



Designation: **D5357–03 (Reapproved 2013) D5357 – 19**

Standard Test Method for Determination of Relative Crystallinity of Zeolite Sodium A by X-ray Diffraction¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D5357; 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 a procedure for determining the relative crystallinity of zeolite sodium A (zeolite NaA) using selected peaks from the X-ray diffraction pattern of the zeolite.

1.2 The term “intensity of an X-ray powder diffraction (XRD) peak” refers to the “integral intensity,” either the area or counts under the peak or the product of the peak height and the peak width at half height.

1.3 This test method provides a number that is the ratio of intensity of portions of the XRD pattern of the sample to intensity of the corresponding portion of the pattern of a reference zeolite NaA. The intensity ratio, expressed as a percentage, is then labeled relative crystallinity of NaA.

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

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

[D3906 Test Method for Determination of Relative X-ray Diffraction Intensities of Faujasite-Type Zeolite-Containing Materials](#)

[E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods](#)

[E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics](#)

[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The XRD patterns of the zeolite NaA or zeolite NaA-containing sample and the reference sample (NaA) are obtained under the same conditions. A comparison of the sums of intensities of six strong peaks in the 11–32° 2 θ range is made, giving relative crystallinity of NaA. This type of comparison is commonly used in zeolite technology and is often referred to as “% crystallinity.”

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Zeolite NaA has been used as an active component in molecular sieves employed as desiccants for natural gas, process gas streams, sealed insulated windows, and as a builder (water softener) in household laundry detergents.

4.2 This X-ray procedure is designed to allow a reporting of the relative degree of crystallization of NaA in the manufacture of NaA. The relative crystallinity number has proven useful in technology, research, and specifications.

4.3 Drastic changes in intensity of individual peaks in the XRD pattern of NaA can result from changes in distribution of electron density within the unit cell of the NaA zeolite. The electron density distribution is dependent upon the extent of filling

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D32 on Catalysts and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D32.05 on Zeolites.

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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.

of pores in the zeolite with guest molecules, and on the nature of the guest molecules. In this XRD method, the guest molecule H₂O completely fills the pores. Intensity changes may also result if some or all of the sodium cations in NaA are exchanged by other cations.

4.4 Drastic changes in overall intensity can result from changes in X-ray absorption attributed to non-crystalline phases, if present, in a NaA sample. If non-zeolite crystalline phases are present, their diffraction peaks may overlap with some of the NaA diffraction peaks selected for this test method. If there is reason to suspect the presence of such components, then NaA peaks free of interference should be chosen for analysis.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *X-ray Diffractometer*, equipped with computerized data acquisition and reduction capability or with a strip chart recorder, and using copper K-alpha radiation.

5.2 *Drying Oven*, set at ~~100°C~~ 100 °C.

5.3 *Hydrator (Laboratory Desiccator)*, maintained at about 58 % relative humidity by a saturated solution of sodium bromide, NaBr.

5.4 *Planimeter or Appropriate Peak Profile Analysis or Digital Integration Software*, if diffractometer is not equipped with appropriate software data analysis capability.

NOTE 1—Modern analysis software performs either numerical integration or peak modelling by profile fitting, or both. Using these methods true peak areas values can be obtained too.

6. Reagents and Materials

6.1 *NaA Powder*³, as reference standard, preferably with a mean particle diameter of 3 to 5 microns (mean crystal size 1 to 2 microns).

7. Procedure

7.1 Carry out the steps (described in 7.1.1 – 7.1.3) in an identical manner for both the sample and the NaA reference.

7.1.1 Place about 1.5 g of finely divided sample in the drying oven at ~~100°C~~ 100 °C for 2 h. Cool the sample in the hydrator and hold there at room temperature and about 58 % relative humidity for at least 16 h.

NOTE 2—Grinding of course-textured samples should be done gently. Over-grinding can lead to breaking up of fine crystals and destruction of the zeolite.

NOTE 3—Drying followed by rehydration results in filling the zeolite pores with water of hydration but without an excess of moisture residing on the surface of the zeolite particles.

7.1.2 Pack the sample into an XRD sample holder.

7.1.3 Obtain an XRD pattern of the NaA reference by scanning over the angle range from 11 to 32° 2θ at 0.25°/min. In the step mode, a 0.02° 2θ step for 2 s may be acceptable for pure NaA, while 10 to 20 s may be necessary for lower NaA content samples. This scan range includes the six strong diffraction peaks that are to be used in the calculation for “% crystallinity”:

hkl index	d (Angstrom)	°2θ (Cu K-α radiation)
222	7.104	12.46
420	5.503	16.11
442	4.102	21.67
620	3.710	23.99
642	3.289	27.12
644	2.984	29.94

Fig. 1 shows a pattern for the reference zeolite NaA used in testing of this method.

NOTE 4—1 nanometer (nm) = 10 Angstroms.

7.1.3.1 If a strip chart recorder is used, set the chart drive at 20 mm/min. Select the scale factor (amplification) for the NaA reference pattern so that the strong (644) peak at 29.94° is between 50 and 100 % of full scale. The same scale factor should be used for the sample pattern. However, if the sample gives considerable lower peak intensity, the scale factor may be reduced (amplification increased) to provide reasonable peak heights.

NOTE 5—If a shortened scan program covering just the six NaA peaks is used, a range for each peak should be chosen so that a suitable background reading can be determined. This range, covering each peak, is typically about 1°2θ.

8. Calculation

8.1 Determine the integral peak intensity for each of the six peaks of 7.1.3 for both the sample and the reference NaA in one of three ways:

³ Available from National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), 100 Bureau Dr., Stop 3460, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-3460.