



Designation: **C1260—22 C1260 – 23**

Standard Test Method for Potential Alkali Reactivity of Aggregates (Mortar-Bar Method)¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation C1260; 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 This test method permits detection, within 16 days, of the potential for deleterious alkali-silica reaction of aggregate in mortar bars.

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard. When this test method refers to combined-unit standards, the selection of the measurement systems is at the user's discretion.

1.3 The text of this test method refers to notes and footnotes that provide explanatory material. These notes and footnotes (excluding those in tables and figures) shall not be considered as requirements of this test method.

1.4 *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.* A specific precautionary statement is given in the section on Reagents.

1.5 *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

- [C109/C109M Test Method for Compressive Strength of Hydraulic Cement Mortars \(Using 2-in. or \[50 mm\] Cube Specimens\)](#)
- [C125 Terminology Relating to Concrete and Concrete Aggregates](#)
- [C127 Test Method for Relative Density \(Specific Gravity\) and Absorption of Coarse Aggregate](#)
- [C128 Test Method for Relative Density \(Specific Gravity\) and Absorption of Fine Aggregate](#)
- [C150/C150M Specification for Portland Cement](#)
- [C305 Practice for Mechanical Mixing of Hydraulic Cement Pastes and Mortars of Plastic Consistency](#)
- [C490/C490M Practice for Use of Apparatus for the Determination of Length Change of Hardened Cement Paste, Mortar, and Concrete](#)
- [C511 Specification for Mixing Rooms, Moist Cabinets, Moist Rooms, and Water Storage Tanks Used in the Testing of Hydraulic Cements and Concretes](#)
- [C595/C595M Specification for Blended Hydraulic Cements](#)

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C09 on Concrete and Concrete Aggregates and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C09.50 on Aggregate Reactions in Concrete.

Current edition approved Nov. 1, 2022; Nov. 15, 2023. Published December 2022; November 2023. Originally approved in 1989. Last previous edition approved in 2021; 2022 as C1260—21; C1260 – 22. DOI: 10.1520/C1260-22; 10.1520/C1260-23.

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.

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

[C670 Practice for Preparing Precision and Bias Statements for Test Methods for Construction Materials](#)
[C1260 Test Method for Potential Alkali Reactivity of Aggregates \(Mortar-Bar Method\)](#)
[C1778 Guide for Reducing the Risk of Deleterious Alkali-Aggregate Reaction in Concrete](#)
[D1193 Specification for Reagent Water](#)
[E11 Specification for Woven Wire Test Sieve Cloth and Test Sieves](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of other terms relating to concrete or aggregates, see Terminology [C125](#).

3.1.1 *relative density (OD), n*—as defined in Test Methods [C127](#) or [C128](#), for coarse and fine aggregates, respectively.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method provides a means of detecting the potential of an aggregate intended for use in concrete for undergoing alkali-silica reaction resulting in potentially deleterious internal expansion. It is based on the NBRI Accelerated Test Method (**1-4**).³ It is especially useful for aggregates that react slowly or produce expansion late in the reaction. However, it does not evaluate combinations of aggregates with cementitious materials nor are the test conditions representative of those encountered by concrete in service.

4.2 Because the specimens are exposed to a NaOH solution, the alkali content of the cement is not a significant factor in affecting expansions.

4.3 Results of tests conducted on an aggregate as described herein should form a part of the basis for a decision as to whether precautions should be taken against excessive expansion due to alkali-silica reaction. Refer to Guide [C1778](#) for the interpretation of the test results from Test Method [C1260](#).

5. Apparatus

5.1 The apparatus shall conform to Specification [C490/C490M](#), except as follows:

5.2 *Sieves*—Square hole, woven-wire cloth sieves, shall conform to Specification [E11](#).

5.3 *Mixer, Paddle, and Mixing Bowl*—Mixer, paddle, and mixing bowl shall conform to the requirements of Practice [C305](#), except that the clearance between the lower end of the paddle and the bottom of the bowl shall be 5.1 mm ± 0.3 mm.

5.4 *Tamper and Trowel*—The tamper and trowel shall conform to Test Method [C109/C109M](#).

5.5 *Containers*—The containers shall be of such a nature that the bars can be totally immersed in either the water or 1N NaOH solution. The containers shall be made of material that can withstand prolonged exposure to 80 °C and must be resistant to a 1N NaOH solution (see [Note 1](#)). The containers must be so constructed that when used for storing specimens, the loss or gain of moisture is prevented by tight-fitting covers, by sealing, or both (see [Note 2](#)). The bars in the solution must be placed and supported so that the solution has access to the entire surface of the bar; therefore, it should be ensured that the specimens do not touch the sides of the container or each other. The specimens, if stood upright in the solution, shall not be supported by the metal gauge stud.

NOTE 1—The NaOH solution will corrode glass or metal containers.

NOTE 2—Some microwave-proof food storage containers made of polypropylene or high-density polyethylene have been found to be acceptable.

5.6 *Oven, or Water Bath*—A convection oven or water bath with temperature control maintaining 80.0 °C ± 2.0 °C.

6. Reagents

6.1 *Sodium Hydroxide (NaOH)*—USP or technical grade may be used, provided the Na⁺ and OH⁻ concentrations are shown by chemical analysis to lie between 0.99N and 1.01N.

³ The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to a list of references at the end of the text.

6.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water conforming to Type IV of Specification **D1193**.

6.3 *Sodium Hydroxide Solution*—Each litre of solution shall contain 40.0 g of NaOH dissolved in 900 mL of water, and shall be diluted with additional distilled or deionized water to obtain 1.0 L of solution. The volume proportion of sodium hydroxide solution to mortar bars in a storage container shall be 4 ± 0.5 volumes of solution to 1 volume of mortar bars. The volume of a mortar bar may be taken as 184 mL. Include sufficient test solution to ensure complete immersion of the mortar bars.

6.3.1 **Warning**—Before using NaOH, review: (1) the safety precautions for using NaOH; (2) first aid for burns; and (3) the emergency response to spills, as described in the manufacturer’s Material Safety Data Sheet or other reliable safety literature. NaOH can cause very severe burns and injury to unprotected skin and eyes. Suitable personal protective equipment should always be used. These should include full-face shields, rubber aprons, and gloves impervious to NaOH. Gloves should be checked periodically for pin holes.

7. Conditioning

7.1 Maintain the temperature of the molding room and dry materials at not less than 20 °C and not more than 27.5 °C. The temperature of the mixing water, and of the moist closet or moist room, shall not vary from 23 °C by more than 2.0 °C.

7.2 Maintain the relative humidity of the molding room at not less than 50 %. The moist closet or room shall conform to Specification **C511**.

7.3 Maintain the storage oven or water bath in which the specimens are stored in the containers at a temperature of 80.0 °C \pm 2.0 °C.

8. Sampling and Preparation of Test Specimens

8.1 *Selection of Aggregate*—Process materials proposed for use as fine aggregate in concrete as described in the section on Preparation of Aggregate with a minimum of crushing. Process materials proposed for use as coarse aggregate in concrete by crushing to produce as nearly as practical a graded product from which a sample can be obtained. Grade the sample as prescribed in **Table 1**. The sample shall represent the composition of the coarse aggregate as proposed for use.

8.1.1 When a given quarried material is proposed for use both as coarse and as fine aggregate, test it only by selection of an appropriate sample crushed to the fine aggregates sizes, unless there is reason to expect that the coarser size fractions have a different composition than the finer sizes and that these differences might significantly affect expansion due to reaction with the alkalis in cement or from the environment of service. In this case test the coarser size fractions in a manner similar to that employed in testing the fine aggregate sizes.

8.2 *Preparation of Aggregate*—Grade all aggregates to which this test method is applied in accordance with the requirements given in **Table 1**. Crush aggregates in which sufficient quantities of the sizes specified in **Table 1** do not exist until the required material has been produced. In the case of aggregates containing insufficient amounts of one or more of the larger sizes listed in **Table 1**, and if no larger material is available for crushing, the first size in which sufficient material is available shall contain the cumulative percentage of material down to that size as determined from the grading specified in **Table 1**. When such procedures are required, make a special note thereof in the test report. After the aggregate has been separated into the various sieve sizes, wash each size with a water spray over the sieve to remove adhering dust and fine particles from the aggregate. Dry the portions retained on the various sieves and, unless used immediately, store each such portion individually in a clean container provided with a tight-fitting cover.

TABLE 1 Grading Requirements

| Sieve Size | | Mass, % |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Passing | Retained on | |
| 4.75 mm (No. 4) | 2.36 mm (No. 8) | 10 |
| 2.36 mm (No. 8) | 1.18 mm (No. 16) | 25 |
| 1.18 mm (No. 16) | 600 μ m (No. 30) | 25 |
| 600 μ m (No. 30) | 300 μ m (No. 50) | 25 |
| 300 μ m (No. 50) | 150 μ m (No. 100) | 15 |