



# Standard Test Method for Determination of Total Suspended Particulate Matter in the Atmosphere (High-Volume Sampler Method)<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 4096; 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.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This test method provides for sampling a large volume of atmosphere, 1600 to 2400 m<sup>3</sup> (55 000 to 85 000 ft<sup>3</sup>), by means of a high flow-rate vacuum pump at a rate of 1.13 to 1.70 m<sup>3</sup>/min (40 to 60 ft<sup>3</sup>/min) (**1, 2, 3 and 4**).<sup>2</sup>

1.2 This flow rate allows suspended particles having diameters of less than 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (stokes equivalent diameter) to be collected. However, the collection efficiencies for particles larger than 20  $\mu\text{m}$  decreases with increasing particle size and it varies widely with the angle of the wind with respect to the roof ridge of the sampler shelter and with increasing speed (**5**). When glass fiber filters are used, particles within the size range of 100 to 0.1  $\mu\text{m}$  diameters or less are ordinarily collected.

1.3 The upper limit of mass loading will be determined by plugging of the filter medium with sample material, which causes a significant decrease in flow rate (see **6.4**). For very dusty atmospheres, shorter sampling periods will be necessary. The minimum amount of particulate matter detectable by this method is 3 mg (95 % confidence level). When the sampler is operated at an average flow rate of 1.70 m<sup>3</sup>/min (60 ft<sup>3</sup>/min) for 24 h, this is equivalent to 1 to 2  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (**3**).

1.4 The sample that is collected may be subjected to further analyses by a variety of methods for specific constituents.

1.5 Values stated in SI units shall be regarded as the standard. Inch-pound units are shown for information only.

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:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D22 on Air Quality and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D22.03 on Ambient Atmospheres and Source Emissions.

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<sup>2</sup> The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this practice.

<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.

[D 1356 Terminology Relating to Sampling and Analysis of Atmospheres](#)

[D 3631 Test Methods for Measuring Surface Atmospheric Pressure](#)

[E 1 Specification for ASTM Liquid-in-Glass Thermometers](#)

### 2.2 Other Documents:

EPA-600/9-76-005 Quality Assurance Handbook for Air Pollution Measurement Systems, Vol I, Principles (December 1984 Rev.)<sup>4</sup>

EPA-600/4-77-027a Quality Assurance Handbook for Air Pollution Measurement Systems, Vol II, Ambient Air Specific Methods<sup>4</sup>

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of other terms used in this test method, refer to Terminology [D 1356](#).

### 3.2 Descriptions of Terms:

3.2.1 *absolute filter*—a filter or filter medium of ultra-high collection efficiency for very small particles (submicrometre size) so that essentially all particles of interest or of concern are collected. Commonly, the efficiency is in the region of 99.95 % or higher for a standard aerosol of 0.3- $\mu\text{m}$  diameter (see Practice D 2986).

3.2.2 *Hi-Vol (The High-Volume Air Sampler)*—a device for sampling large volumes of an atmosphere, collection of the contained particulate matter by filtration, and consisting of a high-capacity air mover, a filter to collect suspended particles, and means for measuring, or controlling, or both, the flow rate.

3.2.3 *primary flow-rate standard*—a device or means of measuring flow rate based on direct primary observations, such as time and physical dimensions.

3.2.4 *secondary flow-rate standard*—A flow-rate-measuring device, such as an orifice meter, that has been calibrated against a primary standard.

3.2.5 *spirometer*—a displacement gasometer consisting of an inverted bell resting upon or sealed by liquid (or other means) and capable of showing the amount of gas added to or withdrawn from the bell by the displacement (rise or fall) of the bell.

<sup>4</sup> Available from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Monitoring Systems Laboratory, Quality Assurance Division, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711. Attn: Distribution Record System.

3.2.6 *working flow-rate standard*—a flow rate measuring device, such as an orifice meter, that has been calibrated against a secondary flow-rate standard. The working flow-rate standard is used to calibrate a flow measuring or flow rate indicating instrument.

3.2.7 *constant flow high-volume sampler*—a high volume sampler that is equipped with a constant flow control device.

#### 4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 This test method describes typical equipment, operational procedures, and a means of calibration of the equipment using an orifice flowrate meter. (See also [Annex A1](#).)

4.2 Air is drawn into a covered housing and through a filter by means of a high-flow-rate air mover, so that particulate material collects on the filter surface.

4.3 The amount of particulate matter accumulated on the filter over a specified period of time is measured by weighing a preweighed filter after exposure. The flow rate of air sampled is measured over the test period. The result is expressed in terms of particulate mass collected (or loading) per unit volume of air sampled, usually as micrograms per cubic metre ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). The volume of air sampled is recorded by measurement of the device flow rate(s).

4.4 The volume of air sampled is determined by means of a flow-rate indicator. The instrument flow-rate indicator is calibrated against a reference orifice meter. The latter is a working standard which, in turn, has been calibrated against a secondary flow meter certified by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology.

4.5 Airborne particulate matter retained on the filter may be examined or analyzed by a variety of methods. Specific procedures are not included in this method but are the subject of separate standard methods.

#### 5. Significance and Use

5.1 The Hi-Vol sampler is commonly used for the collection of the airborne particulate component of the atmosphere. Some physical and chemical parameters of the collected particulate matter are dependent upon the physical characteristics of the collection system and the choice of filter media. A variety of options available for the Hi-Vol sampler give it broad versatility and allow the user to develop information about the size and quantity of airborne particulate material and, using subsequent chemical analytical techniques, information about the chemical properties of the particulate matter.

5.2 This test method presents techniques that when uniformly applied, provide measurements suitable for intersite comparisons.

5.3 This test method measures the atmosphere presented to the sampler with good precision, but the actual dust levels in the atmosphere can vary widely from one location to another. This means that sampler location may be of paramount importance, and may impose far greater variability of results than any lack of precision in the method of measurement. In particular, localized dust sources may exert a major influence over a very limited area immediately adjacent to such sources. Examples include unpaved streets, vehicle traffic on roadways with a surface film of dust, building demolition and construction activity, or nearby industrial plants with dust emissions. In

some cases, dust levels measured close to such sources may be several times the community wide levels exclusive of such localized effects (see Practice D 1357).

#### 6. Interferences

6.1 Large extraneous objects, such as insects, may be swept into the filter and become weighed unnoticed.

6.2 Liquid aerosols, such as oil mists and fog droplets, are retained by the filter. If the amount of liquid so collected is sizable, the filter can become wet and its function and mass impaired.

6.3 Any gaseous or vaporous constituent of the atmosphere under test that is reactive with or sorptive upon the filter or its collected matter will be retained and weighed as particulate matter.

6.4 As the filter becomes loaded with collected matter, the sampling rate is reduced. If a significant drop in flow rate occurs, the average of the initial and final flow rate calculated in [10.1](#) will not give an accurate estimate of total flow during the sampling period. The magnitude of such errors will depend on the amount of reduction of airflow rate and on the variation of the mass concentration of dust with time during the 24-h sampling period. As an approximate guideline, any sample should be suspect if the final flow rate is less than one half the initial rate. A continuous record of flow rate will indicate the occurrence of this problem, or a constant-flow high-volume sampler may be used to eliminate the problem.

6.5 The possibility of power failure or voltage change during the test period would lead to an error, depending on the extent and time duration of such failure. A continuous record of flow rate is desirable.

6.6 The passive loading of the filter that can occur if it is left in place for any time prior to or following a sampling period can introduce significant error. For unattended operation, a sampler equipped with shutters shall be used.

6.7 If two or more samplers are used at a given location, they should be placed at least 2 m (6 ft) apart so that one sampler will not affect the results of an adjacent sampler.

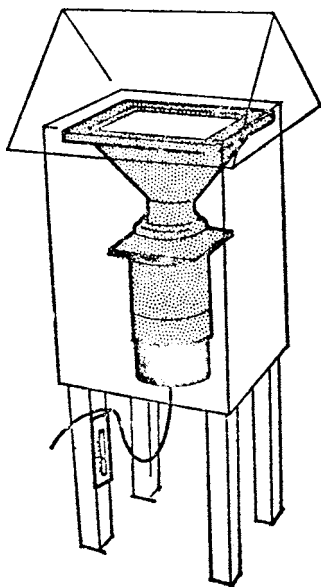
6.8 Wind tunnel studies have shown significant possible sampling errors as a function of sampler orientation in atmospheres containing high relative concentrations of large particles ([5](#)).

6.9 Metal dusts from motors, especially copper, may significantly contaminate samples under some conditions.

6.10 Under some conditions, atmospheric  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{NO}_x$  may interfere with the total mass determination ([6](#)).

#### 7. Apparatus

7.1 The essential features of a typical high-volume sampler are shown in the diagram of [Fig. 1](#) and [Fig. 2](#). It is a compact unit consisting of a protective housing, an electric motor-driven, high-speed, high-volume air mover, a filter holder capable of supporting a 203 by 254-mm (8 by 10-in.) filter at the forward or entrance end, and at the exit end, means for either indicating or controlling the air flow rate, or both, over the range of 1.13 to 1.70  $\text{m}^3/\text{min}$  (40 to 60  $\text{ft}^3/\text{min}$ ). Designs also exist in which a flow controller is located between the filter and the blower. For unattended operation, a sampler equipped with shutters to protect the filter is required.



NOTE 1—The clearance area between the main housing and the roof at its closest point should be  $580.5 \pm 129.0 \text{ cm}^2$  ( $90 \pm 20 \text{ in.}^2$ ). The main housing should be rectangular, with dimensions of about 290 by 360 mm ( $11\frac{1}{2}$  by 14 in.).

FIG. 1 Assembled Sampler and Shelter

7.2 A calibrator kit is required. This contains a working flow-rate standard of appropriate range in the form of an orifice with its own calibration curve. The kit includes also a set of five flow-control plates. These kits are available from most supply houses that deal in apparatus for air sampling and analysis.

7.3 A large desiccator or air conditioned room is required for filter conditioning, storage, and weighing. Filters must be stored and conditioned at a temperature of 15 to 27°C and a relative humidity between 0 and 50 %.

7.4 An analytical balance capable of reading to 0.1 mg, and having a capacity of at least 5 g is necessary. It is very desirable to have a weighing chamber of adequate size with a support that is capable of accommodating the filter without rolling or folding it or exposing it to drafts during the weighing operation.

7.5 *Barograph or Barometer*, capable of measuring to the nearest 0.1 kPa (1 mm Hg) meeting the requirements of Test Methods D 3631.

7.6 *Thermometer*—ASTM Thermometer 33C, meeting the requirements of Specification E 1.

7.7 *Clock*, capable of indicating  $24 \text{ h} \pm 2 \text{ min}$ .

7.8 *Flow-Rate Recorder*, capable of recording to the nearest  $0.03 \text{ m}^3/\text{min}$  ( $1.0 \text{ ft}^3/\text{min}$ ).

7.9 *Differential Manometer*, capable of measuring to 4 kPa (40 mm Hg).

## 8. Reagents and Materials

### 8.1 Filter Medium:

8.1.1 In general, the choice of a filter medium will depend on the purpose of the test. For any given standard test method the appropriate medium will be specified. However, it is important to be aware of certain filter characteristics that can affect selection and use.

8.1.2 *Glass-Fiber Filter Medium*—This type is most widely used for determination of mass loading. Weight stability with respect to moisture is an attractive feature. High-efficiency or absolute types are preferred and will collect all airborne particles of practically every size and description. The following characteristics are typical:

Fiber content	All-glass-usually mixed sizes
Binder	Below 5 % (zero for binderless types)
Thickness	Approximately 0.5 mm
Pinholes	None
DOP smoke test (Practice D 2986)	0.05 % penetration, 981 Pa (100 mm of water) at 8.53 m/min (28 ft/min)

Particulate matter collected on glass-fiber medium can be analyzed for many constituents. If chemical analysis is contemplated binderless filters should be used. It must be borne in mind, however, that glass is a commercial product generally containing test-contaminating materials. The high ratio of surface area to glass volume permits extraction of such contaminants, especially if strong reagents are employed.

8.1.3 *Silica Fiber Filters*—Where it may be required or desirable to use a mineral fiber filter, which may later be extracted by strong reagents, silica fiber filters can be used. Such fibers are usually made by leaching glass fibers with strong mineral acids followed by washing with deionized water. The fibers are rather weak but can be formed into filter sheets using little or no binder. These filters are commercially available (7).

8.1.4 *Cellulose Papers*—For some purposes it is desirable to collect airborne particles on cellulose fiber filters. Low-ash papers are especially useful where the filter is to be destroyed by ignition or chemical digestion. However, these papers have higher flow resistance (lower sampling rate) and have been reported to have much poorer collection efficiency than the glass fiber media (8). Furthermore, cellulose is very sensitive to moisture conditions and even with very careful conditioning before and after sampling it is difficult to make an accurate weighing of the collected particles. It is usually necessary to do the weighing with the filter enclosed in a lightweight metal can with a tight lid.

## 9. Procedure

9.1 The Hi-Vol sampler can be used in a number of ways. Variations of procedure may include the kind of filter medium, the surface area of the filter, flow velocity through the filter, prescreening to exclude particles up to a given size, and the manner of placing and exposing the filter during the test. The procedure most commonly used will be described here.

9.2 Calibrate the sampler as described in the Annex. Do not make any change or adjustment on the sampler flow indicator after calibrating. Remove the calibrating orifice.

9.3 Mark the filters for identification, condition them in a large desiccator or conditioned room and allow them to remain for 24 h at 15 to 27°C and 0 to 50 % relative humidity. Weigh the sheets carefully on an analytical balance to the fourth decimal place (0.1 mg). Glass or silica fiber papers are very stable to moisture and one such preparation cycle is usually adequate. If a special binding has been used in making the sheet, this could introduce a higher moisture sensitivity.