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## Standard Practice for Demonstrating Equivalent In-Plane Lateral Seismic Performance to Wood-Frame Shear Walls Sheathed with Wood Structural Panels<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D7989; 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 practice establishes a method for alternative shear wall systems to compare seismic equivalency parameters (SEP) derived from cyclic in-plane racking tests to performance targets derived from tests of light-frame shear walls constructed with wood structural panel (WSP) sheathing attached to dimension lumber framing using nails.

1.2 This practice considers only the performance of shear walls subject to cyclic lateral loading, parallel to the plane of the shear wall. Design of walls with openings and performance for other wall functions, such as out-of-plane bending, combined shear and uplift, and so forth are not considered.

1.3 This practice is applicable only to shear walls where all vertical-load-supporting elements are intact at the end of the in-plane lateral load test and remain capable of supporting gravity loads. Wall assemblies whose vertical-load-supporting elements buckle or otherwise become incapable of supporting gravity loads during the lateral load test are outside the scope of this practice. In addition, for bearing wall systems, this practice assumes that the shear wall system under evaluation has documented design procedures to ensure that vertical-load-supporting elements have adequate resistance to the combined effect of compression loads caused by overturning and gravity loads.

1.4 This practice does not address height limitations, detailing requirements, wall openings, derivation of design values for strength and stiffness, or other requirements and limitations that may be necessary for an alternative shear wall system. These requirements shall be provided elsewhere, such as by a suitable product standard for the alternative shear wall system.

1.5 This practice assumes that the stiffness or deformation of the alternative shear wall system can be estimated, and that design loads within a structure will be distributed among seismically equivalent wall systems based on their relative stiffness.

1.6 This practice is not intended to preclude other rational means of evaluating seismic performance.

1.7 This practice assumes that the alternative shear wall system may be used alone or in combination with wood-frame shear walls sheathed with wood structural panels.

1.8 *Units*—The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

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1.10 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:<sup>2</sup>

**E2126** Test Methods for Cyclic (Reversed) Load Test for Shear Resistance of Vertical Elements of the Lateral Force Resisting Systems for Buildings

**F1667** Specification for Driven Fasteners: Nails, Spikes, and Staples

### 2.2 Other Documents:

**PS1** Structural Plywood, U.S. Department of Commerce Voluntary Product Standard<sup>3</sup>

**PS2** Performance Standard for Wood-Based Structural Use Panels, U.S. Department of Commerce Voluntary Product Standard<sup>4</sup>

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—The definitions in Test Methods **E2126** also apply to this practice.

### 3.2 *Definitions Specific to this Practice:*

3.2.1 *aspect ratio, n*—ratio of a shear wall's height divided by its length.

3.2.2 *allowable design load, n*—maximum in-plane racking resistance using an allowable stress design methodology assigned to a tested shear wall configuration for seismic design.

3.2.3 *alternative shear wall system, n*—shear wall system for which seismic equivalence to the reference shear wall system is sought.

#### 3.2.3.1 *Discussion*—

The alternative shear wall system may represent a range of possibilities including pre-fabricated or field-fabricated wall assemblies that do not resemble the reference shear wall system or assemblies with minor modifications to the reference system, such as the use of alternative fasteners, framing, or sheathing.

3.2.4 *component overstrength, n*—ratio of peak load divided by allowable design load.

3.2.5 *drift capacity, n*—ultimate cyclic displacement on the average envelope curve defined in Test Methods **E2126** corresponding to the failure limit state.

3.2.6 *ductility, n*—ratio of drift capacity divided by the displacement on the average envelope curve defined in Test Methods **E2126** corresponding to the allowable design load.

3.2.7 *peak load, n*—maximum load on the average envelope curve defined in Test Methods **E2126**.

3.2.8 *reference shear wall system, n*—wood-frame shear wall system used for the equivalence benchmark, consisting of wood structural panel sheathing attached to dimension lumber framing using 6d, 8d, or 10d common (Specification **F1667**, Table 14, Type 1, Style 9) or galvanized box (Specification **F1667**, Table 5, Type 1, Style 3A) nails, with full round heads, complying with **F1667**.

<sup>2</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.

<sup>3</sup> Online, Available: <https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/12/16/PS%201%2019%20final%20WERB-approved%20%28NIST%20vers%2011-18-2019%29%2B.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Online, Available: [https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/05/09/ps\\_2-18\\_final\\_apr\\_2019\\_dfa\\_reviewed.pdf](https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/05/09/ps_2-18_final_apr_2019_dfa_reviewed.pdf)

### 3.2.8.1 Discussion—

**Table X1.1** provides summary information for the walls evaluated to represent the reference shear wall system.

3.2.9 *seismic equivalence parameters (SEP), n*—key parameters representing seismic performance of shear walls, specifically drift capacity, component overstrength, ductility, and maintenance of vertical-load-supporting capability.

3.2.10 *shear wall, n*—wall designed to resist lateral racking shear forces parallel to the plane of the wall.

3.2.11 *shear wall configuration, n*—shear wall of a specific height and length representing one possible case of a shear wall system and consisting of a specific arrangement of components, such as framing, fasteners, sheathing, and anchorage.

3.2.12 *wood structural panel (WSP)*—panel manufactured in accordance with PS1 or PS2 from veneers; wood strands or wafers; or a combination of veneer and wood strands or wafers; bonded together with waterproof resins or other suitable bonding systems.

## 4. Summary of Practice

4.1 Shear walls are tested in accordance with Test Methods **E2126**, and the average envelope curve is generated for each specimen as defined in 3.2.4 of Test Methods **E2126**.

4.2 SEPs are determined from the average envelope curve for each specimen, and the average SEPs for each tested shear wall configuration are compared to the benchmark parameters.

4.3 Seismic equivalency is established if each of the SEPs for the alternative shear wall system meets specified requirements and the vertical-load-supporting elements are intact and capable of supporting gravity loads.

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 This practice documents cyclic performance benchmarks for shear walls constructed with wood structural panel (WSP) sheathing attached to dimension lumber framing using common or galvanized box nails as defined in **3.2.8**.

5.2 Procedures described in this practice provide a method to evaluate an alternative shear wall system's SEPs to demonstrate equivalent in-plane lateral seismic performance to the reference shear wall system.

5.3 The procedures described in this practice do not address all factors to be considered for recognition of an alternative shear wall system. Such factors, as described in **1.4**, vary by the end-use application and shall be addressed outside the scope of this standard through an evaluation of the acceptability of the alternative shear wall system in accordance with requirements of building codes and standards, as applicable.

## 6. Testing Requirements

6.1 *Test Program Design*—The test program used to evaluate the alternative shear wall system shall be based on consideration of the range of intended applications and variables that have a potential impact on the seismic performance. Variables may include, but are not limited to, allowable design loads, configuration options, material variations, overturning restraint types, fastener spacings, and aspect ratios.

6.2 *Number of Tests*—For each tested shear wall configuration, the number of replicates shall be as required in 8.1 of Test Methods **E2126** or as required by the applicable product standard.

6.3 *Loading*—Cyclic lateral load tests shall be conducted using Method C from Test Methods **E2126**.

6.3.1 *Load Beam*—The load beam used to apply load to the test assembly shall comply with 7.3.1 of Test Methods **E2126**.

6.4 *Rigid Base*—Testing shall be conducted on a rigid base, such that the performance of the test specimens is not influenced by deformation of the base structure. The specimens shall be anchored directly to the base and shall be in full contact with the base.

**6.5 Test Specimen Construction**—Specimens shall be constructed using details consistent with the intended application. Sheathing, if present, shall not bear on any portion of the test fixture or the loading beam during the tests, except where the specified end-use installation requires the sheathing to bear on supporting elements, such as foundations or sill plates. If bearing on a wood sill plate is specified in application, a similar wood sill plate shall be included in the tested assembly.

**6.5.1 Aspect Ratios**—Aspect ratios and wall dimensions shall be consistent with the intended application.

**6.5.1.1** Alternative shear wall systems that are similar to the reference system (that is, repetitive vertical stud framing spaced at 24 in. on center or less with structural sheathing nailed to framing), except for variations in framing materials, sheathing materials, or fasteners, shall be evaluated using an aspect ratio of 1:1 and a minimum wall height of 8 ft (2.4 m).

**6.5.1.2** Alternative shear wall systems that vary more significantly from the reference system described in **6.5.1.1** shall be evaluated using the range of aspect ratios for the intended application.

**6.5.2 Sheathing Joints**—Alternative shear wall systems that will include discrete sheathing panels shall include at least one vertical sheathing joint if such joints will occur in application. Test specimens may include horizontal sheathing joints as necessary, such as where specimen heights exceed panel height or where sheathing is intended to be installed with the long dimension perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the studs.

**6.5.3 Framing**—Where applicable, the stud and plate material, species, grade, size, and spacing shall be representative of that used in application. Framing shall meet the requirements of 6.3 in Test Methods **E2126**.

**6.5.3.1** For alternative systems described in **6.5.1.1**, framing with the smallest standard stud and plate cross sections expected in application shall be used, and the smallest number of end post studs that can practically be employed in accordance with standard design provisions shall be used.

**6.5.4 Anchorage and Framing Connections**—Shear anchorage, overturning restraint, and framing connections, including connections between individual plies of built-up posts, shall be representative of typical connections used in application and shall be designed and detailed to optimize to the extent practical the design resistance of the connections to the design load of the shear wall.

**6.5.4.1** Alternative systems described in **6.5.1.1** shall be tested with bolts for shear anchorage and eccentric-type hold downs positioned inside the wall for overturning restraint unless use of an alternative shear anchorage or hold down system, or both, will be required in application. Where either an alternative shear anchorage or overturning restraint is required in application, the specified alternative shall be permitted for the evaluation.

**6.5.5 Sheathing Connections**—Where sheathing attached to framing is used to resist lateral loads, the sheathing fasteners shall be installed using the minimum edge distance recommended by the sheathing manufacturer along all four sheathing edges. The number of fasteners installed along each edge shall be equal to the length of the sheathing edge divided by the specified fastener spacing, plus one. Spacing between the sheathing corner fastener and the next adjacent fastener is permitted to be less than the recommended spacing to accommodate the required edge distance. Sheathing fasteners placed in the field of the panel, if any, shall be positioned as required by the design. Sheathing fasteners shall be driven so that the head of the fastener contacts the surface of the sheathing, but not so deep as to crush the surface, unless specified differently by the manufacturer.

## **7. Evaluation of Cyclic Response**

**7.1 Average Envelope Curve**—The average envelope curve shall be generated for each test specimen as defined in 3.2.4 of Test Methods **E2126**.

**7.2 SEP Determination**—The component overstrength, drift capacity, and ductility shall be determined for each specimen as defined in **3.2**. The average values calculated for all replicates of a tested shear wall configuration shall be the SEPs for the alternative shear wall configuration. The results of multiple shear wall configurations shall not be averaged or otherwise combined for the evaluation.

**7.3 Assessment of Vertical-Load-Supporting Elements**—The condition of the vertical-load-supporting elements shall be visually assessed to qualitatively determine whether the capability to support gravity loads is retained.

NOTE 1—Visual assessment of vertical-load-supporting elements relies on examination during and after the test for observation of occurrence of buckling of the vertical-load-supporting elements. Failure modes, such as buckling, that compromise the wall assembly's ability to carry vertical load. For wood-frame walls that comprise the reference shear wall system, the lack of observed buckling or other significant vertical load limiting failure modes for the studs and end posts has been used as visual confirmation of retained ability to support gravity loads.

## 8. Requirements for Equivalency

8.1 Table 1 provides the SEP performance targets based on tests of the reference shear wall system conducted in accordance with Method C of Test Methods E2126.

8.2 Seismic equivalency is established if the SEPs for the alternative shear wall system meet requirements specified in Table 1 and if the vertical-load-supporting elements are judged to retain capability to support gravity loads.

## 9. Keywords

9.1 cyclic loads; earthquake, shear wall; lateral force; seismic; wood structural panel;

## APPENDIX

### (Nonmandatory Information)

### X1. COMMENTARY

#### X1.1 Introduction

X1.1.1 Shear walls constructed with wood structural panels (WSP) fastened to sawn lumber framing with common or galvanized box nails are widely used in construction. This system serves as the reference shear wall construction for this practice. When subjected to cyclic loads, this reference system demonstrates desirable ductile yield modes with significant drift capacity, ductility, and overstrength. The seismic design provisions for engineered light-frame wood construction in North America account for this behavior by assigning appropriate seismic design coefficients. These coefficients are used to determine the seismic design loads on a structure and to estimate the building response to an earthquake. <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/7337dc99-7bf5-4ebf-9f07-e135c58f1bc1/astm-d7989-21>

X1.1.2 As new structural systems are developed or modifications to the reference system are introduced, the seismic response capabilities of the new or modified systems are often questioned. For example, will the response of the alternative system be significantly different from the benchmark system or will the use of a proprietary sheathing panel, fastener, or framing material fundamentally change the seismic response of the benchmark wall system? Can an entirely new wall system or product be intermixed with the benchmark system and behave in a compatible fashion? This practice provides a relatively simple, quantitative method for comparison of cyclic resistance parameters to establish seismic equivalence. However, there are many considerations beyond the results of the in-plane lateral tests performed in accordance with this practice for evaluation of SEPs that must be considered before a new system can be deemed equivalent to the reference system for all aspects of building performance in a seismic event. For this reason, it is required for the alternative shear wall system to have documentation, such as a product standard,

**TABLE 1 SEPs for Equivalency to Nailed, Wood-Frame, WSP Shear Walls**

Parameter	SEP Requirement
Component Overstrength	$2.5 \leq \frac{P_{peak, avg}}{P_{ASD}} \leq 5.0$
Drift Capacity	$\Delta_{U, avg} \geq 0.028h$
Ductility	$\frac{\Delta_{U, avg}}{\Delta_{ASD, avg}} \geq 11$

$P_{peak, avg}$  = average peak load for all replicates of the wall configuration,

$P_{ASD}$  = allowable design load for the wall configuration,

$\Delta_{U, avg}$  = average ultimate displacement for all replicates of the wall configuration,

$h$  = height of the shear wall, and

$\Delta_{ASD, avg}$  = average displacement corresponding to the allowable design load for all replicates of the wall configuration.

that addresses the specific issues listed in 1.4, as well as any other relevant issues necessary to the use of the product. Assessing all aspects of seismic performance for the end use application is beyond the scope of this standard.

## **X1.2 Development of Equivalency Procedure**

X1.2.1 In 2007, an ICC Evaluation Service task group was formed to create an approach for a new structural system to demonstrate seismic equivalence to wood-frame WSP shear walls (1, 2). This task group included consulting engineers, academics, trade association representatives, product manufacturers, and wood industry professionals. The initial focus of the group was to derive a procedure that could be used to judge whether high-aspect-ratio, prefabricated shear panels could be assigned the seismic design coefficients and factors associated with the WSP reference system.

X1.2.2 Several different quantitative parameters from cyclic shear wall testing were reviewed by the industry task group to represent the seismic performance of the reference system (1, 2). Ultimately, they selected drift capacity, component overstrength, and ductility, as defined in this practice, to represent seismic performance for the reference system.

X1.2.3 In addition, the task group observed that degradation of the sheathing and fasteners under progressive cyclic lateral loading does not typically compromise the ability of the wood studs in the reference system to support vertical loads. Therefore, in the absence of a consensus standard to conduct combined vertical and lateral load testing, it was determined that alternative systems should also demonstrate this characteristic (1, 2). Examples of failure modes that could be induced in a lateral load only test that would inhibit the ability to carry a simultaneous vertical load might include buckling, bending or compression fracture of a non-redundant assembly, or similar failure for multiple framing members within light-frame assembly. Given the wide variety of potential wall assemblies that might be reviewed under this protocol, it is not possible to prescriptively list acceptable and unacceptable failure modes and some practical engineering judgement and rationalization is required for this qualitative assessment. Alternative systems that demonstrate significant degradation of the vertical-load-supporting elements during the lateral load test or exhibit questionable failure modes cannot achieve equivalence through this protocol alone and some form of combined load testing should be considered.

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X1.2.4 It is an underlying assumption of this procedure that an alternative shear wall system judged to be equivalent through this practice may either be used alone or in combination with wood-frame shear walls sheathed with wood structural panels. The potential for use in combination with the reference shear wall system precludes the possibility for a system to trade-off excess performance in one SEP for low performance in another (for example using excess overstrength to justify reduced drift capacity). Such tradeoffs could lead to unpredictable load distribution and performance when the combined system is subject to inelastic deformation in a seismic event. This procedure is intended to ensure compatibility between the reference and alternative systems, so that they can be used in combination.

X1.2.5 The resulting procedure, which serves as the basis of this practice, has been subsequently employed as a practical method to judge whether new shear wall products behave in a manner similar to the reference shear wall system or if modifications to the reference system affect its seismic performance. Systems that are demonstrated to be similar to and compatible with the reference system are assigned the ASCE 7 (3) seismic design coefficients and factors for light-frame wood shear walls sheathed with wood structural panels.

X1.2.6 Prior to the compilation of the reference database and development of this procedure, proponents of an alternative system had to create their own reference database for the WSP reference system, either through literature review or testing. Small sample sizes, variations between laboratories, and use of different load protocols served to create inconsistent performance benchmarks that were not necessarily representative of the performance of the reference system as a whole or of its most frequently constructed configurations. In addition, there were no standardized parameters by which to judge equivalence. For these reasons, the SEP targets in this practice were developed from a large reference database representing the full range of typical reference shear wall configurations based on tests conducted at multiple laboratories.

### X1.3 Reference Database

X1.3.1 *Number of Wall Tests*—The seismic equivalency parameters of [Table 1](#) were originally derived from a reference database including tests of 48 blocked wood-frame WSP shear walls ([1](#), [2](#)). The database was subsequently expanded to include 80 wall tests, which bracketed the practical range of sheathing thickness, nail size, and nail spacing ([4](#)). Most walls were tested with aspect ratios of 2:1 or less. The most common wall aspect ratio tested was 1:1. Walls from the original database with aspect ratios greater than 2:1 or with staples as fasteners were removed in 2020, reducing the current database to 70 walls (See [X1.3.4](#)).

X1.3.2 *Load Protocol*—The shear walls in the reference database were tested at four independent laboratories using the CUREE protocol (Method C of Test Methods [E2126](#)). This load protocol was chosen because it is commonly used by the wood products industry in the United States, and because the failure modes observed with this loading protocol are consistent with failures observed due to real earthquakes. Because the results of cyclic tests can vary depending on the load protocol, this practice has adopted Method C from Test Methods [E2126](#) as the default procedure. While Krawinkler ([5](#)) suggested that the CUREE protocol (Method C of Test Methods [E2126](#)) was developed specifically for seismic site class D and that a more severe protocol might be appropriate for site classes E and F, the use of Method C was judged to be suitable across a range of site conditions and appropriate for the purposes of this Practice, which compares the performance of wall systems to the reference system based on the same test method. This judgment is based largely on observation of representative failure modes from use of Method C, and because effects associated with more severe seismic loading, such as effects of site class or near-fault conditions, are considered separately in design. It is recognized that a large amount of data has been generated using Method A from Test Methods [E2126](#), and that Method A typically produces conservative SEPs relative to Method C. Therefore, a conservative application of this standard would permit the use of this procedure to evaluate systems previously tested using Method A from Test Methods [E2126](#), provided that the results of the two methods are not mixed. It is also not permissible to adjust the results from Method A to try and predict Method C performance. Several different failure modes are possible for each of the two protocols, making a simple conversion impractical for a consistent evaluation. While it is recognized that Method B (ISO 16670 Protocol) from Test Methods [E2126](#) is also a legitimate method for cyclic loading, a suitable database has not been compiled based on that method to enable establishment of seismic equivalence parameters for the reference shear wall system, so that method is not included in this practice.

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<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/7337de99-7bf5-4ebf-9f07-e135c58fb6c1/astm-d7989-21>

X1.3.3 *Test Configuration*—The walls in the reference database were tested on a rigid base and constructed with properly designed anchorage and uplift connections, consistent with use in typical applications. With the exception of one shear wall configuration that was tested with an 8.5 ft (2.6 m) wall height, the walls in the reference database were constructed with an 8 ft (2.4 m) wall height.

X1.3.4 *Database Updates*—The reference database was updated in 2020 to the current 70 walls reflected in [Table X1.1](#). These updates included revision of the SEP parameters for 14 walls with 10d common nails for sheathing attachment to reflect corresponding updates in the 2021 SDPWS ([6](#)) allowable design racking resistance for walls framed with eccentric hold downs positioned inside the wall, as was the case for the reference database tests. To more closely align with a uniform set of reference conditions, ten walls from the original reference database were also removed because they included either window or door openings or stapled sheathing attachment.