



Designation: D5951 – 96 (Reapproved 2002)

Standard Practice for Preparing Residual Solids Obtained After Biodegradability Standard Methods for Plastics in Solid Waste for Toxicity and Compost Quality Testing¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D5951; 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.

1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers a standard procedure for preparing the residual solids obtained at the end of standard methods for biodegradability testing of plastics in solid waste, for subsequent toxicity and compost quality testing. The practice yields mixtures that can be used as such for terrestrial toxicity testing or that can be submitted to water extraction for further aquatic toxicity tests, in accordance with Practice D5152, and in conjunction with Method D4229, Guides E729, E1192, E1295, and E1440, or other currently accepted toxicity test methods (see OECD Guidelines 201, 202, 203, 207, and 208 or U.S. EPA 40FR797A, as well as other documents such as *A New Manual for Conducting Microtox Test with the Model 500 Analyzer*² the work on cyst-based toxicity tests by Centeno, et al³). The mixtures can also be used for further soil contact biodegradation testing.

1.2 This practice provides for storage and drying of the mixtures obtained at the end of the test methods for determination of the biodegradability of plastics under controlled composting conditions (Test Method D5338), and under high-solids anaerobic digestion (Test Method D5511). The mixtures contain the biologically decomposed residuals from solid waste and from the plastic materials. For the blanks, the residuals will be derived only from the biologically decomposed solid waste. In the event that a particular sample does not pass the toxicity test, chemical characterization of the degradation products can be performed on the sample to determine the source of the toxicity. Description of the performance of these analyses is beyond the scope of this practice.

1.3 There is no ISO standard that is equivalent to this practice.

1.4 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.5 *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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:⁴

D883 Terminology Relating to Plastics

D3987 Test Method for Shake Extraction of Solid Waste with Water

D4229 Method for Conducting Static Acute Toxicity Tests on Waste-Waters with Daphnia

D5152 Practice for Water Extraction of Residual Solids from Degraded Plastics for Toxicity Testing

D5338 Test Method for Determining Aerobic Biodegradation of Plastic Materials Under Controlled Composting Conditions

D5511 Test Method for Determining Anaerobic Biodegradation of Plastic Materials Under High-Solids Anaerobic-Digestion Conditions

E729 Guide for Conducting Acute Toxicity Tests on Test Materials with Fishes, Macroinvertebrates, and Amphibians

E1192 Guide for Conducting Acute Toxicity Tests on Aqueous Ambient Samples and Effluents with Fishes, Macroinvertebrates, and Amphibians

E1295 Guide for Conducting Three-Brood, Renewal Toxicity Tests with *Ceriodaphnia dubia*

E1440 Guide for Acute Toxicity Test with the Rotifer *Brachionus*

2.2 OECD Guidelines:⁵

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D20 on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D20.96 on Environmentally Degradable Plastics and Biobased Products.

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² Microbics Corporation, Carlsbad, CA.

³ Centeno, M. D., Brendonck, L., and Persoone, G., "Cyst-Based Toxicity Tests III: Development and Standardization of an Acute Toxicity Test with the Freshwater Anostracan Crustacean *Streptocephalus probosciceus*," *Progress in Standardization of Aquatic Toxicity Tests*, A. M. V. M. Soares and P. Calow, eds., Lewis Publishers, London, United Kingdom, pp. 37–56.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Available from Director of Information, OECD, 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France.

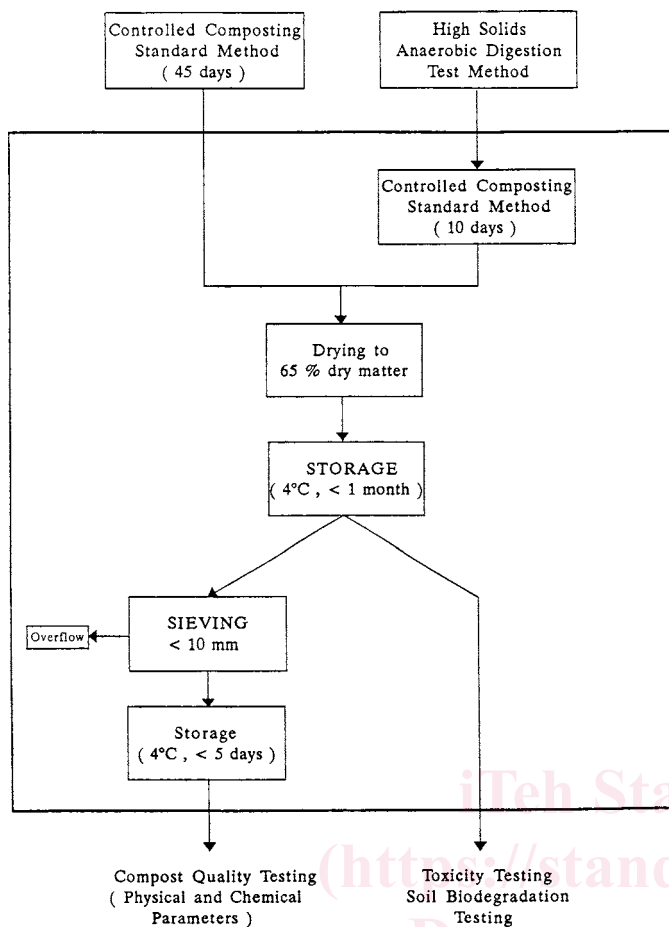


FIG. 1 Schematic Overview of Practice

- OECD Guideline 201 Alga, Growth Inhibition Test
- OECD Guideline 202 Daphnia sp., 14-day Reproduction Test
- OECD Guideline 203 Fish, Acute Toxicity Test
- OECD Guideline 207 Earthworm, Acute Toxicity Tests
- OECD Guideline 208 Terrestrial Plants, Growth Test
- 2.3 Other Standards:
- U.S. EPA 40FR797A A Variety of Toxicity Testing Procedures⁶
- APHA 2540E Fixed and Volatile Solids Ignited at 550°C⁷

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—Definitions of terms applying to this practice appear in Terminology D883.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Standard methods for determining the biodegradation of plastics simulating solid waste treatment systems have been developed. In addition to the rate and degree of biodegradation, the impact of the biologically decomposed plastics on the

quality of the compost is important, in particular with regard to any toxicity or biodegradation that the residual plastics may exhibit when the final end-product, compost, is applied to the soil. Therefore, the effects of residual plastics on toxicity need to be measured as well as the impact on the compost quality, in order to evaluate the safe biological treatment through aerobic or anaerobic degradation.

4.1.1 This practice provides a way of preparing residual solids from tests simulating conditions of solid waste degradation for subsequent toxicity, biodegradation, or compost quality testing.

4.2 Several methods have been developed for the determination of toxicological effects. A distinction can be made between aquatic toxicity tests and terrestrial toxicity tests.

4.3 At the end of a composting process for municipal solid waste, a post-treatment is performed to transform the rough process compost into an upgraded market compost. This post-treatment consists primarily of a drying of the compost followed by a sieving over a 10-mm screen.

4.4 This practice provides for a standardized post-treatment at the end of a standard method for biodegradation under controlled composting conditions. The practice consists of drying, storage, and sieving to be followed by further compost quality testing. No sieving is applied to the dried residual solids for subsequent toxicity and soil biodegradation testing.

4.5 At the end of an anaerobic digestion process for municipal solids waste, a post-treatment is performed to transform the digested material into an upgraded compost. This post-treatment consists of a 10-day aerobic maturation and drying phase, followed by a screening over a 10-mm screen.

4.6 This practice provides for a standardized post-treatment at the end of the high solids anaerobic digestion method and consists of preparing a mixture of the digested residue with a compost, in order to submit the mixture to a ten-day controlled composting phase. The mixtures retrieved after the ten-day controlled composting steps are then treated in the same way as the mixtures retrieved from an aerobic composting process and prepared for subsequent toxicity testing by drying, storage, and sieving.

4.7 This practice is end-point specific as written, in that it is focused on a post-degradation analysis after the completion of a standard method. Sample preparation and storage as recommended herein allow for further qualitative and quantitative toxicological, chemical, and physical testing procedures that are beyond the scope of this practice. These procedures may be useful in the characterization of degradation products derived from biodegradable plastics. In case toxicity is observed, the material may be tested and prepared in the standard test methods in a concentration of 1 % (weight over weight) added to the inoculum or to a standardized fresh waste matrix and evaluated again for toxicity and compost quality testing.

4.8 *Limitations*—Because there is a wide variation in the construction and operation of composting and anaerobic digestion systems and because regulatory requirements vary, this practice is not intended to simulate the post-treatment and compost refining of any particular composting or digestion

⁶ Available from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC 20402.

⁷ *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater (APHA)*, 17th Ed., available from American Public Health Association, 1740 Broadway, New York, NY 19919.