



Designation: ~~D396–21~~ D396 – 24

Standard Specification for Fuel Oils¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D396; 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 (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

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

1. Scope*

1.1 This specification (see [Note 1](#)) covers grades of fuel oil intended for use in various types of fuel-oil-burning equipment under various climatic and operating conditions. These grades are described as follows:

1.1.1 Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, No. 1 S15, No. 2 S5000, No. 2 S500, and No. 2 S15 are middle distillate fuels for use in domestic and small industrial burners. Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, and No. 1 S15 are particularly adapted to vaporizing type burners or where storage conditions require low pour point fuel.

1.1.2 Grades B6–B20 S5000, B6–B20 S500, and B6–B20 S15 are middle distillate fuel/biodiesel blends for use in domestic and small industrial burners.

1.1.3 Grades No. 4 (Light) and No. 4 are heavy distillate fuels or middle distillate/residual fuel blends used in commercial/industrial burners equipped for this viscosity range.

1.1.4 Grades No. 5 (Light), No. 5 (Heavy), and No. 6 are residual fuels of increasing viscosity and boiling range, used in industrial burners. Preheating is usually required for handling and proper atomization.

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/astm/c8aa70b3-8f3d-4f30-8298-a7bb43d6fc50/astm-d396-24>

NOTE 1—For information on the significance of the terminology and test methods used in this specification, see [Appendix X1](#).

NOTE 2—A more detailed description of the grades of fuel oils is given in [X1.3](#).

1.2 This specification is for the use of purchasing agencies in formulating specifications to be included in contracts for purchases of fuel oils and for the guidance of consumers of fuel oils in the selection of the grades most suitable for their needs.

1.3 Nothing in this specification shall preclude observance of federal, state, or local regulations which can be more restrictive.

1.4 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard.

1.4.1 Non-SI units are provided in Table 1 and Table 2 and in [7.1.2.1/7.1.2.2](#) because these are common units used in the industry.

NOTE 3—The generation and dissipation of static electricity can create problems in the handling of distillate burner fuel oils. For more information on the subject, see Guide [D4865](#).

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D02](#) on Petroleum Products, Liquid Fuels, and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D02.E0](#) on Burner, Diesel and Non-Aviation Gas Turbine Fuels.

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

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

- D56 Test Method for Flash Point by Tag Closed Cup Tester
- D86 Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels at Atmospheric Pressure
- D93 Test Methods for Flash Point by Pensky-Martens Closed Cup Tester
- D95 Test Method for Water in Petroleum Products and Bituminous Materials by Distillation
- D97 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products
- D129 Test Method for Sulfur in Petroleum Products (General High Pressure Decomposition Device Method) (Withdrawn 2023)³
- D130 Test Method for Corrosiveness to Copper from Petroleum Products by Copper Strip Test
- D445 Test Method for Kinematic Viscosity of Transparent and Opaque Liquids (and Calculation of Dynamic Viscosity)
- D473 Test Method for Sediment in Crude Oils and Fuel Oils by the Extraction Method
- D482 Test Method for Ash from Petroleum Products
- D524 Test Method for Ramsbottom Carbon Residue of Petroleum Products
- D664 Test Method for Acid Number of Petroleum Products by Potentiometric Titration
- D975 Specification for Diesel Fuel
- D1266 Test Method for Sulfur in Petroleum Products (Lamp Method)
- D1298 Test Method for Density, Relative Density, or API Gravity of Crude Petroleum and Liquid Petroleum Products by Hydrometer Method
- D1552 Test Method for Sulfur in Petroleum Products by High Temperature Combustion and Infrared (IR) Detection or Thermal Conductivity Detection (TCD)
- D2500 Test Method for Cloud Point of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels
- D2622 Test Method for Sulfur in Petroleum Products by Wavelength Dispersive X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry
- D2624 Test Methods for Electrical Conductivity of Aviation and Distillate Fuels
- D2709 Test Method for Water and Sediment in Middle Distillate Fuels by Centrifuge
- D2887 Test Method for Boiling Range Distribution of Petroleum Fractions by Gas Chromatography
- D3828 Test Methods for Flash Point by Small Scale Closed Cup Tester
- D4052 Test Method for Density, Relative Density, and API Gravity of Liquids by Digital Density Meter
- D4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products
- D4177 Practice for Automatic Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products
- D4294 Test Method for Sulfur in Petroleum and Petroleum Products by Energy Dispersive X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry
- D4306 Practice for Aviation Fuel Sample Containers for Tests Affected by Trace Contamination
- D4308 Test Method for Electrical Conductivity of Liquid Hydrocarbons by Precision Meter
- D4865 Guide for Generation and Dissipation of Static Electricity in Petroleum Fuel Systems
- D5453 Test Method for Determination of Total Sulfur in Light Hydrocarbons, Spark Ignition Engine Fuel, Diesel Engine Fuel, and Engine Oil by Ultraviolet Fluorescence
- D5842 Practice for Sampling and Handling of Fuels for Volatility Measurement
- D5854 Practice for Mixing and Handling of Liquid Samples of Petroleum and Petroleum Products
- D5949 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products (Automatic Pressure Pulsing Method)
- D5950 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products (Automatic Tilt Method)
- D5985 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products (Rotational Method)
- D6079 Test Method for Evaluating Lubricity of Diesel Fuels by the High-Frequency Reciprocating Rig (HFRR)
- D6469 Guide for Microbial Contamination in Fuels and Fuel Systems
- D6749 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products (Automatic Air Pressure Method)
- D6751 Specification for Biodiesel Fuel Blendstock (B100) for Middle Distillate Fuels
- D6892 Test Method for Pour Point of Petroleum Products (Robotic Tilt Method)
- D7039 Test Method for Sulfur in Gasoline, Diesel Fuel, Jet Fuel, Kerosine, Biodiesel, Biodiesel Blends, and Gasoline-Ethanol Blends by Monochromatic Wavelength Dispersive X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry
- D7042 Test Method for Dynamic Viscosity and Density of Liquids by Stabinger Viscometer (and the Calculation of Kinematic Viscosity)

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 The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

- D7094 Test Method for Flash Point by Modified Continuously Closed Cup (MCCCFP) Tester
- D7220 Test Method for Sulfur in Automotive, Heating, and Jet Fuels by Monochromatic Energy Dispersive X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry
- D7344 Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels at Atmospheric Pressure (Mini Method)
- D7345 Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels at Atmospheric Pressure (Micro Distillation Method)
- D7346 Test Method for No Flow Point and Pour Point of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels
- D7371 Test Method for Determination of Biodiesel (Fatty Acid Methyl Esters) Content in Diesel Fuel Oil Using Mid Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR-ATR-PLS Method)
- D7688 Test Method for Evaluating Lubricity of Diesel Fuels by the High-Frequency Reciprocating Rig (HFRR) by Visual Observation
- D7861 Test Method for Determination of Fatty Acid Methyl Esters (FAME) in Diesel Fuel by Linear Variable Filter (LVF) Array Based Mid-Infrared Spectroscopy
- D7945 Test Method for Determination of Dynamic Viscosity and Derived Kinematic Viscosity of Liquids by Constant Pressure Viscometer
- E29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications
- 2.2 *Other Documents:*
- 26 CFR Part 48 Diesel Fuel Excise Tax; Dye Color and Concentration⁴
- 40 CFR Part 80 Regulation of Fuel and Fuel Additives⁴
- EN 14078 Determination of Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (FAME) Content in Middle Distillates — Infrared Spectrometry Method⁵
- EN 15751 Automotive Fuels—Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (FAME) Fuel and Blends with Diesel Fuel—Determination of Oxidation Stability by Accelerated Oxidation Method⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *additive, n—in fuel oils*, a substance added to fuel oil at a blend level not greater than 1 % by volume of the finished fuel.

3.1.1.1 Discussion—

Additives are generally included in finished fuel oil to enhance performance properties (for example, stability, pour point, and so forth).

3.1.1.2 Discussion—

Additives that contain hydrocarbon oil blended with other substances may exclude the hydrocarbon oil portion for determination of the volume percent of the finished fuel.

3.1.1.3 Discussion—

Triglycerides (for example, vegetable oils, animal fats, greases, and so forth) have been found to cause fouling of fuel oil burning equipment, and triglycerides are therefore not allowed as additives or components of additives.

3.1.2 *alternative blendstock, n—in diesel fuels and fuel oils*, a non-hydrocarbon oil substance added to diesel fuel or fuel oil at blend levels greater than 1 % by volume of the finished fuel.

3.1.2.1 Discussion—

An alternative blendstock should normally have an industry consensus standard or an annex in this specification that defines its physical and chemical properties.

3.1.2.2 Discussion—

See **Appendix X3** for guidance regarding new materials for No. 1 and No. 2 grades of fuel oils.

3.1.3 *biodiesel, n—fuel* comprised of mono-alkyl esters of long chain fatty acids derived from vegetable oils or animal fats, designated B100.

3.1.4 *biodiesel blend (BXX), n—a* homogeneous mixture of hydrocarbon oils and mono alkyl esters of long chain fatty acids.

3.1.4.1 Discussion—

In the abbreviation BXX, the XX represents the volume percentage of biodiesel in the blend.

3.1.5 *hydrocarbon oil, n—a* homogeneous mixture with elemental composition primarily of carbon and hydrogen that may also

⁴ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, 732 N. Capitol St., NW, Mail Stop: SDE, Washington, DC 20401.

⁵ Available from the National CEN members listed on the CEN website (www.cenorm.be) or from the CEN/TC 19 Secretariat (astm@nen.nl).

contain sulfur, oxygen, or nitrogen from residual impurities and contaminants associated with the fuel's raw materials and manufacturing processes and excluding added oxygenated materials.

3.1.5.1 *Discussion*—

Neither macro nor micro emulsions are included in this definition since neither are homogeneous mixtures.

3.1.5.2 *Discussion*—

Examples of excluded oxygenated materials are alcohols, esters, ethers, and triglycerides.

3.1.5.3 *Discussion*—

The hydrocarbon oil may be manufactured from a variety of raw materials, for example, petroleum (crude oil), oil sands, natural gas, coal, and biomass. **Appendix X3** discusses some matters for consideration regarding the use of fuel oils from feedstocks other than petroleum.

3.1.6 *S*(numerical specification maximum), *n*—a part of the grade name that states the maximum sulfur content in ppm by mass (mg/kg) allowed by this specification and formatted as S followed with no space by the numerical sulfur maximum.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—

Of the fourteen fuel oil grades specified in this specification, nine have important distinguishing maximum sulfur regulatory requirements: Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, No. 1 S15; No. 2 S5000, No. 2 S500, and No. 2 S15; B6-B20 S5000, B6-B20 S500, and B6-B20 S15. The remaining grades are distinguished from these grades by other major properties in addition to sulfur (unregulated maximum), and therefore are not included in this designation system.

3.1.6.2 *Discussion*—

mg/kg is equivalent to $\mu\text{g/g}$, $1 \times 10^{-4} \%$ by mass, and mass fraction 0.000001.

3.1.6.3 *Discussion*—

Most, but not all, test methods to determine sulfur content mentioned in this specification produce results in units of mg/kg. Consult the test method in use to determine units for a particular result.

4. General Requirements

4.1 The grades of fuel oil specified herein shall be hydrocarbon oils, except as provided in **4.3**, free from inorganic acid, and free from excessive amounts of solid or fibrous foreign matter. The inclusion of additives to enhance performance properties, if required, is allowed.

4.1.1 Additives may be included in fuel oil at a blend level not greater than 1 % by volume of the finished fuel.

4.1.1.1 Additives are generally included in finished fuel oil to enhance performance properties (for example, stability, pour point, and so forth).

4.1.1.2 Additives that contain hydrocarbon oil blended with other substances may exclude the hydrocarbon oil portion for determination of the volume percent of the finished fuel.

4.1.1.3 Triglycerides (for example, vegetable oils, animal fats, greases, and so forth) have been found to cause fouling of fuel oil burning equipment, and triglycerides are therefore not allowed as additives or components of additives.

4.2 All grades containing residual components shall remain uniform in normal storage and not separate by gravity into light and heavy oil components outside the viscosity limits for the grade.

4.3 *Alternative Blendstocks:*

4.3.1 *Fuels Blended with Biodiesel*—The detailed requirements for fuels blended with biodiesel shall be as follows:

4.3.1.1 *Biodiesel for Blending*—If biodiesel is a component of any fuel oil, the biodiesel shall meet the requirements of Specification **D6751**.

4.3.1.2 The remainder of the fuel oil shall be fuel oil conforming to Specification D396 Grades No. 1 or No. 2 of any sulfur level specified, with the exception that fuel oil whose sulfur level falls outside of Specification D396 may be blended with biodiesel meeting Specification **D6751**, provided the finished mixture meets this specification.

4.3.1.3 Fuel oil containing up to 5 % by volume biodiesel shall meet the requirements for the appropriate grade No. 1 or No. 2 fuel as listed in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1 Detailed Requirements for Fuel Oils Conforming to Grades 1, 2 or B6–B20^{A,B}

Property	ASTM Test Method	No. 1	No. 2	B6–B20
		S15, S500, or S5000 ^C	S15, S500, or S5000 ^C	S15, S500, or S5000 ^C
Distillation Temperature, °C				
10 % volume recovered, max		215	...	...
90 % volume recovered, min	D86	...	282	282
90 % volume recovered, max		288	338	343
Kinematic viscosity at 40 °C, mm ² /s				
min	D445	1.3	1.9	1.3
max		2.4	4.1	4.1
Sulfur, percent by mass, max ^D				
Grade S15	D5453	0.0015	0.0015	0.0015
Grade S500	D2622	0.05	0.05	0.05
Grade S5000	D2622	0.5	0.5	0.5
Pour Point °C, max ^E	D97	–18	–6	–6
Ramsbottom carbon residue on 10 % distillation residue percent by mass, max	D524	0.15	0.35	0.35
Density at 15 °C, kg/m ³ , max	D1298	850	876	876
Oxidation Stability, hours, min	EN 15751	...	...	6
Acid Number, mg KOH/g, max	D664	...	...	0.3
Biodiesel Content, percent (V/V) ^F	D7371	...	...	6–20.
Requirements for all grades				
Flash Point, °C, min	D93 – Proc. A		38	
Water and sediment, percent by volume, max	D2709		0.05	
Lubricity, HFRR @ 60 °C, micron, max	D6079/D7688	520		520 ^G
Copper strip corrosion rating, max, 3 h at a minimum control temperature of 50 °C	D130		No. 3	
Conductivity (pS/m) or Conductivity Units (C.U.), min	D2624/D4308		25 ^H	

^A It is the intent of these classifications that failure to meet any requirement of a given grade does not automatically place an oil in the next lower grade unless in fact it meets all requirements of the lower grade. However, to meet special operating conditions, modifications of individual limiting requirements may be agreed upon among the purchaser, seller, and manufacturer.

^B Refer to 7.1.2.1 for Low Temperature guidance for <1000 gal outside or unheated storage containers for the United States.

^C Under United States regulations, in the United States, under federal U.S. regulations, at or beyond terminal storage tanks, Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, No. 1 S15, No. 2 S5000, No. 2 S500, No. 2 S15, B6–B20 S5000, B6–B20 S500, and B6–B20 S15 are required by 40 CFR Part 80 to contain a sufficient amount of the dye Solvent Red 164 so its presence is visually apparent. At or beyond terminal storage tanks, they are required by 26 CFR Part 48 to contain the dye Solvent Red 164 at a concentration spectrally equivalent to at least 3.9 lb of the solid dye standard Solvent Red 26 per thousand barrels of fuel oil.

^D Other sulfur limits may apply in selected areas in the United States and in other countries.

^E Lower or higher pour points can be specified whenever required by conditions of storage or use. When a pour point less than –18 °C is specified, the minimum viscosity at 40 °C for grade No. 2 shall be 1.7 mm²/s and the minimum 90 % recovered temperature shall be waived.

^F See subsection 4.3.1.3 on biodiesel content for grades other than B6–B20.

^G If the fuel oil is qualified under Table 1 of Specification D396 for lubricity, it is not necessary to measure the lubricity of the blend because the lubricity of the individual blend components will be less than 520 µm so the resulting blend will also be less than 520 µm.

^H The electrical conductivity of the fuel oil is measured at the time and temperature of the fuel at delivery. The 25 pS/m minimum conductivity requirement applies at all instances of high velocity transfer (7 m/s) but sometimes lower velocities, (see 8.1 for detailed requirements) into mobile transport (for example, tanker trucks, rail cars, and barges).

4.3.1.4 Fuel oil containing 6 % to 20 % by volume biodiesel shall meet the requirements for the appropriate grade B6 to B20 as listed in Table 1.

4.3.1.5 Test Methods **D7371**, **D7861**, and EN 14078 may be used for determination of the percent by volume biodiesel in a biodiesel blend. In cases of dispute, Test Method **D7371** shall be the referee test method. See Practice **E29** for guidance on significant digits.

4.3.1.6 Fuel oils containing more than 20 % by volume biodiesel component are not included in this specification.

4.3.1.7 Biodiesel blends with Grades 4, 5, or 6 are not covered by this specification.

5. Detailed Requirements

5.1 The various grades of fuel oil shall conform to the limiting requirements shown in Table 1 and Table 2. A representative sample shall be taken for testing in accordance with Practice **D4057**.

5.2 Modifications of limiting requirements to meet special operating conditions agreed upon between the purchaser, the seller, and the supplier shall fall within limits specified for each grade, except as stated in supplementary footnotes for Table 1 and Table 2.

TABLE 2 Detailed Requirements for Fuel Oils Conforming to Grades No. 4, 5, or 6^{A,B}

Property	ASTM Test Method	No. 4 (Light) ^C	No. 4	No. 5 (Light)	No. 5 (Heavy)	No. 6
Flash Point, °C, min	D93 —Proc. A D93 —Proc. B	38 ...	... 55	... 55	... 55	... 60
Water and sediment, percent by volume, max	D95 + D473	(0.50) ^D	(0.50) ^D	(1.00) ^D	(1.00) ^D	(2.00) ^D
Kinematic viscosity at 40 °C, mm ² /s						
min	D445	1.9	>5.5	...	...	...
max		5.5	24.0 ^E	...	...	...
Kinematic viscosity at 100 °C, mm ² /s						
min	D445	...	...	5.0	9.0	15.0
max		...	...	8.9 ^E	14.9 ^E	50.0 ^E
Ash, percent by mass, max	D482	0.05	0.10	0.15	0.15	...
Density at 15 °C, kg/m ³ , min	D1298	>876 ^F	...	...	...	...
Pour Point °C, max ^G	D97	-6	-6	...	...	^H

^A It is the intent of these classifications that failure to meet any requirement of a given grade does not automatically place an oil in the next lower grade unless in fact it meets all requirements of the lower grade. However, to meet special operating conditions, modifications of individual limiting requirements may be agreed upon among the purchaser, seller, and manufacturer.

^B Refer to 7.1.2.1 for Low Temperature guidance for <1000 gal outside or unheated storage containers for the United States.

^C Under United States regulations, Grade No. 4 (Light) is required by 40 CFR Part 80 to contain a sufficient amount of the dye Solvent Red 164 so its presence is visually apparent. At- In the United States, under federal U.S. regulations, at or beyond terminal storage tanks, it-Grade No. 4 (Light) is required by 26 CFR Part 48 to contain the dye Solvent Red 164 at a concentration spectrally equivalent to at least 3.9 lb of the solid dye standard Solvent Red 26 per thousand barrels of fuel oil.

^D The amount of water by distillation by Test Method **D95** plus the sediment by extraction by Test Method **D473** shall not exceed the value shown in the table. For Grade No. 6 fuel oil, the amount of sediment by extraction shall not exceed 0.50 % by mass, and a deduction in quantity shall be made for all water and sediment in excess of 1.0 % by mass.

^E Where low sulfur fuel oil is required, fuel oil falling in the viscosity range of a lower numbered grade down to and including No. 4 can be supplied by agreement between the purchaser and supplier. The viscosity range of the initial shipment shall be identified and advance notice shall be required when changing from one viscosity range to another. This notice shall be in sufficient time to permit the user to make the necessary adjustments.

^F This limit ensures a minimum heating value and also prevents misrepresentation and misapplication of this product as Grade No. 2.

^G Lower or higher pour points can be specified whenever required by conditions of storage or use.

^H Where low sulfur fuel oil is required, Grade No. 6 fuel oil will be classified as Low Pour (+15 °C max) or High Pour (no max). Low Pour fuel oil should be used unless tanks and lines are heated.

6. Sampling, Containers, and Sample Handling

6.1 The reader is strongly advised to review all intended test methods prior to sampling in order to understand the importance and effects of sampling technique, proper containers, and special handling required for each test method.

6.2 Correct sampling procedures are critical to obtaining a sample representative of the fuel oil to be tested. Refer to **X1.4** for recommendations. The recommended procedures or practices provide techniques useful in the proper sampling or handling of fuels oils.

7. Test Methods

7.1 The requirements enumerated in this specification shall be determined in accordance with the following ASTM test methods,⁶ except as may be required under 7.1.1.

7.1.1 *Flash Point*—Test Method **D93** (Procedure A) for Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, No. 2 S5000, No. 2 S500, and No. 4 (Light), and Test Method **D93** (Procedure B) for Grades No. 4, No. 5 (Light), No. 5 (Heavy), and No. 6, except where other methods are prescribed by law. For Grades No. 1 S5000, No. 1 S500, No. 2 S5000, No. 2 S500, and No. 4 (Light), Test Methods **D3828** and **D7094** may be used as an alternative with the same limits. For Grades No. 1, No. 1 Low Sulfur, No. 2, and No. 2 Low Sulfur, Test Method **D56** may be used as an alternative with the same limits, provided the flash point is below 93 °C and the viscosity is below 5.5 mm²/s at 40 °C. This test method will give slightly lower values. In cases of dispute, Test Method **D93**, with the appropriate procedure, shall be used as the referee method.

7.1.2 *Pour Point*—Test Method **D97**. For all grades, the automatic Test Methods **D5949**, **D5950**, **D5985**, **D6749**, **D6892**, and **D7346** may be used as alternatives with the same limits. In case of dispute, Test Method **D97** shall be used as the referee method. Alternative test methods that indicate flow point properties can be used for low sulfur residual fuels by agreement between purchaser and supplier.

⁶ For information on the precision of the ASTM test methods for fuel oils refer to “An Evaluation of Methods for Determination of Sulfur in Fuel Oils” by A. R. Crawford, Esso Mathematics and Systems Inc. and G. V. Dyroff, Esso Research and Engineering Co., 1969. This document is available from the Publications Section, API Library, American Petroleum Institute, 1220 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20005.