



Standard Test Method for Determining Filterability of Distillate Fuel Oils¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 6426; 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 covers a procedure for determining the filterability of distillate fuel oils within the viscosity range from 1.70 to 6.20 mm²/s (cSt) at 40°C.

NOTE 1—ASTM specification fuels falling within the scope of this test method are Specification D 396 Grade Nos. 1 and 2, Specification D 975 Grades 1-D, low sulfur 1-D, 2-D, and low sulfur 2-D, and Specification D 2880 Grade Nos. 1-GT and 2-GT.

1.2 This test method is not applicable to fuels that contain undissolved water.

1.3 The values stated in SI units shall be considered standard.

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

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*

D 396 Specification for Fuel Oils²

D 975 Specification for Diesel Fuel Oils²

D 2880 Specification for Gas Turbine Fuel Oils³

D 4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products³

D 4176 Test Method for Free Water and Particulate Contamination in Distillate Fuels (Visual Inspection Procedures)³

D 4177 Practice for Automatic Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products³

D 4860 Test Method for Free Water and Particulate Contamination in Mid-Distillate Fuels (Clear and Bright Numerical Rating)⁴

E 1 Specification for ASTM Thermometers⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D02 on Petroleum Products and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D02.14 on Stability and Cleanliness of Liquid Fuels.

Current edition approved June 10, 2001. Published October 2001. Originally published as D 6426 – 99. Last previous edition D 6426 – 99.

² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 05.01.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 05.02.

⁴ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 05.03.

⁵ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.03.

3.1.1 For this test method, filterability is a measure of the rapidity with which a standard filter medium is plugged by insoluble matter in fuel and can be described in either of the following two ways:

3.1.1.1 *filterability*—the pressure drop across a filter medium when 300 mL of fuel is passed at a rate of 20 mL/min.

3.1.1.2 *filterability*—the volume of fuel passed when 104 kPa (15 psi) is reached. This method of report is used when less than 300 mL passes at that pressure.

3.1.1.3 *filterability quality factor (F-QF)*—a value that defines the filter plugging tendency of a fuel caused by particulate. The value is calculated using the volume and pressure attained at the end of the test cycle. Depending on the outcome of the test, two different equations are applied.

3.1.1.4 *Discussion*—Eq 1 is applied if the total sample was discharged prior to reaching the maximum pressure or Eq 2 if the maximum pressure was reached prior to discharging the entire sample. The equations proportion the results so that a continuous range of 0 – 100 is attained. Eq 1 yields values from 50 to 100, whereas, Eq 2 yields values from 0 to 50. Higher values signify less particulate that can plug a filter of a given pore size and porosity.

If the total sample (300 mL) is discharged prior to reaching the maximum pressure (104 kPa or 15 psi), the F-QF is calculated by the following equation:

$$F-QF_{(300 \text{ mL at } P_{(F)})} = ((15 \text{ psi} - P_{(F)}) / 15 \text{ psi})(50) + (50) \quad (1)$$

where:

$P_{(F)}$ = final pressure when the total sample (300 mL) was discharged.

If the total sample is not discharged prior to reaching the maximum pressure (104 kPa or 15 psi), the F-QF is calculated by the following equation:

$$F-QF_{(V_{(F)} \text{ at } 15 \text{ psi})} = V_{(F)} / 6 \quad (2)$$

where:

$V_{(F)}$ = final volume when the maximum pressure was reached.

3.1.1.5 *Discussion*—The final pressure ($V_{(F)}$) is divided by six, since the maximum possible volume is 300 mL. By dividing by six, the values for that test result are proportioned to fit the range from 0 to 50.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A sample is passed at a constant rate (20 mL/min)

through a standard porosity filter medium. The pressure drop across the filter and the volume of filtrate are monitored. The test is concluded either when the pressure drop across the filter exceeds 104 kPa (15 psi) or when 300 mL have passed through the filter.

4.2 Results are reported as either the volume that has passed through the filter when a pressure of 104 kPa (15 psi) has been reached or the pressure drop when 300 mL have passed through the filter.

4.3 Verification of the apparatus is required when there is a doubt of a test result, or when the apparatus has not been used for three months or more. It is not necessary to verify apparatus performance prior to each test.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method is intended for use in the laboratory or field in evaluating distillate fuel cleanliness.

5.2 A change in filtration performance after storage, pre-treatment, or commingling can be indicative of changes in fuel condition.

5.3 Relative filterability of fuels may vary depending on filter porosity and structure and may not always correlate with results from this test method.

5.4 Causes of poor filterability in industrial/refinery filters include fuel degradation products, contaminants picked up during storage or transfer, incompatibility of commingled fuels, or interaction of the fuel with the filter media. Any of these could correlate with orifice or filter system plugging, or both.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Micro-Filter Analyzer*:⁶

6.1.1 The apparatus is shown diagrammatically in Fig. 1 and photographically in Fig. 2. It is capable of measuring pressure

upstream of the filtering element and the volume of sample passed through the filter at two discrete preset pressure levels. The apparatus is comprised of the following parts:

6.1.1.1 *Peristaltic Pump*, variable speed/flow rate, with feedback speed control, adjusted to provide fuel delivery at a constant rate of 20 ± 1 mL/min, and incorporating a pulse dampening mechanism to produce a smooth flow.

6.1.1.2 *Pressure Transducer*—Pressure transducer capable of measuring gage pressure in the range from 0 to 104 kPa, in 1.0 kPa increments (0 to 15 psi, in 0.1 psi increments⁷).

6.1.1.3 *Three Digital Displays*—One for pressure readout capable of interfacing with transducer (see 6.1.1.2) with display range from 0 to 104 kPa in 1.0 kPa increments (0 to 15 psi in 0.1 psi increments), one for volume readout with display range from 0 to 300 mL in 1 mL increments, and one for F-QF.

6.1.1.4 *Fuel Reservoir Container*—TFE-fluorocarbon, funnel shaped, 500 mL capacity.

6.1.1.5 *Collection Container*—Glass or plastic Erlenmeyer flask, 500-mL capacity.

6.1.1.6 *Tygon Tubing*,⁸ fuel compatible, 3.1-mm (0.12-in.) inner diameter.

6.1.1.7 *Plastic In-line Splice Coupler*, fuel compatible, capable of being inserted into, and making a seal in Tygon tubing (see 6.1.1.6).

6.1.1.8 *Plastic Tee Coupler*, fuel compatible, capable of being inserted into, and making a seal in Tygon tubing (see 6.1.1.6).

6.1.1.9 *Plastic LuerLoc Coupler*, fuel compatible, one end capable of being inserted into, and making a seal in Tygon tubing (see 6.1.1.6) and the other end into filter unit (see 6.2).

6.2 *Fcell*⁹ *Filter Unit*—Disposable, precalibrated assembly consisting of a shell and plug containing a 25-mm diameter nylon membrane filter of nominal 5.0- μ m pore size, nominal 60 % porosity, with a 158.9-mm² effective filtering area.

⁶ The sole source of supply of the apparatus (Model 1143 Micro-Filter Analyzer) known to the committee at this time is available from EMCEE Electronics, Inc., 520 Cypress Ave., Venice, FL 34292. If you are aware of alternate suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend.

⁷ The Micro-Filter can display the pressure in either kPa or psi units by changing an internal jumper wire.

⁸ Tygon tubing was used in the round robin test program to generate the precision and bias. Tygon is available from most laboratory supply houses.

⁹ A registered trademark of EMCEE Electronics, Inc., 520 Cypress Ave., Venice, FL 34292.

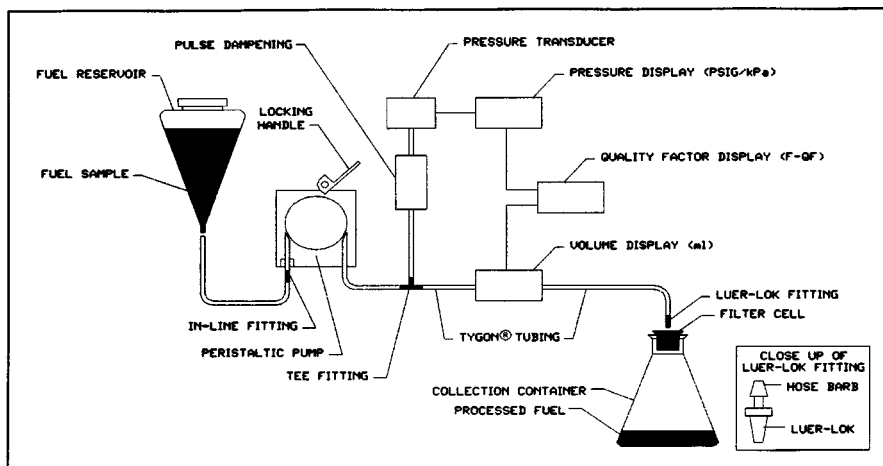


FIG. 1 Schematic Diagram of Filterability Apparatus

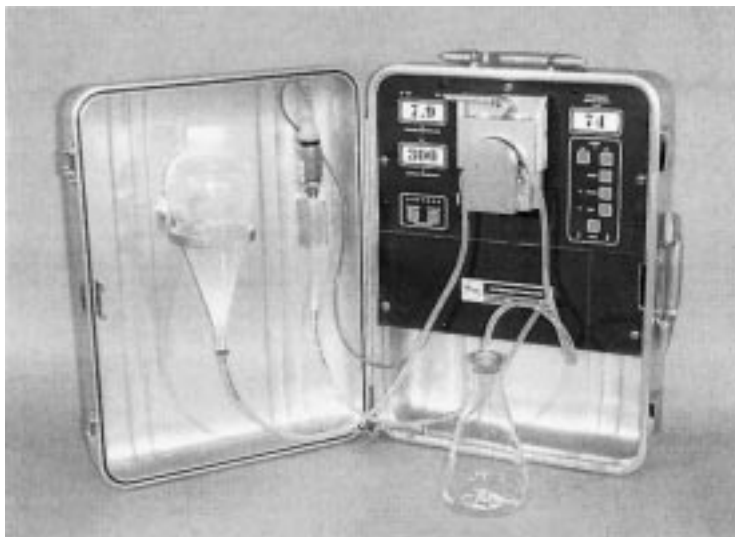


FIG. 2 Micro-Filter Analyzer

6.3 *Accessories for Apparatus Verification Test:*

6.3.1 *Measuring Cylinder*, 500-mL capacity, with 1-mL graduations.

6.3.2 *Pressure Gage*, 350-kPa (50-psi) capability, graduations 0.5 kPa (0.1 psi).

6.3.3 *Thermometer*, general purpose type, range 0 to 60°C conforming to the requirements prescribed in Specification E 1.

7. **Sampling**

7.1 The fuel sample from which an aliquot is being drawn for the purposes of this test must be representative of the lot of fuel. Obtain the sample in accordance with the procedures of Practice D 4057 or D 4177, and report (see 10.1) how and from where it was obtained. The maximum sample size is dictated by the quantity that can be mixed thoroughly (see 9.2). If any undissolved water is visually apparent (as determined by Test Method D 4176 or D 4860, or both), discard and replace with a fresh sample.

7.2 After thoroughly mixing, use an epoxy-lined can or dark glass bottle as a transfer container to store an aliquot of the test sample. Prior to drawing the aliquot, rinse the transfer container three times with the product to be tested. Draw a representative 1 to 2-L aliquot from the sample container into a transfer container. (**Warning**—Because the situations under which samples are taken vary from laboratory to laboratory and from situation to situation, no firm recommendation for sampling can be given. It is the responsibility of the user of this test method to ensure the aliquot used in the test is representative of the lot of fuel.)

8. **Preparation of Apparatus**

8.1 Locate the apparatus on a level surface in an area where the temperature is between 15 and 25°C (59 and 77°F).

8.2 Open the case, and assemble the apparatus as shown in Fig. 2. If the Tygon tubing (see 6.1.1.6) is not attached as shown, carry out 8.2.1 to 8.2.2.

8.2.1 Attach one end of the Tygon tubing to the fuel reservoir container (6.1.1.4) and insert the plastic in-line splice coupler (6.1.1.7) into the other end.

8.2.2 Insert the plastic in-line coupler into another piece of Tygon tubing, thread the tubing in the peristaltic pump (see 6.1.1.1), as shown in Fig. 3, and clamp it in place by moving the lever arm counterclockwise.

NOTE 2—The splice fitting prevents the tubing from being pulled into the pump during operation. This also allows easy replacement of the portion of the tubing that is depressed by the pump rollers. To extend the life of the Tygon tubing, when not in use, leave the clamp open or remove the tubing from the pump.

8.2.3 Insert one end of the horizontal section of the plastic tee coupler (6.1.1.8) into the tubing that is clamped in the pump and attach two other sections of tubing to the other parts of the tee.

8.2.4 Connect the tubing that is connected to the perpendicular part of the tee to the pressure transducer. Insert the hose barbed portion of the Luer-Loc coupler (6.1.1.9) into the other section of tubing that is connected to the in-line part of the tee.

8.3 Attach the power pack to the connector on the top of the case and connect the power pack to an ac power source. Turn the instrument on by depressing the ON switch causing both the POWER and MODE A lights to illuminate.

8.4 Have a labeled FCell filter (see 6.2.1) ready for use.

8.5 *Verification of Apparatus*—As required per 4.3, verify apparatus performance by checking that the flow rate and the pressure transducer are within tolerance.

8.5.1 Check the flow rate by performing a purge cycle to eliminate any air from the system. Subsequently, perform a test using a fuel sample without a filter, collecting the sample in a graduate (see 6.3.1). Compare the volume collected with amount displayed. The amount displayed shall be approximately 300 mL, and the amount collected shall be 285 to 315 mL. Adjust the pump speed control, as required.

8.5.2 Check the pressure by inserting a pressure gage (see 6.3.2) at the end of the Tygon tubing where the filter would be installed. Perform a test using air only, and compare the readings when approximately 105 kPa (15 psi) is displayed. If the readings vary more than ± 7 kPa (1.0 psi), return the