



Designation: **E3277--23 E3277 - 23a**

Standard Test Method for Determining the Liquid or Solid State of a Material by Rheometry¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E3277; 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 (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

1. Scope*

1.1 Using rheometry, this test method determines, for regulatory purposes, whether a viscose viscous material is a liquid or a solid. Very small amounts of material (~~typical~~typically less than 3 g) may be used for this measurement.

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

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:²

- D4092 Terminology for Plastics: Dynamic Mechanical Properties
- D4359 Test Method for Determining Whether a Material Is a Liquid or a Solid
- D4473 Test Method for Plastics: Dynamic Mechanical Properties: Cure Behavior
- E473 Terminology Relating to Thermal Analysis and Rheology

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—Technical terms used in this test method are defined in Terminologies D4092 and E473 including *dynamic mechanical analyzer, loss modulus, phase angle, rheometer, shear, storage modulus, strain, stress, and tan delta*.

3.1.1 *dissipative, adj*—in *dynamic mechanical analysis*, the irrecoverably loss of mechanical energy usually as heat.

3.1.2 *gel point, n*—the stage at which a liquid begins to exhibit pseudo-elastic properties.

3.1.3 *slip, wall, n*—in rheology, the lack of adhesion between the test specimen and the shearing surface.³

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E37 on Thermal Measurements and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E37.08 on Rheology. Current edition approved June 1, 2023. Published June 2023. Originally approved in 2021. Last previous edition approved in 2022 as E3277 - 22. DOI: 10.1520/E3277-23-23. DOI: 10.1520/E3277-23A.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ Bingham, E. C., *Fluidity and Plasticity*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, 1922, p. 231.

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

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 Viscoelastic materials exhibit both solid-like and liquid-like characteristics. The loss modulus of a material is a measure of its liquid-like characteristic while the storage modulus of a material indicates its solid-like characteristics. When the loss modulus is greater than the storage modulus, a material is said to be predominantly a liquid. When the storage modulus is greater than the loss modulus, the material is said to be predominantly a solid. The ratio of loss modulus to storage modulus is known as tangent angle delta ($\tan \delta$).

4.2 Loss modulus and storage modulus of a material is measured using a cone-and-plate or parallel plate rheometer at ambient temperature conditions and $\tan \delta$ is then calculated. Materials with a $\tan \delta$ greater than unity ($\tan \delta \geq 1.0$) are identified as liquids. Those materials with a $\tan \delta$ less than unity are identified as solids.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Shipping regulations often require the identification of a material as either a liquid or a solid. This test method may be used to make that determination for regulatory purposes. (See also Test Method [D4359](#).)

5.2 For liquid thermosetting resin, as cure progresses, the liquid resin becomes a solid. A thermosetting resin is more easily worked or shaped while in the liquid-like form and becomes more difficult to do so as the cure advances. The point at which the solid-like character becomes dominant is called the gel point and is considered to be the end of the period where the thermosetting resin is workable. Gel point is identified as that point where $\tan \delta = 1$ as determined in Test Method [D4473](#).

NOTE 1—Gel point at ambient temperature is seldom a useful parameter. Use of this test method at the more useful elevated temperatures requires capabilities readily available but outside of [7.2.6](#), [7.2.7](#), and Section [10](#).

5.3 This test method may be used in research, development, and for regulatory compliance.

6. Interferences

6.1 Since small quantities of material are used, it is essential that the specimen be representative of the sample being tested.

6.2 Wall slip may occur with a variety of materials to which this test method is applicable. When slip occurs, the measured rheological properties are significantly lower than their true values. Roughened measuring geometries are useful in these cases. The type of roughening shall be agreed upon by all interested parties.

7. Apparatus

7.1 A rheometer is a type of dynamic mechanical analyzer especially suited for testing liquid materials. The function of the rheometer apparatus is to hold a liquid test specimen of known volume and dimensions in which the material acts as the elastic and dissipative elements in a mechanically driven oscillatory shear system.

7.2 *Rheometer*—The essential instrumentation required providing the minimum rheological analytical capabilities for this test method include:

7.2.1 A *drive motor*, to apply force or displacement to the specimen in a periodic manner capable of frequencies of oscillation from 0.5 Hz to 2 Hz. This motor may also be capable of providing static force or displacement on the specimen.

7.2.2 A *coupling shaft*, or other means to transmit the force or displacement from the motor to the specimen.

7.2.3 A *fixture, geometry, or tool* to fix the specimen between the drive shaft and a stationary position.

7.2.3.1 Either roughened cone-and-plate geometries of diameter D having a known cone angle α (see [Fig. 1a](#)) or,

7.2.3.2 Roughened parallel plate geometries of known diameter D (see [Fig. 1b](#)).

NOTE 2—25 mm or 50 mm diameter cone-and-plate geometries have been found suitable for this test method. Other diameters may be used but shall be