



Designation: **E96/E96M—16 E96/E96M – 21**

## Standard Test Methods for Gravimetric Determination of Water Vapor Transmission Rate of Materials<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E96/E96M; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

*This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.*

### 1. Scope

1.1 These test methods cover the determination of water vapor transmission (WVT) of materials through which the passage of water vapor may be of importance, such as rate (WVTR) of materials, such as, but not limited to, paper, plastic films, other sheet materials, coatings, foams, fiberboards, gypsum and plaster products, wood products, and plastics. The test methods are limited to specimens not over 1¼ in. [32 mm] in thickness except as provided in Section 9. Two basic methods, the Desiccant Method and the Water Method, are provided for the measurement of permeance, and two variations include service conditions with one side wetted and service conditions with low humidity on one side and high humidity on the other. Agreement should not be expected between results obtained by different methods. The method should be selected that more nearly approaches the conditions of use; test conditions employed are at the discretion of the user, but in all cases, are reported with the results.

1.2 The values stated in either Inch-Pound or SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be necessarily 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. However, derived results can be converted from one system to the other using appropriate conversion factors (see Table 1).

1.3 This standard does not purport to address all of the safety problems, 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.

1.4 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>

C168 Terminology Relating to Thermal Insulation

C1809 Practice for Preparation of Specimens and Reporting of Results for Permeance Testing of Pressure Sensitive Adhesive Sealed Joints in Insulation Vapor Retarders

<sup>1</sup> These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C16 on Thermal Insulation and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C16.33 on Insulation Finishes and Moisture.

Current edition approved March 1, 2016; Sept. 15, 2021. Published April 2016; December 2021. Originally approved in 1953. Last previous edition approved in 2015; 2016 as E96/E96M—15; E96/E96M – 16. DOI: 10.1520/E0096-E0096M-16; 10.1520/E0096-E0096M-21.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

TABLE 1 Metric Units and Conversion Factors<sup>A,B</sup>

Multiply	by	To Obtain (for the same test condition)
	$\frac{WVT}{WVTR}$	
g/h·m <sup>2</sup>	1.43	grains/h·ft <sup>2</sup>
grains/h·ft <sup>2</sup>	0.697	g/h·m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Water Vapor Permeance (WVP)</i>		
ng/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>	$1.75 \times 10^{-2}$	perm
g/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>	$1.75 \times 10^2$	1 Perm (inch-pound)
g/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>	$1.75 \times 10^7$	perm
perm	57.2	ng/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>
1 Perm (inch-pound)	$5.72 \times 10^{-8}$	g/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>
perm	$5.72 \times 10^{-8}$	g/Pa·s·m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Permeability</i>		
ng/Pa·s·m	0.688	perm-inch
g/Pa·s·m	$6.88 \times 10^8$	1 Perm-inch
g/Pa·s·m	$6.88 \times 10^8$	perm-inch
perm-inch	1.45	ng/Pa·s·m
1 Perm-inch	$1.45 \times 10^{-9}$	g/Pa·s·m
perm-inch	$1.45 \times 10^{-9}$	g/Pa·s·m

<sup>A</sup> These units are commonly used in the construction trade. Other units may be and building materials industries. Additional units are used in other standards industries, such as packaging.

<sup>B</sup> All conversions of mm Hg to Pa are made at a temperature of 0°C.

- D449/D449M Specification for Asphalt Used in Dampproofing and Waterproofing
- D2301 Specification for Vinyl Chloride Plastic Pressure-Sensitive Electrical Insulating Tape
- E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods
- E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

### 3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of terms used in this standard will be found in Terminology C168, from which the following is quoted:

*“water vapor permeability—*the time rate of water vapor transmission through unit area of flat material of unit thickness induced by unit vapor pressure difference between two specific surfaces, under specified temperature and humidity conditions.

*Discussion—*Permeability is a property of a material, but the permeability of a body that performs like a material may be used. Permeability is the arithmetic product of permeance and thickness.

*water vapor permeance—*the time rate of water vapor transmission through unit area of flat material or construction induced by unit vapor pressure difference between two specific surfaces, under specified temperature and humidity conditions.

*Discussion—*Permeance is a performance evaluation and not a property of a material.

*water vapor transmission rate—*the steady water vapor flow in unit time through unit area of a body, normal to specific parallel surfaces, under specific conditions of temperature and humidity at each surface.”

3.2 *water vapor transmission rate—*the steady water vapor flow in unit time through unit area of a body, normal to specific parallel surfaces, under specific conditions of temperature and humidity at each surface.”

### 4. Summary of Test Methods

4.1 In the Desiccant Method the test specimen is sealed to the open mouth of a test dish containing a desiccant, and the assembly placed in a controlled atmosphere. Periodic weighings are used to determine the rate of water vapor movement through the specimen into the desiccant.

4.2 In the Water Method, the dish contains distilled water, and the weighings are used to determine the rate of vapor movement through the specimen from the water to the controlled atmosphere. The vapor pressure difference is nominally the same in both methods except in the variation, with extremes of humidity on opposite sides.

4.3 Given a common controlled atmosphere, the vapor pressure difference is nominally the same in both methods, but the water method exposes the specimen to higher humidity, which potentially affects the water vapor transmission through the material. The controlled atmosphere temperature and humidity levels are selected by the user.

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 The purpose of these tests is to obtain, by means of simple apparatus, reliable values ~~offor~~ water vapor transfer through permeable and semipermeable rate through materials, expressed in suitable units. These values are for use in design, manufacture, and marketing. A permeance ~~A~~ WVTR value obtained under one set of test conditions ~~may not indicate is not necessarily indicative~~ of the value under a different set of conditions. For this reason, the test conditions ~~should are to~~ be selected that most closely approach the conditions of use. ~~While any set of conditions may be used and those conditions reported, standard conditions~~ Commonly used conditions are shown in Appendix X1 that have been useful are shown in Appendix X1. Where tests are conducted for classification ~~Appendix X1~~ or compliance purposes, environmental conditions are typically defined in product standard specifications.

## 6. Apparatus

6.1 *Test Dish*—The test dish shall be of any noncorroding material, impermeable to water or water vapor. ~~It may be of any shape. There is no specified shape or maximum size for the test dish.~~ Light weight is desirable. A ~~large,~~ shallow dish is preferred, but its size and weight are limited when an analytical balance is chosen to detect small weight changes. The mouth of the dish shall be as large as practical and at least 4.65 in.<sup>2</sup> [3000 mm<sup>2</sup>]- in area. The desiccant or water area shall ~~be not be~~ less than the mouth area except ~~ifwhen~~ a grid is used, as provided in ~~12.1~~13.1, with its effective area ~~shall not exceed~~exceeding 10 % of the mouth area. An ~~external~~A flange or ledge around the mouth, ~~toon~~ which the specimen may be attached, is useful when shrinking or warping occurs. When the specimen area is larger than the mouth area, this overlay upon the ledge is a source of error, particularly for thick specimens. This overlay material should be masked as described in ~~rests is commonly~~ 10.1 so that the mouth area defines the test area. The overlay material results in a positive error, indicating excessive water vapor transmission. The magnitude of the error is a complex function of the thickness, ledge width, mouth area, and possibly the permeability. This error is discussed by Joy and Wilson (1) (see 13.4.3). This type of error should be limited to about 10 to 12 %. For a thick specimen the ledge should not exceed 3/4 in. [19 mm] for a 10-in. [254-mm] or larger mouth (square or circular) or 1/8 in. [3 mm] for a 5-in. [127-mm] mouth (square or circular). For a 3-in. [76-mm] mouth (square or circular) the ledge should not exceed 0.11 in. [2.8 mm] wide. An allowable ledge may be interpolated for intermediate sizes or calculated according to Joy and Wilson.(1) A rim around the ledge (Fig. X2.1) may be useful. If a rim is provided, it shall be not more than 1/4 in. [6 mm] higher than the specimen as attached. Different depths may be used for the Desiccant Method and Water Method, but ~~aised to ensure sealing, but other~~ 3/4-in. [19-mm] depth (below the mouth) is satisfactory for either method.configurations are allowed.

6.1.1 When the specimen area is larger than the mouth area, this overlay upon the ledge is a source of error. The magnitude of this error increases with the width of the overlay upon the ledge. The overlay material results in a positive error, indicating excessive water vapor transmission. To minimize this error, this overlay material is to be masked as described in 11.1 so that the mouth area defines the test area. The magnitude of the edge mask error is a complex function of the specimen thickness, ledge width, mouth area, and in some cases the specimen permeability. This error is discussed by Joy and Wilson (1)<sup>3</sup> (see 14.4.3). This type of error is to be limited to no more than 12 %. For a thick specimen the ledge width shall not exceed 3/4 in. [19 mm] for a 10-in. [254-mm] or larger span mouth (square or circular) or 1/8 in. [3 mm] for a 5-in. [127-mm] span mouth (square or circular). For a 3-in. [76-mm] span mouth (square or circular) the ledge shall not exceed 0.11 in. [2.8 mm] wide. An allowable ledge that limits error to 12% shall be determined by interpolation for intermediate sizes. Per Joy and Wilson (1), using Equation 7, it is possible to solve for the ledge width that results in a specific or lower error rate. To achieve a lower error rate or to calculate specific intermediate ledge widths, the ledge width is solved for using Equation 7. When a rim is incorporated, it shall not be more than 1/4 in. [6 mm] higher than the specimen as attached. See sections 12.1 and 13.1 for requirements for the clearance for the test dishes for the Desiccant Method and Water Method, respectively.

6.2 *Test Chamber*—The room or cabinet where the assembled test dishes are to be placed shall have a controlled temperature (see Note 1) and relative humidity. ~~Some standard~~ Common test conditions that have been useful are given are listed in Appendix X1. The temperature chosen shall be determined according to the desired application of ~~If not listed among these, temperature and relative humidity corresponding to the intended application of, or specification for, the material to be tested (see Appendix X1).~~ The relative) are used. Refer to product standard specification for test conditions for classification or compliance purposes. Temperature shall be maintained at  $\pm 5$  °F [2.8 °C] at a given measurement point, with the average at the end of the test period being within  $\pm 2$  °F [1.1°C] of the specified test condition. Relative humidity shall be maintained at  $50 \pm 2\%$ , except where extremes of humidities are desired, when the conditions shall be  $100 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$  [ $38 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ ] and  $90 \pm 2\%$  relative humidity.  $\pm 5\%$  at a given measurement point, with the average at the end of the test period being within  $\pm 2\%$  of the specified test condition. Provisions shall be made to prevent water from dripping onto the surface of a specimen when tested at high humidity, when condensation on the chamber walls is possible. Both temperature and relative humidity shall be measured frequently and or

<sup>3</sup> The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this standard.

~~preferably recorded continuously. recorded at a frequency of at least once every 15 min for the duration of the test. Air shall be continuously circulated throughout the chamber, with a velocity sufficient to maintain uniform conditions at all test locations. The air velocity over the specimen shall be between 0.066 and 1 ft/s [0.02 and 0.3 m/s] within the chamber. Test dishes shall be placed in the chamber in such a way that [1]. Suitable racks shall be provided on which to place the test dishes within the air flow is not restricted over the top of the specimen. Barometric pressure shall be measured and recorded at every weighing for use in the still air correction. See 15.6.1.1 test chamber.~~

~~Note 1—Simple temperature control by heating alone is usually made possible at 90°F [32°C]. However, it is very desirable to enter the controlled space, and a comfortable temperature is more satisfactory for that arrangement. Temperatures of 73.4°F [23°C] and 80°F [26.7°C] are in use and are satisfactory for this purpose. With cyclic control, the average test temperature may be obtained from a sensitive thermometer in a mass of dry sand. The temperature of the chamber walls facing a specimen over water should not be cooler than the water to avoid condensation on the test specimen.~~

~~6.3 Balance and Weights—Balance—The sensitivity of the balance shall be sensitive equivalent to a change smaller than 1 % of 1 % or less of the dish assembly weight change during the period when a steady state is considered to exist. The weights used shall be accurate to 1 % of If the sensitivity is greater than 1 % of the observed weight change during apparent steady state, weighing shall be extended until such a point that the weight change during the steady-state period is at least 100 times the sensitivity of the balance (Note 21). A light wire sling may be substituted for the usual pan to accommodate a larger and heavier load. In such cases where WVTR is near zero and the requirements of this section cannot be fulfilled, the report shall make note of such.~~

~~6.4 Thickness-Measuring Gage—The nominal thickness of the specimen shall be determined using a thickness-measuring gage with an accuracy of ±1 % of the reading or 0.0001 in. [0.0025 mm], whichever is greater.~~

~~NOTE 1—For example: 1-perm [57 ng·Pa·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>] specimen 10 in. [254 mm] square at 80°F [26.7°C] passes 8.6 grains or 0.56 g/day. In 18 days of steady state, the transfer is 10 g. For this usage, the balance must have a sensitivity of 1 % of 10 g or 0.1 g and the weights must be accurate to 0.1 g. If, however, the balance has a sensitivity of 0.2 g or the weights are no better than 0.2 g, the requirements of this paragraph can be are met by continuing the weighing at steady state conditions for 36 days. An analytical balance that is much more sensitive will permit more rapid results on specimens below 1 perm [57 ng·Pa<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>] when the assembled dish is not excessively heavy. See Appendix X4 for additional discussion regarding measurements on near zero-water vapor permeance (WVP) materials.~~

~~6.4 Thickness-Measuring Gage—The gage shall have an accuracy of ±1 % of the reading or 0.0001 in. [0.0025 mm], whichever is greater.~~

## 7. Materials

### 7.1 Desiccant and Water: Desiccant—

~~7.1.1 For the Desiccant Method, anhydrous calcium chloride in the form of small lumps that will pass a No. 8 [2.36-mm] sieve, and free of fines that will pass a No. 30 [600-µm] sieve, shall be used (Note 3). It shall be dried at 400°F [200°C] before use.~~

~~NOTE 3—If CaCl<sub>2</sub> will react chemically on the specimen, an adsorbing desiccant such as silica gel, activated at 400°F [200°C], may be used; but the moisture gain by this desiccant during the test must be limited to 4 %. For the Desiccant Method, anhydrous calcium chloride in the form of small pellets that will pass a No. 8 [2.36-mm] sieve, and free of fines that will pass a No. 30 [600-µm] sieve, shall be used. Recycled desiccant shall be dried at 400°F [200°C] to a constant mass before use. Recycled desiccant shall be stored in a sealed container and be at room temperature before use. Virgin material that has been in a sealed container does not have to be dried before use.~~

~~7.1.2 For the Water Method, distilled water shall be used in the test dish.~~

~~7.2 Water—For the Water Method, distilled water shall be used in the test dish (Note 2).~~

~~NOTE 2—In order to minimize the risk of condensation on the interior surface of the sample, the temperature of the water in the prepared specimen dish must be within ±2°F [±1°C] of the test condition. When weighing the test dish in an environment that is cooler than the test temperature, take precautions to minimize the duration that the test dish is outside the test conditions.~~

~~7.3 Sealant—The sealant used for attaching the specimen to the dish, in order to be suitable for this purpose, must be highly resistant-dish must be impervious to the passage of water vapor (and water). It must not lose weight to, or gain weight from, the atmosphere in an amount, over the required period of time, that would affect the test result by more than 2 %. It must not affect the vapor pressure in a water-filled dish. Molten Seals of molten asphalt or wax isare required for permeance-tests producing results below 4 perms [230perms [230 ng·m<sup>-2</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·Pa<sup>-1</sup>]. Sealing methods are discussed in Appendix X2.~~

## 8. Sampling

8.1 The material shall be sampled in accordance with standard methods of sampling applicable to the material or product under test. ~~The~~ For homogenous materials, the sample shall be of uniform thickness. ~~If~~When the material is of nonsymmetrical construction, opposing faces of a product are dissimilar, the two faces shall be designated by distinguishing marks identification (for example, on a one-side-coated sample, “I” for the coated side and “II” for the uncoated side).

## 9. Test Specimens

9.1 Test specimens shall be representative of the material tested. When a product is designed for use in only one position, three specimens shall be tested by the same method with the vapor flow in the designated direction. When the sides faces of a product are indistinguishable, three specimens shall be tested by the same method. When the sides faces of a product are different and either side may face the vapor source, four different, and the location of the vapor source is independent of the installation, six specimens shall be tested by the same method, two three being tested with the vapor flow in each direction and so reported. A blank specimen for both orientations is required (see 9.6).

9.2 Materials of homogeneous composition and physical structure shall be tested at any thickness to determine water vapor permeance (WVP). When determining permeability, the specimen must be a minimum of ½ in. [12.5 mm] thick.

9.3 ~~A slab, produced and used as a laminate slab of a singular material that varies in physical structure by layer (such as a foamed plastic or rubber with natural “skins”) may~~ shall be tested at the thickness of use. ~~Alternatively, it may be sliced into two or more sheets, each being separately tested and so reported as provided in 9.4, provided also, that the “overlay upon the cup ledge” (6.1) of any laminate shall not exceed ¼ in. [3 mm].~~

9.3 ~~When the material as used has a pitted or textured surface, the tested thickness shall be that of use. When it is homogeneous, however, a thinner slice of the slab may be tested as provided in 9.4.~~

9.4 ~~In either case (When a material has 9.2 a pitted or 9.3), textured surface, the tested overall thickness, if less than that of use, shall be at least five times the sum of the maximum pit depths in both its faces, and its tested permeance shall be not greater than 5 perms [ $\approx 300 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{m}^2 \cdot \text{s}^{-1} \cdot \text{Pa}^{-1}$ ].~~

9.5 ~~For homogeneous (not laminated) materials with thickness greater than ½ in., the overall nominal thickness of each specimen shall be measured with an accuracy of  $\pm 1\%$  of the reading at the center of each quadrant and the results averaged.~~

9.5 When testing pressure sensitive adhesive sealed joints used in insulation vapor retarder systems, prepare the specimens according to Practice **C1809**.

9.6 When testing any material with a permeance less than  $0.05 \text{ perms}$  [ $3 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{m}^2 \cdot \text{s}^{-1} \cdot \text{Pa}^{-1}$ ] or when testing a low permeance material that may be expected to lose or gain weight throughout the test (because of evaporation or oxidation), it is strongly recommended that an additional specimen, or “dummy,” be tested exactly like the others, except that no desiccant or water is put in the dish. Failure to use this dummy specimen to establish modified dish weights may significantly increase the time required to complete the test. Because time to reach equilibrium of water permeance increases as the square of thickness, thick, particularly hygroscopic, materials may take as long as 60 days to reach equilibrium conditions. Use of a Blank Specimen:

9.6.1 All tests require an additional blank specimen to be tested exactly like the others, except that no desiccant or water is put in the dish. Failure to use this blank specimen to establish modified dish weights may significantly increase the time required to complete the test. The time to reach equilibrium of water vapor transmission increases as the square of thickness. Some thick, particularly hygroscopic, materials take as long as 60 days to reach equilibrium conditions.

9.6.2 The blank specimen is used to cancel out the effects of barometric pressure changes eliminating the need for buoyancy corrections, moisture changes of hygroscopic materials, and mass changes of uncured specimens. This enables simpler, more accurate calculations and reduces the time to establish steady state mass change.

9.6.3 The blank specimen becomes the fourth specimen of a standard three dish test set.



## 10. Specimen Thickness Measurement

10.1 When testing permeability of homogeneous materials, the overall thickness of each specimen shall be measured. Divide the specimen into quadrants and measure each quadrant with a gage meeting the requirements of 6.4, and average the results.

## 11. Attachment of Specimen to Test Dish

11.1 Attach the specimen to the dish by sealing ~~(and clamping if desired)~~ in such a manner that the dish mouth defines the area of the specimen exposed to the vapor pressure in the dish. If necessary, mask the specimen top surface, surface that is exposed to conditioned air so that its exposure duplicates the mouth shape and size and is directly above it. A template is recommended useful for locating the mask. Thoroughly seal the edges of the specimen to prevent the passage of vapor into, or out of, or around the specimen edges or any portion thereof. The same assurance must apply to any part of the specimen faces outside their defined areas. Suggested methods of attachment are described in **Appendix X2**.

**Note 4**—In order to minimize the risk of condensation on the interior surface of the sample when it is placed in the chamber, the temperature of the water prior to preparation of the test specimen should be within  $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$  [ $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ] of the test condition.

11.2 It is possible that some specimens will warp and break the seal during the test. The risk is reduced by preconditioning the specimen to the controlled environmental conditions of the test for 24 hours, while mechanically restraining it to the dish.

## 12. Procedure for Desiccant Method

12.1 Fill the test dish with desiccant within  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. [6 mm] of the specimen. Weigh the amount of desiccant placed in each dish. Leave enough space so that shaking of the dish, which must to be done at each weighing, will mix the desiccant.

12.2 Attach the specimen to the dish (see ~~10.1~~11.1) and place it in the controlled chamber, specimen up, weighing it at once. (This weight may be helpful to an understanding of the initial moisture in the specimen.) environment room or chamber.

12.3 Weigh the dish assembly periodically, often enough to ~~provide eight or ten~~obtain at least six data points ~~during the test at steady state.~~ A data point is the weight at a particular time. The time that the weight is ~~made should~~determined shall be recorded to a precision of approximately 1 % of the time span between successive weighing. Thus, if weighings are made every hour, record the time to the nearest 30 s; if recordings are made every day, a time to the nearest 15 min ~~would be allowed.~~ At first the weight may change rapidly; later a steady state will be reached where the is allowed. The initial rate of change is substantially constant. Weighings should be not necessarily the steady state rate of change. Weighings are best accomplished without removal of the test dishes from the controlled atmosphere, environment, but if removal is prescribed necessary, the time the specimens are kept at different conditions, temperature or relative humidity, or both, should shall be kept to a minimum. When results of water vapor transmission are expected to be less than 0.05 perm [ $3 \text{ ng} \cdot \text{m} \cdot \text{A blank}^{-2} \cdot \text{s}^{-1} \cdot \text{Pa}^{-1}$ ], a dummy specimen is strongly recommended. Such a dummy specimen should specimen shall be utilized. Such a blank specimen shall be attached to an empty cup in the normal manner. The same manner as the test specimens. This allows the environmental effects of temperature variation and buoyancy variability due to barometric pressure fluctuation ~~can to be arithmetically~~are corrected out of the weighing values. This precaution permits earlier and more reliable achievement of equilibrium conditions. Analyze the results as prescribed in steady state. 13.1.

12.4 Terminate the test or change the desiccant before the water ~~added to~~absorbed by the desiccant exceeds 10 % of its starting weight. ~~This limit cannot be exactly determined and judgement is required.~~ The desiccant gain may be more or less than the dish weight gain when the moisture content of the specimen has changed: is isolated using the blank specimen to adjust for moisture content change of the specimen.

**Note 5**—The WVT of some materials (especially wood) may depend on the ambient relative humidity immediately before the test. An apparent hysteresis results in higher WVT if the prior relative humidity was above the test condition and vice versa. It is therefore recommended that specimens of wood and paper products be conditioned to constant weight in a 50 % relative humidity atmosphere before they are tested. Some specimens may be advantageously preconditioned to minimize the moisture that the specimen will give up to the desiccant. This applies when the specimen is likely to have high moisture content or when it is coated on the top (vapor source) side.

12.5 Analyze the results as prescribed in 14.1.

**Note 3**—The WVTR of some materials (especially wood and paper) is influenced by the ambient relative humidity immediately before the test. A hysteresis results in higher WVTR when the prior relative humidity is above the test condition and vice versa. As such, specimens of wood and paper

and other materials with significant moisture content are to be conditioned to constant weight in a 50 % relative humidity atmosphere before they are tested.

### 13. Procedure for Water Method

13.1 Fill the test dish with distilled water to a level  $\frac{3}{4} \pm \frac{1}{4}$  in. [ $19 \pm 6$  mm] from the specimen. The air space thus allowed has a small vapor resistance, but it is necessary in order to reduce the risk of water touching the specimen when the dish is handled. Such contact invalidates a test on some materials such as paper, wood, or other hygroscopic materials. The water depth shall be not less than  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. [3 mm] to ensure coverage of the dish bottom throughout the test. ~~However, if the dish is of glass, When using a glass dish, its bottom must be visibly covered at all times but no specific depth is required. Water surges may be reduced. Reduce water surges by placing a grid of light noncorrodingnon-corroding material in the dish to break the water surface. This grid shall be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. [6 mm] below the specimen, and it shall not reduce the water surface by more than 10 %.~~

NOTE 4—~~For the Water Method, baking the empty dish and promptly coating its mouth with sealant before assembly is recommended. The water may be added most conveniently after the specimen is attached. When it is desirable to reuse an assembled specimen for a subsequent test series It is acceptable to add water through a small sealable hole in the dish above the water line.~~

~~12.2 Attach the specimen to the dish (see 10.1). Some specimens are likely to warp and break the seal during the test. The risk is reduced by preconditioning the specimen, and by clamping it to the dish ledge (if one is provided).~~

~~13.2 Weigh the dish assembly~~ Attach the specimen to the dish (see 11.1) and place it in the controlled chamberenvironment on a true-horizontal surface. Follow the procedure given in ~~4.312.3~~. If the test specimen cannot tolerate condensation on the surface, the dish assembly shall not be exposed to a temperature that differs by more than 5°F [3°C] from the control atmosphere to minimize the risk of condensation on the specimen. When results of water vapor transmission are expected to be less than 0.05 perm [3 ng·m through<sup>-2</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·Pa<sup>-1</sup>], a dummy specimen is strongly recommended. Such a dummy specimen should be attached to an empty cup in the normal manner. The environment effects of temperature variation and buoyancy variability due to barometric pressure fluctuation can be arithmetically tared out of the weighing values. This precaution permits earlier and more reliable achievement of equilibrium conditions. ~~Analyze the results as prescribed in 13.12.5.~~

NOTE 5—When the test specimen is going to be exposed to an environment that is more than 5°F [3°C] below the controlled environment, condensation is possible on the inside surface of the specimen. To reduce the chance of this occurring, care shall be taken to minimize the time the specimen is outside of the controlled environment.

13.3 Where water is expected to be in contact with the barrier in service, proceed as in ~~4.313.2~~ except place the dish in an inverted position. The dish must be sufficiently level so that water covers the inner surface of the specimen despite any distortion of the specimen due to the weight of the water. ~~With highly permeable specimens it is especially important to locate~~ Locate the test dish so that air circulates over the exposed surface at the specified velocity. ~~The test dishes may be placed~~ surface. Place the test dishes on the balance in the upright position for weighing, but keep the period during which the wetted surface of the specimen is not covered with water ~~must be kept~~ to a minimum.

### 14. Determination and Utilization of Steady State

14.1 The rate of weight change of a specimen is at steady state when that rate is essentially constant over a period that is a minimum of six consecutive weighings. However, additional weighings increase the confidence in the measurement.

14.2 The data from the beginning and/or the end of the weighing sequence is not always part of the steady state portion of the test due to internal moisture content changes or loss of desiccant efficiency or excess water loss. Analysis of the data per section 14.3 is needed to ensure only steady state portions of the test are used for calculating WVTR.

14.3 The steady state portion of the test is most easily identified graphically. Plot the weight, modified by the blank specimen, against elapsed time, and inscribe a linear fit which is helpful in determining when steady state conditions are reached. Judgment here is required. When a straight line adequately fits the plot of at least six properly spaced points (periodic weight changes matching, or exceeding 20 % of the multiple of 100 times the scale sensitivity), steady state is assumed. The slope of the linear curve fit, during the steady state portion of the test only, is the water vapor transmission rate.

### 15. Calculation and Analysis of Results

15.1 Blank Specimen—The blank specimen is used to compensate for variability in test conditions due to temperature and/or

barometric pressure fluctuations. The test specimen recorded weights are adjusted by calculating the weight change of the blank specimen from the beginning of the test to time of weighing. This adjustment is made by subtracting the weight change of the blank specimen from the weight change of the test dish at the time of weighing of both. This permits earlier recognition of steady state conditions.

15.2 The results of the rate of a mathematical least squares regression analysis of the weight, modified by the blank specimen, as a function of time will give the water vapor transmission may be determined either graphically or numerically rate.

13.1.1 *Dummy Specimen*—If a dummy specimen has been used to compensate for variability in test conditions, due to temperature or barometric pressure, or both, the daily recorded weights can be adjusted by calculating the weight change from initial to time of weighing. This adjustment is made by reversing the direction of the dummy’s weight change, relative to its initial weight, and modifying all the appropriate specimen weight(s) recorded at this time. This permits earlier achievement of equilibrium conditions. An alternate procedure, particular for tests of long duration and more than six weighings, is to subtract the arithmetic mean slope of the rate of weight change of the dummy specimen from the arithmetic mean slope of each similar specimen to get an effective rate of weight change. These procedures are also desirable if the specimen is changing weight due to a curing process while under test.

13.1.2 *Graphic Analysis*—Plot the weight, modified by the dummy specimen when used, against elapsed time, and inscribe a curve that tends to become straight. Judgment here is required and numerous points are helpful. When a straight line adequately fits the plot of at least six properly spaced points (periodic weight changes matching, or exceeding 20 % of the multiple of 100 times the scale sensitivity), a nominally steady state is assumed, and the slope of the straight line is the rate of water vapor transmission.

15.2.1 *Numerical Analysis*—A mathematical least squares regression analysis of the weight, modified by the dummy specimen when used, as a function of time will give the rate of water vapor transmission. An uncertainty, or standard deviation of this rate, can also be calculated to define the confidence band. For very low permeability materials, this method can be used to determine the results after 30 to 60 days when using an analytical balance, with a sensitivity of ≈1 mg, even if the weight change does not meet the 100 times the sensitivity requirement of 6.3. These specimens must be clearly identified in the report. Reference Appendix X4 for discussion regarding measurements of near zero or zero water vapor permeance (WVP) materials.

15.3 Calculate the water vapor transmission,  $WVT$ , and permeance transmission rate,  $WVTR$ , and  $WVP$  as follows:

15.3.1 *Water Vapor Transmission:*

$$WVT = G/tA = (G/t)/A \quad (1)$$

$$WVTR = \frac{G}{t \cdot A} = \frac{(G/t)}{A} \quad (1)$$

where:

In inch-pound units:

- $G$  = steady state weight change, grains (from the straight line),
- $t$  = time during which  $G$  occurred, h,
- $G/t$  = slope of the straight line, grains/h,
- $A$  = test area (cup mouth area), ft<sup>2</sup>, and
- $WVTR$  = water vapor transmission rate, grains/h-ft<sup>2</sup>.

where:

In inch-pound units:

- $G$  = weight change, grains (from the straight line),
- $t$  = time during which  $G$  occurred, h,
- $G/t$  = slope of the straight line, grains/h,
- $A$  = test area (cup mouth area), ft<sup>2</sup>, and
- $WVT$  = rate of water vapor transmission, grains/h-ft<sup>2</sup>.

In metricSI units:

- $G$  = steady state weight change (from the straight line), g,



- $t$  = time, h,  
 $G/t$  = slope of the straight line, g/h,  
 $A$  = test area (cup mouth area), m<sup>2</sup>, and  
~~WVT~~ = ~~rate of water vapor transmission, g/h·m<sup>2</sup>.~~  
~~WVTR~~ = ~~water vapor transmission rate, g/h·m<sup>2</sup>.~~

### 15.3.2 Water Vapor Permeance:

$$\text{Permeance} = \text{WVT}/\Delta p = \text{WVT}/S(R_1 - R_2) \quad (2)$$

$$\text{WVP} = \frac{\text{WVTR}}{\Delta p} = \frac{\text{WVTR}}{S \cdot (R_1 - R_2)} \quad (2)$$

where:

In inch-pound units:

- $\Delta p$  = vapor pressure difference, in. Hg,  
 $S$  = saturation vapor pressure at test temperature, in. Hg,  
 $R_1$  = relative humidity at the source expressed as a fraction (the test chamber for desiccant method; in the dish for water method), and  
 $R_2$  = relative humidity at the vapor sink expressed as a fraction.

where:

In inch-pound units:

- $\Delta p$  = vapor pressure difference, in. Hg,  
 $S$  = saturation vapor pressure at test temperature, in. Hg,  
 $R_1$  = relative humidity at the source expressed as a fraction (the test chamber for desiccant method; in the dish for water method), and  
 $R_2$  = relative humidity at the vapor sink expressed as a fraction.

In metricSI units:

- $\Delta p$  = vapor pressure difference, mm Hg ( $1.333 \times 10^2$  Pa),  
 $S$  = saturation vapor pressure at test temperature, mm Hg ( $1.333 \times 10^2$  Pa),  
 $R_1$  = relative humidity at the source expressed as a fraction (the test chamber for desiccant method; in the dish for water method), and  
 $R_2$  = relative humidity at the vapor sink expressed as a fraction.

~~13.2.3 In the controlled chamber the relative humidity and temperature are the average values actually measured during the test and (unless continuously recorded) these measurements shall be made as frequently as the weight measurements. In the dish the relative humidity is nominally 0 % for the desiccant and 100 % for the water. These values are usually within 3 % relative humidity of the actual relative humidity for specimens below 4 perms [230 ng·Pa<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>] when the required conditions are maintained (no more than 10 % moisture in CaCl<sub>2</sub> and no more than 1 in. [25 mm] air space above water).~~

15.4 In the controlled room or chamber the relative humidity and temperature are the average of values actually measured during the test. In the dish the relative humidity is nominally 0 % for the desiccant and 100 % for the water. These values are usually within 3 % relative humidity of the actual relative humidity for specimens below 4 perms [230 ng·Pa<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>] when the required conditions are maintained (no more than 10 % moisture in CaCl<sub>2</sub> and no more than 1 in. [25 mm] air space above water).

~~15.5 The Perform the calculation of permeability is optional and can be done only when the test specimen is homogeneous (not laminated) and not less than ½ in. [12.5 mm] thick, calculate its average permeability as follows:~~

$$\text{Average permeability} = \text{Permeance} \times \text{Thickness} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Permeability} = \text{WVP} \cdot \text{thickness} \quad (3)$$

15.6 Corrections—It is important that all applicable corrections be made to all measurements that result in permeanceWVP value more than 2-perm2 perms [114 ng·Pa<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>]. Corrections for materials with permeanceWVP value below 2-perm2 perms [114 ng·Pa<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·m<sup>-2</sup>]

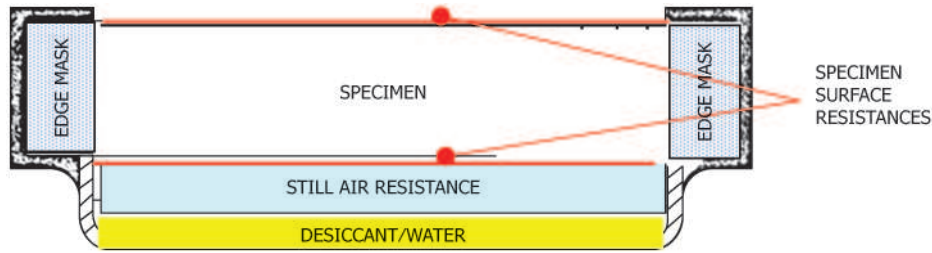


FIG. 1 Graphic Analysis Referenced Corrections in 15.6

$s^{-1}\cdot m^{-2}$ ] or less are insignificant and need not be ~~done~~applied (2). The procedures for making various corrections, as summarized below, are found in the literature: literature (2, 3, 4, 5, 6). Fig. 1 contains a diagram of the corrections referenced in this section.

13.4.1 *Buoyancy Correction*—The duration for one set of measurements can be many days or weeks. The atmospheric pressure may significantly change during such periods. If the test specimen is highly vapor resistant, the changes in mass due to vapor transport may be overshadowed by the apparent gravimetric changes observed. In such cases, all gravimetric data should be corrected to vacuum or any base line pressure. The following equation (3) can be used for buoyancy correction.

$$\frac{m_2}{m_1} = 1 + \frac{\rho_a(\rho_1 - \rho_2)}{\rho_1(\rho_2 - \rho_a)} \quad (4)$$

where:

- $m_1$  = mass recorded by balance, kg,
- $m_2$  = mass after buoyancy correction, kg,
- $\rho_a$  = density of air,  $kg\ m^{-3}$ ,
- $\rho_1$  = density of material of balance weights,  $kg\ m^{-3}$ , and
- $\rho_2$  = bulk density of test assembly,  $kg\ m^{-3}$ .

13.4.1.1 The density of air can be calculated using the ideal gas law for the measured atmospheric pressure and ambient temperature.

13.4.1.2 The buoyancy correction is important (7) when measured mass changes are in the range of 0 to 100 mg.

15.6.1 *Corrections for Resistance due to Still Air and Specimen Surface*—Surface: In general, if the material is highly permeable, these corrections are more significant. With known thickness of the still air layer in the cup, the corresponding vapor resistance can be calculated using the following equation(4) for permeability.

15.6.1.1 When the material is highly permeable, these corrections become more significant. With known thickness of the still air layer in the cup, the corresponding vapor resistance is calculated using the following equations (Eq 4 and Eq 5) for permeability.

$$\delta_a = \frac{5.3081 \times 10^6}{R_v T} \cdot \left(\frac{P_o}{P}\right) \cdot \left(\frac{T}{491.67}\right)^{1.81} \quad (4)$$

where:

- $\delta_a$  = permeability of still air, Perm in.,
- $T$  = temperature, °R,
- $P$  = ambient barometric pressure, in Hg,
- $P_o$  = standard barometric pressure, that is, 29.92 in. Hg, and
- $R_v$  = ideal gas constant for water, that is, 85.780 ft·lbf·lb<sup>-1</sup>·°R<sup>-1</sup>.

$$\delta_a = \frac{2.306 \times 10^{-5} \cdot P_o}{R_v \cdot T \cdot P} \left(\frac{T}{273.15}\right)^{1.81} \quad (5)$$

where:

- $\delta_a$  = permeability of still air,  $kg\cdot m^{-1}\cdot s^{-1}\cdot Pa^{-1}$ ,
- $T$  = temperature, K,
- $P$  = ambient barometric pressure, Pa,

$P_o$  = standard barometric pressure, that is, 101325 Pa, and  
 $R_v$  = ideal gas constant for water, that is, 461.5 J·K<sup>-1</sup>·kg<sup>-1</sup>.

$$\delta_a = \frac{2.306 \times 10^{-5} P_o}{R_v T P} \left( \frac{T}{273.15} \right)^{1.81} \quad (5)$$

where:

$\delta_a$  = permeability of still air, kg·m<sup>-1</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>·Pa<sup>-1</sup>,  
 $T$  = temperature, K,  
 $P$  = ambient pressure, Pa,  
 $P_o$  = standard atmospheric pressure, that is, 101325 Pa, and  
 $R_v$  = ideal gas constant for water, that is, 461.5 J·K<sup>-1</sup>·kg<sup>-1</sup>.

15.6.1.2 In the absence of any measured data, the surface resistances (that is, inside and outside surfaces of the specimen) may be approximated by using Lewis' relation (5). For cup methods that follow this standard, the total surface resistance (Hansen and Lund (6)) should be  $\approx 42.29 \times 10^{7-3} \text{ h}\cdot\text{ft}^2\cdot\text{in}\cdot\text{Hg}\cdot\text{grains}^{-1}$  ( $4 \times 10^{-5} \text{ Pa}\cdot\text{s}\cdot\text{m}^2\cdot\text{kg}\cdot\text{ng}^{-1}$ ).

15.6.2 *Edge Mask Correction*—The following equation (Joy and Wilson (1)) is to be used to correct the excess WVT effect due to edge masking during specimen preparation:

$$\text{Percent excess WVT} = \frac{400t}{\pi S_1} \log_e \left( \frac{2}{1 + e^{-\frac{2\pi b t}{t}}} \right) \quad (6)$$

$$\text{Percent excess WVT} = \frac{400 \cdot t}{\pi \cdot S_1} \log_e \left( \frac{2}{1 + e^{-\frac{2\pi b}{t}}} \right) \quad (6)$$

where:

In inch-pound units:

$t$  = specimen thickness, ft,  
 $b$  = width of masked edge, ft, and  
 $S_1$  = four times the test area divided by the perimeter, ft.

where:

In SI units:

$t$  = specimen thickness, m,  
 $b$  = width of masked edge, m, and  
 $S_1$  = four times the test area divided by the perimeter, m.

15.6.2.1 If the cup assembly includes any edge masking this correction shall be made.

15.7 Metric/ SI units and conversion factor/factors are given in Table 1.

13.6 *Example (in SI unit)*—In a desiccant test on a sample of medium density glass fiber insulation the following results were recorded:

Thickness of the specimen = 25.81 mm  
 Test area = 0.01642 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Mass of the test specimen = 20.44 g  
 Mass of the desiccant = 554.8 g  
 Initial mass of the test assembly = 1.257810 kg  
 Thickness of air layer in the cup = 15 mm

Elapsed Time (h)	Mass of the Test Assembly (g)	Change in Mass (g)	Chamber Temperature (°C)	Chamber RH (%)	Barometric Pressure mm Hg (kPa)
0.000	1257.810	0.000	22.83	52.60	744.7 (99.27)
6.067	1259.469	1.659	22.84	52.6	741.11 (98.79)

-26.633	1264.609	-6.799	22.78	52.2	744.41 (99.23)
-53.150	1271.062	13.252	22.82	52.1	749.21 (99.07)
143.767	1290.773	92.963	22.74	52.2	757.69 (101.00)
168.283	1296.389	38.579	22.78	52.1	749.81 (99.95)
192.883	1301.953	44.143	22.78	52.1	758.44 (101.10)

13.6.1 *Buoyancy Correction*—As mentioned in 13.4.1, the buoyancy effect will be insignificant for this set of readings as recorded changes of mass are all above 100 mg. However, for example, the corrected mass of the test assembly weight 1257.810 g (1<sup>st</sup> reading) can be calculated using Eq 4.

$$\begin{aligned}
 m_1 &= \text{mass recorded by balance, kg} = 1257.810 \times 10^{-3} \text{ kg} \\
 P &= \text{Barometric pressure, Pa} = 99.27 \times 10^3 \text{ Pa} \\
 R &= \text{Gas constant for dry air} = 287.055 \text{ J / (kg}\cdot\text{K)} \\
 T &= \text{Chamber temperature} = 22.83 + 273.15 = 295.98 \text{ K} \\
 \rho_a &= \text{density of air, kg m}^{-3} = P / (RT) = 1.1684 \text{ kg m}^{-3} \\
 \rho_1 &= \text{density of material of balance weights, kg m}^{-3} = 8000 \text{ kg m}^{-3} \\
 h_1 &= \text{height of the test assembly, m} = 44.7 \times 10^{-3} \text{ m} \\
 d_1 &= \text{diameter of the test assembly, m} = 168.0 \times 10^{-3} \text{ m} \\
 \rho_2 &= \text{bulk density of test assembly, kg m}^{-3} \\
 &= \frac{4 \times m_1}{\pi \times d_1^2 \times h_1} = 1269.4 \text{ kg m}^{-3} \\
 m_2 &= \text{mass after buoyancy correction} = 1258.78 \times 10^{-3} \text{ kg}
 \end{aligned}$$

13.6.2 A graphic analysis of the data, according to 13.1.2 is shown in Fig. 1.

13.6.3 A linear least-squares analysis of the data according to 13.1.3 gives the slope of the straight line as  $0.225 \pm 0.002 \text{ g}\cdot\text{h}^{-1}$ , with a linear regression coefficient  $> 0.998$ .

$$\begin{aligned}
 WVT &= 0.225 \text{ g}\cdot\text{h}^{-1} / 0.01642 \text{ m}^2 \\
 &= 19.595 \text{ grains}\cdot\text{h}^{-1}\cdot\text{ft}^{-2} (\sim 3.81 \times 10^6 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}) \\
 S &= 2775.6 \text{ Pa} \\
 R_1 &= 0.523 \\
 R_2 &= 0 \\
 \text{Permeance} &= 3.81 \times 10^6 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1} / (2775.6 \text{ Pa} \times 0.523) \\
 &= 2630 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}\cdot\text{Pa}^{-1}
 \end{aligned}$$

13.6.4 *Corrections for Resistance due to Still Air and Specimen Surface:*

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Permeability of still air layer (Eq 5)} \\
 \delta_a &= \frac{2.306 \times 10^{-5} \times 101325}{461.5 \times (22.79 + 273.15) \times 99860} \left( \frac{22.79 + 273.15}{273.15} \right)^{1.81} \\
 &= 198 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-1}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}\cdot\text{Pa}^{-1} \\
 &\text{Permeance of 15 mm still air layer} \\
 &= (198) / (0.015) \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}\cdot\text{Pa}^{-1} \\
 &= 13200 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}\cdot\text{Pa}^{-1} \\
 &\text{Hence, the 15 mm air layer offers a vapor resistance} \\
 &= 1 / (13200) \text{ m}^2\cdot\text{s}\cdot\text{Pa}\cdot\text{ng}^{-1} \sim 7.6 \times 10^7 \text{ m}^2\cdot\text{s}\cdot\text{Pa}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1} \\
 &\text{Surface resistances (see 13.4.2)} \\
 &= 4.0 \times 10^7 \text{ m}^2\cdot\text{s}\cdot\text{Pa}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1} \\
 &\text{Total corrections for resistance due to still air and specimen surface} \\
 &= (7.6 \times 10^7 + 4.0 \times 10^7) \text{ m}^2\cdot\text{s}\cdot\text{Pa}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}
 \end{aligned}$$

13.6.5 *Edge Mask Correction*—The test assembly used does not include any edge masking. However, for example, if it includes an edge mask of width 5 mm then the following correction is to be made (see 13.4.3):

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \text{specimen thickness, m} = 25.81 \times 10^{-3} \text{ m} \\
 b &= \text{width of masked edge, m} = 5 \times 10^{-3} \text{ m} \\
 \text{Test area} &= 0.01642 \text{ m}^2 \\
 \text{Perimeter} &= 0.4541 \text{ m}
 \end{aligned}$$