



Standard Test Method for Determination of Total and Potential Inorganic Sulfate and Total Inorganic Chloride in Fuel Ethanol by Ion Chromatography Using Aqueous Sample Injection¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 7328; 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.

^{ε1} NOTE—Added standards previously under development to the Referenced Documents and 4.2 editorially in April 2007.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers an ion chromatographic procedure for the determination of the total and potential inorganic sulfate and total inorganic chloride content in hydrous and anhydrous denatured ethanol to be used in motor fuel applications. It is intended for the analysis of ethanol samples containing between 0.55 and 20 mg/kg of total inorganic sulfate, 4.0 to 20 mg/kg of potential inorganic sulfate, and 0.75 to 50 mg/kg of total inorganic chloride.

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.3 *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.* Material Safety Data Sheets are available for reagents and materials. Review them for hazards prior to usage.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

- D 1193 Specification for Reagent Water
- D 4052 Test Method for Density and Relative Density of Liquids by Digital Density Meter
- D 4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products
- D 4177 Practice for Automatic Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products
- D 5827 Test Method for Analysis of Engine Coolant for Chloride and Other Anions by Ion Chromatography
- D 6299 Practice for Applying Statistical Quality Assurance

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D02 on Petroleum Products and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D02.03 on Elemental Analysis.

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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.

Techniques to Evaluate Analytical Measurement System Performance

D 6792 Guide for Quality System in Petroleum Products and Lubricants Testing Laboratories

D 7318 Test Method for Total Inorganic Sulfate in Ethanol by Potentiometric Titration

D 7319 Test Method for Determination of Total and Potential Sulfate and Inorganic Chloride in Fuel Ethanol by Direct Injection Suppressed Ion Chromatography

2.2 Other Standard:

ISO/CEN15492 Ethanol as a Blending Component for Petrol – Determination of Inorganic Chloride – Ion Chromatographic Method³

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *inorganic chloride, n*—chloride present as hydrochloric acid, ionic salts of this acid, or mixtures of these.

3.1.2 *inorganic sulfate, n*—sulfate species present as sulfuric acid, ionic salts of this acid, or mixtures of these.

3.1.3 *potential sulfate, n*—total sulfur species present in the sample that can be oxidized to inorganic sulfate in the presence of an oxidizing agent.

3.1.4 *total sulfate, n*—inorganic sulfate species actually present in the sample at the time of analysis with no oxidation treatment.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 For total inorganic sulfate and chloride, a small volume of a sample is evaporated to dryness and reconstituted to the initial sample volume with deionized water, and injected into an ion chromatograph consisting of appropriate ion exchange columns, suppressor and a conductivity detector. For potential sulfate, a small volume of a sample is evaporated to dryness and reconstituted to the initial sample volume with 0.90 % hydrogen peroxide solution in water, and injected into an ion chromatograph. Ions are separated based on their affinity for

³ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1 rue de Varembe, Case postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland, <http://www.iso.ch>.

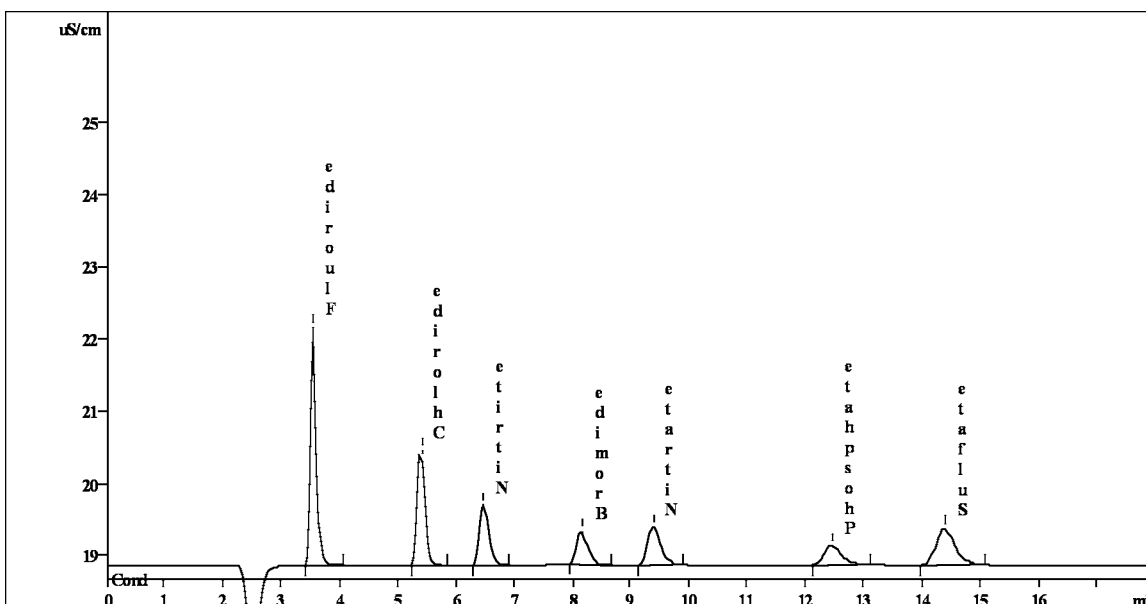


FIG. 1 Typical Ion Chromatogram of a Solution Containing 1 mg/kg of Various Anions in Water

exchange sites of the resin with respect to the resin's affinity for the eluent. The suppressor increases the sensitivity of the method by both increasing the conductivity of the analytes and decreasing the conductivity of the eluent. The suppressor converts the eluent and the analytes to the corresponding hydrogen form acids. Anions in the aqueous sample are quantified by integration of their responses compared with an external calibration curve, calculated as mg/L for each ion. The calibration standards are prepared from suitable salts dissolved in water solutions. Total or potential sulfate and chloride concentrations may be calculated as mg/kg by measuring the density of the original sample.

4.2 Similar methods for chloride and sulfate determinations can be found in Test Method [D 5827](#) for engine coolant, and for ethanol in [ISO/CEN15492](#), Test Method [D 7319](#) by ion chromatography with direct sample injection, and for sulfate only in Test Method [D 7318](#) by potentiometric lead titration.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Sulfates and chlorides may be found in filter plugging deposits and fuel injector deposits. The acceptability for use of the fuel components and the finished fuels depends on the sulfate and chloride content.

5.2 Total and potential sulfate and total chloride content, as measured by this test method, can be used as one measure of the acceptability of gasoline components for automotive spark-ignition engine fuel use.

6. Interferences

6.1 Interferences can be caused by substances with similar ion chromatographic retention times, especially if they are in high concentration compared to the analyte of interest. Sample dilution or standard addition can be used to minimize or resolve most interference problems.

6.2 A water dip (system void, negative peak as shown in [Fig. 1](#)) may cause interference with some integrators. Usually, for chloride and sulfate determinations, the water dip should

not be a problem since the chloride and sulfate peaks are far enough away from the water dip.

6.3 Given the trace amounts of chloride and sulfate determined by this method, interferences can be caused by contamination of glassware, eluents, reagents, etc. Great care must be taken to ensure that contamination is kept at the lowest possible levels. The use of powder-free gloves is highly recommended to prevent sample contamination.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Analytical Balance*, at least 2000 g capacity, capable of weighing accurately to 0.01 g.

7.1.1 *Analytical Balance*, at least 100 g capacity, capable of weighing accurately to 0.0001 g.

7.2 *Drying Oven*, controlled at $110 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$ for drying sodium sulfate and sodium chloride.

7.3 *Desiccator*, containing freshly activated silica gel (or equivalent desiccant) with moisture content indicator.

7.4 *Pipettes or Volumetric Transferring Devices*, Class A glass pipettes or their equivalent of 2.0 cc capacity or automatic pipettes fitted with disposable polypropylene tips.

7.4.1 *Plastic Syringe*, 10 cc disposable, optionally fitted with a $0.2 \mu\text{m}$ syringe filter (must be chloride and sulfate-free).

7.5 *Volumetric Flask*, Class A of 1 L capacity and Class A of 10 mL capacity.

7.6 *Ion Chromatograph*, Analytical system with all required accessories including syringes, columns, suppressor, gases, and detector.

7.6.1 *Injection System*, capable of delivering 25 μL with a precision better than 1 %.

7.6.2 *Pumping System*, capable of delivering mobile phase flows between 0.5 and 1.5 mL/min with a precision better than 5 %.

7.6.3 *Guard Column*, for protection of the analytical column from strongly retained constituents. Better separations are obtained with greater separating power.

7.6.4 *Anion Separator Column*, capable of producing satisfactory analyte separation (see Fig. 1).

7.6.5 *Anion Suppressor Device*, micro membrane suppressor or equivalent. A cation exchange column in the hydrogen form has been used successfully, but it will periodically need to be regenerated as required. This is indicated by a high background conductivity and low analyte response.

7.6.6 *Conductivity Detector*, low volume (<2 μL) and flow, temperature compensated, capable of at least 0 to 1000 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ on a linear scale.

7.6.7 *Integrator or Chromatography Data System Software*, capable of measuring peak areas and retention times, and correcting the data according to the baseline of the chromatogram.

7.7 *Gloves*, powder-free examination type.

7.8 *Hot Block*, aluminum, capable of being heated to 65°C with suitable holes to hold 15 mL glass vials, with a method of flowing nitrogen over inserted samples.

7.9 *Glass Vials*, 15 mL with screw top.

8. Reagents

8.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent grade or higher purity chemicals shall be used for the preparation of all samples, standards, eluents, and regenerator solutions. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available.⁴ 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.

8.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, reference to water shall be understood to mean reagent water as defined by Type II in Specification D 1193. For eluent preparation and handling, comply with all ion chromatograph instrument and column vendor requirements (for example, filtering, degassing, etc.).

8.3 *Eluent Buffer Solution*—The eluent solution used depends on the systems or analytical columns that are used (contact instrument and column vendors). For the chromatograms in Fig. 1, the following eluent buffer was used: Sodium bicarbonate (NaHCO_3) 1.7 mM and sodium carbonate (Na_2CO_3) 1.8 mM. Dissolve 2.8563 ± 0.0005 g of NaHCO_3 and 3.8157 ± 0.0005 g of Na_2CO_3 in reagent water in a 1-L Type A volumetric flask and dilute to volume. Dilute 100 mL of this concentrate to 2000 mL with reagent water for the final working eluent solution. Other volumes of stock solution may be prepared using appropriate ratios of reagents. Follow the specific guidelines for this solution from the vendor of the column being used. Alternatively, this solution can be purchased from a qualified vendor.

8.4 *Suppressor Solution for Membrane Suppressor*, 0.025 N sulfuric acid. Carefully add 13.7 mL of reagent grade sulfuric acid (relative density 1.84) to approximately 500 mL reagent water in a 1-L volumetric flask. (**Warning**—This will generate a very hot solution. Allow it to cool before diluting to 1000 mL volume. Never add water to concentrated acid!) Dilute to 1000 mL with reagent water, and label this solution as 0.50 N sulfuric acid. Dilute 100 mL of this concentrate to 2000 mL with reagent water for the final working suppressor solution. Other volumes of stock solution may be prepared using appropriate ratios of reagents. Follow the specific guidelines for this solution from the vendor of the column being used.

8.5 *Sodium Sulfate*, anhydrous, reagent grade, 99 % minimum purity. (**Warning**—Do not ingest; avoid unnecessary exposure.)

8.6 *Sodium Chloride*, ACS reagent grade, 99 % minimum purity.

8.7 *Ethanol*, denatured with methanol, formula 3A or histological grade ethanol, anhydrous, denatured with ethyl acetate, methylisobutyl ketone and hydrocarbon naphtha. (**Warning**—Flammable; toxic; may be harmful or fatal if ingested or inhaled; avoid skin contact.)

8.8 *Hydrogen Peroxide Solution, 30 %*, commercially available 30 % hydrogen peroxide solution.

8.9 *Nitrogen Gas*, 99.99 mol % pure, free of hydrocarbons.

9. Preparation of Standard Solutions

9.1 *Stock Solutions*:

9.1.1 *Sulfate Stock Solution, approximately 2000 mg/L*—To ensure dryness, place anhydrous sodium sulfate (5 g) in a drying oven at 110°C for at least an hour, cool and store in a desiccator. Accurately weigh 2.96 g anhydrous sodium sulfate to the nearest tenth of a milligram and transfer to a 1 L volumetric flask. Add Type II water to dissolve the sodium sulfate and make to volume. Calculate the concentration of sulfate in the solution according to Eq 1. Other volumes of stock solution may be prepared using the appropriate ratio of reagents.

$$\text{stock sulfate (mg/L)} = (\text{g Na}_2\text{SO}_4) (0.6764) (1000 \text{ mg/g}) / 1 \text{ L} \quad (1)$$

where:

$\text{g Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ = weight in grams of Na_2SO_4 dissolved in 1 L,
and

0.6764 = weight percent sulfate in Na_2SO_4 .

9.1.2 *Chloride Stock Solution, approximately 2000 mg/L*—To ensure dryness, place sodium chloride (5 g) in a drying oven at 110°C for at least an hour, cool and store in a desiccator. Accurately weigh 3.30 g dried sodium chloride to the nearest tenth of a milligram and transfer to a 1 L volumetric flask. Add Type II water to dissolve the sodium chloride and make to volume. Calculate the concentration of chloride in the solution according to Eq 2. Other volumes of stock solution may be prepared using the appropriate ratio of reagents.

$$\text{stock chloride (mg/L)} = (\text{g NaCl}) (0.6068) (1000 \text{ mg/g}) / 1 \text{ L} \quad (2)$$

where:

g NaCl = weight in grams of NaCl dissolved in 1 L, and

0.6068 = weight percent chloride in NaCl .

⁴ *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., Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.