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AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TESTING AND MATERIALS
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Standard Test Method for Antimony in Water [1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 3697; 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 test method[2] covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable antimony in water by atomic absorption spectroscopy.

1.2 This test method is applicable in the range from 1 to 15 µg/L of antimony. The range may be extended by less scale expansion or by dilution of the sample.

1.3 The precision and bias data were obtained on reagent water, tap water, salt water, and two untreated wastewaters. The information on precision and bias may not apply to other waters.

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.* For specific precautionary statements, see 5.1 and 8.12.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*

D 1129 Terminology Relating to Water[3]

D 1193 Specification for Reagent Water[3]

D 2777 Practice for Determination of Precision and Bias of Applicable Test Methods of Committee D-19 on Water[3]

D 3370 Practices for Sampling Water from Closed Conduits[3]

D 4691 Practice for Measuring Elements in Water by Flame Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry[3]

D 4841 Practice for Estimation of Holding Time for Water Samples Containing Organic and Inorganic Constituents[3]

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:* For definitions of terms used in this test method, refer to Terminology D 1129.

3.2 *Definition of Term Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *total recoverable antimony*—an arbitrary analytical term relating to forms of antimony that are determinable by the digestion method which is included in the procedure. Some organic compounds may not be completely recovered.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 Organic antimony-containing compounds are decomposed by adding sulfuric and nitric acids and repeatedly evaporating the sample to fumes of sulfur trioxide. The antimony so produced, together with inorganic antimony originally present, is subsequently reacted with potassium iodide and stannous chloride, and finally with sodium borohydride to form stibine. The stibine is removed from solution by aeration and swept by a flow of nitrogen into a hydrogen flame where it is determined by atomic absorption at 217.6 nm.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Because of the association with lead and arsenic in industry, it is often difficult to assess the toxicity of antimony and its compounds. In humans, complaints referable to the nervous system have been reported. In assessing human cases, however, the possibility of lead or arsenic poisoning must always be borne in mind. Locally, antimony compounds are irritating to the skin and mucous membranes.

6. Interference

6.1 Since the stibine is freed from the original sample matrix, interferences in the flame are minimized.

6.2 Selenium and arsenic, which also form hydrides, do not interfere at concentrations of 100 µg/L. Higher concentrations were not tested.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer*, for use at 217.6 nm with a scale expansion of approximately 3. A general guide for the use of flame atomic absorption applications is given in Practice D 4691.

NOTE 1—The manufacturer's instructions should be followed for all instrumental parameters.

7.1.1 *Antimony Electrodeless Discharge Lamp*.

7.2 *Recorder or Digital Readout*— Any multirange variable speed recorder or digital readout accessory, or both, that is compatible with the atomic absorption spectrophotometer is suitable.

7.3 *Stibine Vapor Analyzer*, assembled as shown in Fig. 1.

NOTE 2—A static system, such as one using a balloon, has been found to be satisfactory. See McFarren, E. F., "New, Simplified Method for Metal Analysis," *Journal of American Water Works Assoc.*, JAWWA, Vol 64, 1972, p. 28.

[1] This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D-19 on Water and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D19.05 on Inorganic Constituents in Water.

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[2] Platte, J. A., and Marcy, V. M., "A New Tool for the Water Chemist," *Industrial Water Engineering*, IWEGA, May 1965.

[3] *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 11.01.