Designation: E 705 – 08

Standard Test Method for Measuring Reaction Rates by Radioactivation of Neptunium-237[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E 705; 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.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers procedures for measuring reaction rates by assaying a fission product (F.P.) from the fission reaction ^{237}Np(n,f)F.P.

1.2 The reaction is useful for measuring neutrons with energies from approximately 0.7 to 6 MeV and for irradiation times up to 30 to 40 years.

1.3 Equivalent fission neutron fluence rates as defined in Practice E 261 can be determined.

1.4 Detailed procedures for other fast-neutron detectors are referenced in Practice E 261.

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

1.6 *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:*[2]

E 170 Terminology Relating to Radiation Measurements and Dosimetry

E 181 Test Methods for Detector Calibration and Analysis of Radionuclides

E 261 Practice for Determining Neutron Fluence, Fluence Rate, and Spectra by Radioactivation Techniques

E 262 Test Method for Determining Thermal Neutron Reaction and Fluence Rates by Radioactivation Techniques

E 320 Test Method for Cesium-137 in Nuclear Fuel Solutions by Radiochemical Analysis[3]

E 393 Test Method for Measuring Reaction Rates by Analysis of Barium-140 From Fission Dosimeters

E 704 Test Method for Measuring Reaction Rates by Radioactivation of Uranium-238

E 844 Guide for Sensor Set Design and Irradiation for Reactor Surveillance, E 706(IIC)

E 944 Guide for Application of Neutron Spectrum Adjustment Methods in Reactor Surveillance, E 706 (IIA)

E 1005 Test Method for Application and Analysis of Radiometric Monitors for Reactor Vessel Surveillance, E 706(IIIA)

E 1018 Guide for Application of ASTM Evaluated Cross Section Data File, Matrix E 706 (IIB)

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 Refer to Terminology E 170.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 High-purity ^{237}Np (<40 ppm fissionable impurity) is irradiated in a fast-neutron field, thereby producing radioactive fission products from the reaction ^{237}Np(n,f)F.P.

4.2 Various fission products such as ^{137}Cs-^{137m}Ba, ^{1140}Ba-^{140}La, ^{95}Zr, and ^{144}Ce can be assayed depending on the length of irradiation, purpose of the experiment, etc.

4.3 The gamma rays emitted through radioactive decay are counted and the reaction rate, as defined in Practice E 261, is calculated from the decay rate and the irradiation conditions.

4.4 The neutron fluence rate for neutrons with energies from approximately 0.7 to 6 MeV can then be calculated from the spectral-weighted neutron activation cross section as defined in Practice E 261.

4.5 A parallel procedure that uses ^{238}U instead of ^{237}Np is given in Test Method E 704.

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[1] This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E10 on Nuclear Technology and Applications and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E10.05 on Nuclear Radiation Metrology.

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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.

[3] Withdrawn. The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Refer to Practice E 261 for a general discussion of the determination of fast-neutron fluence rate with fission detectors.

5.2 ^{237}Np is available as metal foil, wire, or oxide powder. For further information, see Guide E 844. It is usually encapsulated in a suitable container to prevent loss of, and contamination by, the ^{237}Np and its fission products.[4]

5.3 One or more fission products can be assayed. Pertinent data for relevant fission products are given in Table 1 and Table 2.

5.3.1 ^{137}Cs-^{137m}Ba is chosen frequently for long irradiations. Radioactive products ^{134}Cs and ^{136}Cs may be present, which can interfere with the counting of the 0.662 MeV ^{137}Cs-^{137m}Ba gamma ray (see Test Methods E 320).

5.3.2 ^{140}Ba-^{140}La is chosen frequently for short irradiations (see Test Method E 393).

5.3.3 ^{95}Zr can be counted directly, following chemical separation, or with its daughter ^{95}Nb, using a high-resolution gamma detector system.

5.3.4 ^{144}Ce is a high-yield fission product applicable to 2- to 3-year irradiations.

5.4 It is necessary to surround the ^{237}Np monitor with a thermal neutron absorber to minimize fission product production from trace quantities of fissionable nuclides in the ^{237}Np target and from ^{238}Np and ^{238}Pu from (n,γ) reactions in the ^{237}Np material. Assay of ^{238}Pu and ^{239}Pu concentration is recommended when a significant contribution is expected.

5.4.1 Fission product production in a light-water reactor by neutron activation products ^{238}Np and ^{238}Pu has been calculated to be insignificant (1.2 %), compared to that from ^{237}Np(n,f), for an irradiation period of 12 years at a fast neutron (E > 1 MeV) fluence rate of 1×10^{11} cm^{-2}·s^{-1}, provided the ^{237}Np is shielded from thermal neutrons (see Fig. 2 of Guide E 844).

5.4.2 Fission product production from photonuclear reactions, that is, (γ,f) reactions, while negligible near-power and researchreactor cores, can be large for deep-water penetrations **(1)**.[5]

5.5 Good agreement between neutron fluence measured by ^{237}Np fission and the ^{54}Fe(n,p)^{54}Mn reaction has been demonstrated **(2)**. The reaction ^{237}Np(n,f) F.P. is useful since it is responsive to a broader range of neutron energies than most threshold detectors.

5.6 The ^{237}Np fission neutron spectrum-averaged cross section in several benchmark neutron fields are given in Table 3 of Practice E 261. Sources for the latest recommended cross sections are given in Guide E 1018. In the case of the ^{237}Np(n,f)F.P. reaction, the recommended cross section source is the ENDF/B-VI cross section (MAT = 9346) revision 1 **(3)**. Fig. 1 shows a plot of the recommended cross section versus neutron energy for the fast-neutron reaction ^{237}Np(n,f)F.P.

NOTE 1—The data are taken from the Evaluated Nuclear Data file, ENDF/B-VI, rather than the later ENDF/B-VII. This is in accordance with Guide E 1018 Guide for Application of ASTM Evaluated Cross Section Data File, 6.1. since the later ENDF/B-VII data files do not include covariance information. For more details see Section H of **(10)**

TABLE 1 Recommended Nuclear Parameters for Certain Fission Products

Fission Product	Parent Half-Life[A] **(6)**	Primary Radiation[A] **(7)** (keV)	γ Probability of Decay[A] **(7)**	Maximum Useful Irradiation Duration
^{95}Zr	64.032 (6) d	724.192 (4) 756.725 (12)	0.4427 (22) 0.5438	6 months
^{99}Mo	2.7489 (6) d	739.500 (17) 777.921 (20)	0.1213 (22) 0.0426 (8)	300 hours
^{103}Ru	39.26 (2) d	497.084 (6)	0.910 (12)	4 months
^{137}Cs	30.3 (5) yr	661.657 (3)[B]	0.8510[B]	30–40 years
^{140}Ba–^{140}La	12.752 (5) d	537.261 (9) 1596.21 (4)	0.2439 (23) 0.954 (14)[C] 1.1515[D]	1–1.5 months
^{144}Ce	289.91 (5) d	133.515 (2)	0.1109 (10)	2–3 years

[A]The lightface numbers in parentheses are the magnitude of plus or minus uncertainties in the last digit(s) listed.
[B]With ^{137m}Ba (2.552 min) in equilibrium.
[C]Probability of daughter ^{140}La decay.
[D]With ^{140}La (1.6781 d) in transient equilibrium.

TABLE 2 Recommended Fission Yields for Certain Fission Products[A]

Fissile Isotope	Neutron Energy	Reaction Product	Type Yield	ENDF/B-VII[B,A] Fission Yield (%)
^{237}Np(n,f)	0.5 MeV	^{95}Zr	RC	5.66915 ± 2 %
		^{99}Mo	RC	6.11804 ± 4 %
		^{103}Ru	RC	5.5583 ± 2.8 %
		^{137}Cs	RC	6.25127 ± 2 %
		^{137m}Ba	RI	1.141e-3 ± 64 %
		^{140}Ba	RC	5.48848 ± 2 %
		^{140}La	RI	5.121e-3 ± 64 %
		^{144}Ce	RC	4.13935 ± 2 %

[A]Special issue on Evaluated Nuclear Data File ENDF/B-VII.0." Nuclear Data Sheets, J.K. Tull Editor. Vol. 107 December 2006. Data available on the ENDF/B-VII website at URL:http://www.nndc.bnl.gov/exfor/endf00.htm.
[B]All yield data given as a %; RC represents a cumulative yield; RI represents an independent yield.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Gamma-Ray Detection Equipment* that can be used to accurately measure the decay rate of fission product activity are the following two types **(4)**:

6.1.1 *NaI(T1) Gamma-Ray Scintillation Spectrometer* (see Test Methods E 181 and E 1005).

6.1.2 *Germanium Gamma-Ray Spectrometer (see Test Methods E 181 and E 1005)*—Because of its high resolution, the germanium detector is useful when contaminant activities are present.

6.2 *Balance*, providing the accuracy and precision required by the experiment.

6.3 *Digital Computer*, useful for data analysis, but is not necessary (optional).

[4] The sole source of supply of Vanadium-encapsulated monitors of high purity known to the committee at this time in the United States is Isotope Sales Div., Oak Ridge, TN 37830. In Europe, the sole source of supply is European Commission, JRC, Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM) Reference Materials Unit Retieseweg 111, B-2440 Geel, Belgium. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee,[1] which you may attend.

[5] The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references appended to this test method.