



Designation: D2674 – 72 (Reapproved 2004)^{e1}

Standard Methods of Analysis of Sulfochromate Etch Solution Used in Surface Preparation of Aluminum¹

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^{e1} NOTE—Keywords were added editorially in April 2004.

1. Scope

1.1 These methods offer a means for controlling the effectiveness of the etchant which is normally used for preparing the surface of aluminum alloys for subsequent adhesive bonding. As the etchant reacts with the aluminum, hexavalent chromium is converted to trivalent chromium; a measure of the two and the difference can be used to determine the amount of dichromate used.

1.2 The sulfochromate solution can be replenished by restoring the sodium dichromate and the sulfuric acid to the original formulation levels. The lower limit of usefulness will vary depending upon solution storage, adhesives used, critical nature of bond capability, variety of metals processed, etc. and should be determined. Replenishment will be limited to the number of times the chemical ingredients can be restored and maintained to the required levels and should be determined by the user. Sludge collecting in the bottom of a tank should be minimized by periodic removal of sludge. For some applications, the hexavalent chromium should not fall below the trivalent chromium content.

1.3 A typical aqueous sulfochromate acid etch solution formulation is as follows:

Sodium dichromate ($\text{Na}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$)	4.5 oz/gal (33.7 g/litre)
Sulfuric acid (sp gr 1.84)	45 oz/gal (337.1 g/litre)

1.4 Maintenance of the aqueous concentrations is suggested as follows by appropriate additions of sodium dichromate or sulfuric acids.

Sodium dichromate	3.0 to 6.0 oz/gal (22.5 to 44.9 g/litre)
Sulfuric acid	40 to 50 oz/gal (299.6 to 374.5 g/litre)

1.5 Method A is intended for measuring the sulfuric acid content of a sulfochromate solution. Method B is intended for

¹ These methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D14 on Adhesives and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D14.80 on Metal Bonding Adhesives.

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measuring the hexavalent and trivalent Chromium content of a sulfochromate solution. Method C is intended as an alternative method for measuring the hexavalent and trivalent Chromium content of a sulfochromate solution.

1.6 *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:²

D1193 Specification for Reagent Water

E50 Practices for Apparatus, Reagents, and Safety Considerations for Chemical Analysis of Metals, Ores, and Related Materials

3. Purity of Reagents and Water

3.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available.³ Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

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

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 *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, D.C. For suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Analar Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc., (USPC), Rockville, MD.

METHOD A

4. Apparatus

4.1 *pH Meter*.

5. Reagents

5.1 *Methyl Orange Indicator Solution*—Prepare in accordance with Practices E50.

5.2 *Sodium Hydroxide, Standard Solution (1.0 N)*—Dissolve 40 g of sodium hydroxide (NaOH) in 1 liter of water and standardize.

6. Procedure

6.1 Pipet a 5-mL sample of sulfochromate etch solution into a 250-mL beaker. Add 100 mL of water. Titrate the sample with the NaOH solution to a pH of 3.5, using a pH meter.

6.2 An alternative method may be used whereby, instead of the pH meter, 1 drop of methyl orange indicator solution is added and, the titration continued until the color of the solution loses all trace of orange.

7. Calculation

7.1 Calculate the sulfuric acid content of the sulfochromate solution, *A* in oz/gal, *B* in g/litre, as follows:

$$A = 1.3 VN \quad (1)$$

$$B = 9.81 VN \quad (2)$$

where:

V = milliliters of sodium hydroxide solution, and
N = normality of sodium hydroxide solution.

7.2 Replenish the sulfuric acid content of the solution as follows:

$$W_1 = (A_1 - A)V_1 \quad (3)$$

$$W_2 = (B_1 - B)V_2 \quad (4)$$

where:

*W*₁ = weight of sulfuric acid (H₂SO₄, sp gr 1.84) to be added to solution, oz,

*W*₂ = weight of sulfuric acid to be added to solution, g,

*A*₁ = original concentration of solution, oz/gal,

*B*₁ = original concentration of solution, g/litre,

*V*₁ = volume of solution in tank, gal, and

*V*₂ = volume of solution in tank, litres.

METHOD B

8. Reagents

8.1 *Ammonium Persulfate Solution* ((NH₄)₂S₂O₈, 15 weight %).

8.2 *Ferrous Ammonium Sulfate Solution (0.05 N)*—Dissolve 39.2 g of ferrous ammonium sulfate (Fe(NH₄)₂(SO₄)₂·6H₂O) in 1 litre of cold H₂SO₄(5 + 95) and dilute to 2 litres with H₂SO₄(5 + 95). Standardize this material each time as follows:

8.2.1 Pipet 10 mL into a 400-mL beaker. Add 150 mL of water plus 5 mL of H₂SO₄(sp gr 1.84) and 1 drop of the phenanthroline ferrous complex. Titrate with the KMnO₄ solution just to disappearance of the indicator color. If the normality does not fall within 0.051 to 0.049, discard the 0.05 N solution.

8.3 *Hydrochloric Acid (1 + 1)*—Mix 1 volume of concentrated hydrochloric acid (HCl) with 1 volume of water.

8.4 *Ortho-Phenanthroline Ferrous Complex Indicator Solution*—Prepare in accordance with Practices E50.

8.5 *Potassium Permanganate, Standard Solution (0.05 N)*—Dissolve 1.6 g of potassium permanganate (KMnO₄) in 1 litre of water and standardize.

8.6 *Silver Nitrate Solution (1 weight %)*.

8.7 *Sulfuric Acid (sp gr 1.84)*—Concentrated sulfuric acid (H₂SO₄).

Determination of Hexavalent Chromium as Sodium Dichromate

9. Procedure

9.1 Pipet 1 mL of the sample into a 400-mL beaker. Add 150 mL of water, followed by 5 mL of H₂SO₄ (sp gr 1.84). Titrate with the standard ferrous ammonium sulfate solution (using 1 drop of the ferrous complex indicator) (Note 1) until the indicator turns pink and then add about 5 ml of the standard ferrous ammonium sulfate solution in excess. Record the total volume of the standard ferrous solution added. Back-titrate with the potassium permanganate solution until the color of the solution becomes very slightly green.

NOTE 1—Barium diphenylamine sulfonate indicator may be used if preferred. This indicator gives a purple to green end point. If performed with care, back titration is not necessary.

NOTE 2—Upon reaching the end point, the solution will be colorless, then it will carry over by itself to a slightly green color. Any violet color will indicate the back titration has gone over the end point.

9.2 Record the amount of potassium permanganate used to reach this end point. Use an average of three determinations in the calculation.

10. Calculation

10.1 Calculate the hexavalent chromium as sodium dichromate (Na₂Cr₂O₇·2H₂O), *C* in oz/gal, and *D* in g/L, as follows:

$$C = (V_1N_1 - V_2N_2)6.63 \quad (5)$$

$$D = (V_1N_1 - V_2N_2)49.7 \quad (6)$$

where:

*V*₁ = millilitres of ferrous ammonium sulfate solution,

*N*₁ = normality of ferrous ammonium sulfate solution,

*V*₂ = millilitres of potassium permanganate solution, and

*N*₂ = normality of potassium permanganate solution.

Determination of Trivalent Chromium as Sodium Dichromate

11. Procedure

11.1 Pipet 1 mL of the sample into a 400-mL beaker. Add 150 mL of water followed by 10 mL of H₂SO₄ (sp gr 1.84).