



Designation: **D5737/D5737M – 14** D5737/D5737M – 19

Standard Guide for Methods for Measuring Well Discharge¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D5737/D5737M; 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 guide covers an overview of methods to measure well discharge. This guide is an integral part of a series of standards prepared on the in-situ determination of hydraulic properties of aquifer systems by single- or multiple-well tests. Measurement of well discharge is a common requirement to the determination of aquifer and well hydraulic properties.

1.2 This guide does not establish a fixed procedure for any method described. Rather, it describes different methods for measuring discharge from a pumping or flowing well. A pumping well is one type of control well. A control well can also be an injection well or a well in which slug tests are conducted.

1.3 This guide does not address borehole flow meters that are designed for measuring vertical or horizontal flow within a borehole.

1.4 Units—The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units [presented in brackets] are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in non-conformance with the standard. Reporting of results in units other than SI shall not be regarded as nonconformance with 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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use. Furthermore, it is the user's responsibility to properly dispose of water discharged.~~

1.5 *This guide offers an organized collection of information or a series of options and does not recommend a specific course of action. This document cannot replace education or experience and should be used in conjunction with professional judgment. Not all aspects of this guide may be applicable in all circumstances. This ASTM standard is not intended to represent or replace the standard of care by which the adequacy of a given professional service must be judged, nor should this document be applied without consideration of a project's many unique aspects. The word "Standard" in the title of this document means only that the document has been approved through the ASTM consensus process.*

1.6 All observed and calculated values shall conform to the guidelines for significant digits and rounding established in Practice D6026.

1.6.1 The procedures used to specify how data are collected/recorded or calculated in the standard are regarded as the industry standard. In addition, they are representative of the significant digits that generally should be retained. The procedures used do not consider material variation, purpose for obtaining the data, special purpose studies, or any considerations for the user's objectives; and it is common practice to increase or reduce significant digits of reported data to be commensurate with these considerations. It is beyond the scope of this standard to consider significant digits used in analysis methods for engineering data.

~~1.7 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. Furthermore, it is the user's responsibility to properly dispose of water discharged.~~

1.8 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.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D18 on Soil and Rock and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D18.21 on Groundwater and Vadose Zone Investigations.

Current edition approved June 1, 2014/Nov. 1, 2019. Published July 2014/December 2019. Originally approved in 1995. Last previous edition approved in 2006/2014 as D5737 – 95 (2006); D5737 – 14. DOI: 10.1520/D5737_D5737M-14.10.1520/D5737_D5737M-19.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

[D653 Terminology Relating to Soil, Rock, and Contained Fluids](#)

[D1941 Test Method for Open Channel Flow Measurement of Water with the Parshall Flume](#)

[D3740 Practice for Minimum Requirements for Agencies Engaged in Testing and/or Inspection of Soil and Rock as Used in Engineering Design and Construction](#)

[D4043 Guide for Selection of Aquifer Test Method in Determining Hydraulic Properties by Well Techniques](#)

[D5242 Test Method for Open-Channel Flow Measurement of Water with Thin-Plate Weirs](#)

[D5390 Test Method for Open-Channel Flow Measurement of Water with Palmer-Bowlus Flumes](#)

[D5716 Test Method for Measuring the Rate of Well Discharge by Circular Orifice Weir](#)

[D6026 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Geotechnical Data](#)

2.2 ISO Standard:

[Recommendation R541 Measurement of Fluid Flow by Means of Orifice Plates and Nozzles](#)³

2.3 ANSI Standard:

[Standard 1042 Part 1 Methods for the Measurement of Fluid Flow in Pipes, 1, Orifice Plates, Nozzles and Venturi Tubes](#)³

2.4 ASME Standard:

[Standard MFC-3M-1995 Measurement of Fluid Flow in Pipes Using Orifice, Nozzle, and Venturi](#)⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of common technical terms used within this guidestandard, refer to Terminology [D653](#).

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide is limited to the description of test methods typical for measurement of ground water discharge from a control well.

4.1.1 Controlled field tests are the primary means of determining aquifer properties. Most mathematical equations developed for analyzing field tests require measurement of control well discharge.

4.1.2 Discharge may be needed for evaluation of well design and efficiency.

4.1.3 For aquifer tests, a conceptual model should be prepared to evaluate the proper test method and physical test requirements, such as well placement and design (see Guide [D4043](#)). Review the site data for consistency with the conceptual model. Revise the conceptual model as appropriate and consider the implications on the planned activities.

4.1.4 For aquifer tests, the discharge rate should be sufficient to cause significant stress of the aquifer without violating test assumptions. Conditions that may violate test assumptions include conversion of the aquifer from confined to unconfined conditions, lowering the water level in the control well to below the top of the well screen, causing a well screen entrance velocity that promotes well development during the test, or decreasing the filter pack permeability characteristics.

4.1.5 Some test methods described here are not applicable to injection well tests.

4.2 This guide does not apply to test methods used in measurement of flow of other fluids used in industrial operations, such as waste water, sludge, oil, and chemicals.

NOTE 1—The quality of the result produced by this standard is dependent on the competence of the personnel performing it, and the suitability of the equipment and facilities used. Agencies that meet the criteria of Practice [D3740](#) are generally considered capable of competent and objective testing/sampling/inspection/etc. Users of this standard are cautioned that compliance with Practice [D3740](#) does not in itself assure reliable results. Reliable results depend on many factors; Practice [D3740](#) provides a means of evaluating some of those factors.

5. Test Measurement Methods

5.1 *Selection of a Well Discharge Rate Measurement Method*—Select a well discharge measurement method based on the desired discharge rate or rates, the desired pumping method, the required/needed accuracy and frequency of measurement, the type of pump discharge and the water conveyance method.

5.2 *Principal Well Discharge Rate Measurement Methods*—A summary of principal methods is given below for typical hydrogeologic testing. Additional information may be found in a publication of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) **(1)**,⁵ the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) **(2)**, or in a comprehensive book on the subject of flow meter engineering **(3)**. Discharge methods can be classified as open channel flow and closed conduit flow. Open channel flow is limited

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 Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

⁴ Available from American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), ASME International Headquarters, Two Park Ave., New York, NY 10016-5990, <http://www.asme.org>.

⁵ The boldface numbers given in parentheses refer to a list of references at the end of the text.