0.592	0.034	0.026	-1.3	No
1.60	1.521	0.111	0.061	-4.9	Yes
Water of Choice					
0.20	0.200	0.033	0.033	0.0	No
0.60	0.589	0.040	0.026	-1.8	No
1.60	1.511	0.114	0.061	-5.6	Yes