



SLOVENSKI STANDARD
SIST EN 1483:1998

01-maj-1998

Kakovost vode - Določevanje živega srebra

Water quality - Determination of mercury

Wasserbeschaffenheit - Bestimmung von Quecksilber

Qualité de l'eau - Détermination du mercure

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ICS:

13.060.50	Preiskava vode na kemične snovi	Examination of water for chemical substances
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EUROPEAN STANDARD

EN 1483

NORME EUROPÉENNE

EUROPÄISCHE NORM

May 1997

ICS 13.060.30

Descriptors: water tests, surface water, ground water, sewage, chemical analysis, determination of content, mercury, reduction methods, sodium tetraborate, tin chloride

English version

Water quality - Determination of mercury

Qualité de l'eau - Détermination du mercure

Wasserbeschaffenheit - Bestimmung von Quecksilber

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Up-to-date lists and bibliographical references concerning such national standards may be obtained on application to the Central Secretariat or to any CEN member.

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CEN

European Committee for Standardization
Comité Européen de Normalisation
Europäisches Komitee für Normung

Central Secretariat: rue de Stassart, 36 B-1050 Brussels

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Foreword

This European Standard has been prepared by the Technical Committee CEN/TC 230 "Water analysis", the secretariat of which is held by DIN.

This European Standard contains three informative annexes.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by November 1997, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by November 1997.

According to the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organizations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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Introduction

It should be investigated whether and to what extent particular problems will require the specification of additional marginal conditions.

It is absolutely essential that tests conducted according to this standard are carried out by suitably qualified staff.

In natural water sources, mercury compounds generally occur only in very small concentrations of less than 0,1 µg/l. Higher concentrations may be found, for example, in waste water.

Both inorganic and organic compounds of mercury may be present. Mercury can accumulate in sediment and sludge.

In order to fully decompose all of the mercury compounds, a digestion procedure is necessary. Digestion can be omitted only if it is certain that the mercury concentration can be measured without this pretreatment.

For measurements in the low concentration range, highest purity reagents, clean reaction vessels, mercury-free air in the laboratory and a very stable measurement system are essential.

1 Scope

This standard specifies two methods for the determination of mercury. In the method described in clause 4, tin(II)chloride is used as reducing agent. In the method given in clause 5, sodium tetrahydroborate serves as reducing agent. The choice of the method depends on the equipment available and the matrix (see clause 3). Both methods are suitable for the determination of mercury in water, for example in ground, surface and waste waters, in the concentration range from 0,1 µg/l to 10 µg/l. Higher concentrations can be determined if the water sample is diluted.

2 Normative References

This European Standard incorporates by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated references, subsequent amendment to or revisions of any of these publications apply to this European standard only when incorporated in it by amendment or revision. For undated reference the latest edition of the publication referred to applies.

EN 25667-1 : 1993

Water quality – Sampling – Part 1: Guidance on the design of sampling programmes (ISO 5667-1 : 1980)

EN 25667-2 : 1993

Water quality – Sampling – Part 2: Guidance on sampling techniques (ISO 5667-2 : 1991)

EN ISO 5667-3 : 1995

Water quality – Sampling – Part 3: Guidance on the preservation and handling of samples (ISO 5667-3 : 1994)

3 General interferences

With mercury there is a risk that exchange reactions, that is adsorption and desorption, will occur on the walls of the reaction vessel (see 4.4).

Mercury vapour can diffuse through various plastics, this phenomenon needs to be taken into consideration in the choice of tubing material. Glass or special plastics tubing, e.g. FEP tubes may be used (FEP = perfluoro(ethylene-propylene). Silicone tubing, for example, is unsuitable.

Volatile organic substances can absorb in the UV range and be mistaken for mercury. These are for the most part removed by adding potassium permanganate until the solution is permanently coloured red and aerating for 10 min with an inert gas, before reduction of the mercury compounds. Often, such interference by non-specific absorption can also be eliminated using a background compensation system.

All solutions have to be brought to the same temperature (< 25 °C) before reduction and stripping of the mercury vapour. Water condensation on the cuvette windows can be prevented by heating the cuvette with, for example, an infrared lamp.

The interferences which occur due to the presence of other elements in the matrix are dependent on the choice of reducing agent. Element concentrations in excess of those listed in Table 1 can cause results which are too low.

Fewer interferences from heavy metals arise if tin(II) chloride is used rather than sodium tetrahydroborate. Using flow systems, interference effects due to heavy metals can be less than indicated in table 1.

Table 1: Acceptable Concentrations of Some Matrix Elements in a Measurement Solution in milligrams per litre

Reducing agent	NaBH ₄ directly	NaBH ₄ directly	SnCl ₂ directly
Medium	0,5 mol/l HCl	5 mol/l HCl + 0,2 g/l Fe(III)	0,5 mol/l HCl
Element			
Cu(II)	10	10	500
Ni(II)	1	500	500
Ag(I)	0,1	10	1
I ⁻	100	10	0,1
As(V)	0,5	0,5	0,5
Bi(III)	0,05	0,5	0,5
Sb(III)	0,5	0,5	0,5
Se(IV)	0,005	0,05	0,05

Tin(II)chloride causes such extensive contamination of the apparatus with tin that considerable interferences occur if sodium tetrahydroborate is used afterwards. Separate systems are therefore essential for reductions with tin(II) chloride and with sodium tetrahydroborate.

WARNING: Mercury and mercury compounds are very toxic. Extreme caution should be exercised when handling samples and solutions which contain or may contain mercury.

4 Determination of Mercury after Tin(II)-Chloride Reduction without Enrichment

4.1 Principle

Mono- or di-valent mercury is reduced to the elemental form by tin(II) chloride in an acid medium. Elemental mercury is then stripped from the solution with the aid of a stream of inert gas or mercury-free air and, in the form of an atomic gas, transported into a cuvette. Absorbances are measured at a wavelength of 253,7 nm in the radiation beam of an atomic absorption spectrometer. Concentrations are calculated using a calibration curve.

4.2 Interferences

(See also clause 3).

Iodide in concentrations > 0,1 mg/l causes interferences in the determination due to the formation of mercury complexes. In this case another method such as reduction with sodium tetrahydroborate (see clause 5) is necessary.

Because of the redox potential of the tin(II)chloride solution, various inorganic mercury compounds such as mercury sulfide and organic mercury compounds cannot be reduced fully without digestion.

4.3 Reagents

4.3.1 General requirement

As a minimum use "analytical grade" reagents or those with particularly low mercury content. Water shall be double distilled or of similar purity. The mercury content of the water and reagents shall be negligible compared to the lowest analyte concentration.

4.3.2 Nitric acid, $\rho(\text{HNO}_3) = 1,40 \text{ g/ml}$

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4.3.3 Sulfuric acid, $\rho(\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4) = 1,84 \text{ g/ml}$

4.3.4 Hydrochloric acid, $\rho(\text{HCl}) = 1,16 \text{ g/ml}$

4.3.5 Potassium permanganate solution:

Dissolve 50 g of potassium permanganate, KMnO_4 , in 1 000 ml of water.

4.3.6 Stabilizer Solution

Dissolve 5 g of potassium dichromate, $K_2Cr_2O_7$, in 500 ml of nitric acid (see 4.3.2) and dilute to 1000 ml with water.

WARNING: Potassium dichromate is toxic. Caution should be exercised when handling the solid material or its solutions.

4.3.7 Potassium peroxydisulfate solution

Dissolve 40 g of potassium peroxydisulfate, $K_2S_2O_8$, in 1 000 ml of water.

4.3.8 Hydroxylammonium chloride solution

Dissolve 10 g of hydroxylammonium chloride, H_4CINO , in 100 ml of water.

4.3.9 Tin(II) chloride solution

Dissolve 5 g of tin(II)chloride dihydrate, $SnCl_2 \cdot 2H_2O$, in 30 ml of hydrochloric acid (see 4.3.4); dilute to 100 ml with water. With flow systems, use a solution of lower concentration, e.g. 0,5 g in 100 ml. Prepare this solution fresh daily from the more concentrated solution by diluting with water.

If a high result for the blank (see 4.6) is obtained, pass nitrogen through the solution for 30 min in order to remove traces of mercury.

4.3.10 Mercury stock solution I, $\rho(Hg) = 100 \text{ mg/l}$

Dissolve 108,0 mg of mercury(II)oxide, HgO , in 10 ml of the stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6); dilute to 1 000 ml with water.
1 ml of this solution corresponds to 0,1 mg of mercury.

It is possible for stock solution I to be prepared from a commercially available mercury standard. This solution is stable for at least 1 year.

4.3.11 Mercury stock solution II, $\rho(Hg) = 1 \text{ mg/l}$

Add 10 ml of stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6) to 10 ml of stock solution I (see 4.3.10) and dilute to 1000 ml with water. 1 ml of this solution corresponds to 1 μg of mercury.

The solution is stable for about 1 week.

4.3.12 Mercury standard solution (1), $\rho(Hg) = 100 \mu\text{g/l}$

Add 10 ml of stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6) to 100 ml of stock solution II (see 4.3.11) and dilute to 1 000 ml with water. 1 ml of this solution corresponds to 100 ng of mercury.

Prepare this solution on the day of use.

4.3.13 Mercury standard solution (2), $\rho(Hg) = 50 \mu\text{g/l}$

Add 10 ml of stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6) to 50 ml of stock solution II (see 4.3.11) and dilute to 1000 ml with water. 1 ml of this solution corresponds to 50 ng of mercury.

Prepare this solution on the day of use.

4.3.14 Mercury calibration solutions

Prepare calibration solutions appropriate for the volume and expected mercury concentrations of the measurement sample solutions:

For the concentration range from 0,5 $\mu\text{g/l}$ to 5 $\mu\text{g/l}$, for example, proceed as follows:

- Pipette into a series of six 100 ml volumetric flasks 1 ml, 2 ml, 4 ml, 6 ml, 8 ml and 10 ml respectively of mercury standard solution (2) (see 4.3.13).
- Add 1 ml of stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6) to each 100 ml volumetric flask.
- Fill to the mark with water and mix thoroughly.

These calibration solutions contain 0,5 µg/l, 1 µg/l, 2 µg/l, 3 µg/l, 4 µg/l and 5 µg/l mercury respectively. They shall be prepared freshly before each series of measurements. If calibration measurements shall be done in duplicate prepare another set of solutions.

4.3.15 Reagent blank solution

Prepare a volume of blank solution corresponding to that of the measurement solution by adding 10 ml of stabilizer solution (see 4.3.6) per 1000 ml of water. Use the same digestion procedure as for the sample (see 4.6). Include the reagent blank in each batch of analyses.

4.3.16 Rinsing solution for glassware

Add to about 500 ml of water 150 ml of nitric acid (see 4.3.2) and dilute with water to 1 000 ml.

4.4 Apparatus

4.4.1 General Requirement

Before use, all glassware shall be washed thoroughly with diluted nitric acid (see 4.3.16) and then rinsed thoroughly several times with water (see 4.3.1).

4.4.2 Atomic absorption spectrometer with a monitoring system. An instrument with background correction system is recommended.

4.4.3 Radiation source for the determination of mercury, e.g. a hollow cathode or electrodeless discharge lamp.

4.4.4 Mercury accessory consisting of:

- absorption cell consisting of a borosilicate glass or quartz cuvette, inner diameter about 2 cm, at least 15 cm long (dependent on the AAS instrument) with quartz end windows;
- air circulating pump (e.g. membrane pump, peristaltic pump), capacity 1 l/min to 2 l/min, with plastics tubing (closed system) or inert gas cylinder with pressure reducing valve (open system);
- flow meter with plastics (see clause 3) tubing (open system). An open system is advantageous for high concentrations of mercury;
- reaction vessel consisting of, for example, a 100 ml, 250 ml or 1 000 ml flat-bottomed flask as shown in the diagram, with ground glass stopper, wash bottle insert with glass frit porosity 1;
- heating source for the measuring cell sufficient to prevent condensation of water.

The temperature of the measuring cell shall be the same throughout the analysis.

An example of a closed system is shown in figure 1.

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