



Designation: **D5402—15 D5402 – 19**

Standard Practice for Assessing the Solvent Resistance of Organic Coatings Using Solvent Rubs¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D5402; 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 practice describes a solvent rub technique for assessing the solvent resistance of an organic coating that chemically changes during the curing process. This technique can be used in the laboratory, in the field, or in the fabricating shop. Test Method **D4752** is the preferred method for ethyl silicate zinc-rich primers.

1.2 This practice does not specify the solvent, number of double rubs, or expected test results.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

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~~ safety, health, and ~~health~~ environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* Consult the supplier's Safety Data Sheet for specific hazard information relating to the solvent used.

1.5 *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

D235 Specification for Mineral Spirits (Petroleum Spirits) (Hydrocarbon Dry Cleaning Solvent)

D523 Test Method for Specular Gloss

D740 Specification for Methyl Ethyl Ketone

D843 Specification for Nitration Grade Xylene

D3363 Test Method for Film Hardness by Pencil Test [ASTM D5402-19](#)

D4138 Practices for Measurement of Dry Film Thickness of Protective Coating Systems by Destructive, Cross-Sectioning Means

D4752 Practice for Measuring MEK Resistance of Ethyl Silicate (Inorganic) Zinc-Rich Primers by Solvent Rub

D7091 Practice for Nondestructive Measurement of Dry Film Thickness of Nonmagnetic Coatings Applied to Ferrous Metals and Nonmagnetic, Nonconductive Coatings Applied to Non-Ferrous Metals

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *double rub, n*—the act of rubbing a cloth in one complete forward and back motion over a coated surface.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Coatings that chemically change during the curing process, such as epoxies, vinyl esters, polyesters, alkyds and urethanes, become more resistant to solvents as they cure. These coatings should reach specific levels of solvent resistance prior to being topcoated and prior to placing in service; the levels of solvent resistance necessary vary with the type of coating and the intended service. Rubbing with a cloth saturated with the appropriate solvent is one way to determine when a specific level of solvent

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **D01** on Paint and Related Coatings, Materials, and Applications and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **D01.46** on Industrial Protective Coatings.

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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.

resistance is reached. However, the level of solvent resistance by itself does not indicate full cure and some coatings become solvent resistant before they become sufficiently cured for service.

4.2 The time required to reach a specific level of solvent resistance can be influenced by temperature, film thickness, air movement and, for water-borne or water-reactive coatings, humidity.

4.3 The test solvent's effect upon the coating varies with coating type and solvent used. The coating manufacturer may specify the solvent, the number of double rubs, and the specific test results needed.

5. Materials and Equipment

5.1 Solvent:

5.1.1 *Methyl Ethyl Ketone (MEK)*, conforming to Specification **D740**, or

5.1.2 *Mineral Spirits*, conforming to Specification **D235**, or

5.1.3 *Xylene*, conforming to Specification **D843**, or

5.1.4 *Other Solvents*, as specified by the coating manufacturer or user.

5.2 *100 % Cotton, Shop Cloth or Cheesecloth*. Cheesecloth is for coil coatings, mesh grade 28 by 24. Approximately 300 by 300 mm (12 by 12 in.) and contrasting in color to the coating being evaluated, or other mutually agreed upon cloth.

5.3 *Proper Safety Equipment*, as determined from the solvent MSDS, for example, solvent resistant gloves, respirator.

6. Procedure

Method A (Standard Method)

6.1 If the testing is being performed in a laboratory setting, before actually testing the specimens, perform a sufficient number of double rubs with the index finger covered with a cotton cloth on a laboratory balance such that 1000 to 2000 g of force is constantly being applied. This is the amount of pressure the operator will apply when testing the specimens, and will be considered as being moderate pressure.

6.2 Select areas on the coated surface at least 100-mm (4-in.) long on which to run the tests. Clean the surface with tap water to remove any loose material and allow to dry.

6.3 Measure the dry-film thickness of the coating in the selected areas in accordance with Test Methods **D4138** or Practice **D7091**. Mark a 100- by 25-mm (4- by 1-in.) rectangular test area on the undamaged, cleaned surface using a pencil or other suitable solvent resistant marker.

6.4 Fold the cotton cloth into a pad of double thickness and saturate it to a dripping wet condition with the specified solvent. Do not allow more than 10 s to elapse before proceeding to the next steps.

6.5 Place the properly protected index finger into the center of the pad while holding excess cloth with the thumb and remaining fingers of the same hand. With the index finger at a 45° angle to the test surface, rub the rectangular test area with moderate pressure first away from the operator and then back towards the operator. Use the amount of pressure determined in 6.1. One forward and back motion is one double rub, and complete at the rate of approximately 1/s.

~~6.6 Continue rubbing the test area for a total of 25 double rubs. Take care to stay within the rectangular test area.~~

6.6 If additional solvent rubs are specified, reposition the finger on an unused clean portion of the cloth and re-saturate the cloth with the selected solvent to a dripping wet condition. Do not allow more than 10 s to elapse before continuing the double rub procedure on the marked test area for an additional 25 double rubs. Repeat this step Repeat the double rubs until reaching the specified test criteria, such as, until the substrate becomes visible, or until a predetermined number of double rubs ~~have~~has been performed. ~~If multiple specimens are being tested in a laboratory, it may be useful to occasionally check the pressure exerted on a balance with a dry cotton cloth between specimens. Ensure that the cloth remains saturated. If it is desirable to change or expose a fresh cloth surface at a specified double rub interval (for example, every 25 double rubs), such a procedure must be agreed upon between producer and user.~~

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6.7 If the film has not been removed down to the substrate, immediately inspect the middle 75 mm (3 in.) of the rubbed area, disregarding 13 mm (½ in.) at each end, for fingernail hardness and visual changes in appearance, comparing the rubbed area with an adjacent unrubbed area. Gloss and hardness will tend to return to initial values as the recovery time increases. The following methods may be used to evaluate the solvent-rubbed area: gloss may be measured in accordance with Test Method **D523**; pencil hardness with Test Method **D3363**; film thickness of the rubbed area by the same method used in 6.3 (allow up to 24 h for the coating to recover before measuring film thickness).

NOTE 2—It may be difficult to measure film thickness and gloss in the narrow solvent-rubbed area of the panel.