



Designation: D2976 – 71 (Reapproved 2004)

## Standard Test Method for pH of Peat Materials<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D2976; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

### 1. Scope

1.1 This test method<sup>2</sup> covers the electrometric measurement of the pH of peat materials. It is a means of expressing the degree of acidity or alkalinity of peat material suspended in water and 0.01 M calcium chloride solution.

1.2 *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. Summary of Test Method

2.1 The electrometric measurement of the pH of peat in suspensions of water and calcium chloride solutions is made with a potentiometer using a glass-calomel electrode system, calibrated with buffers of known pH.

### 3. Significance and Use

3.1 pH measurements are made in water and in calcium chloride solution because the pH readings in water can be modified by salts, such as fertilizer material, whereas the observed pH in calcium chloride solution is virtually independent of the initial amount of salts present in the soil. pH values obtained in calcium chloride solution usually run about a 0.5 to 0.8 pH unit lower than measurements in water due to release of more hydrogen ions by cation exchange.

### 4. Apparatus

4.1 *pH Meter*—Potentiometer equipped with glass-calomel electrode system. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the pH meter used.

### 5. Reagents

5.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that

<sup>1</sup> This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D18 on Soil and Rock and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D18.22 on Soil as a Medium for Plant Growth.

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<sup>2</sup> This test method is currently undergoing an extensive review by ASTM Committee D18 and additional alternative methods will be proposed.

all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available.<sup>3</sup> 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.

5.2 *Purity of Water*—Water shall be carbon-dioxide-free distilled water. Use water with a pH of not less than 6.5 nor more than 7.5, obtained by boiling distilled water for 15 min and cooling under carbon dioxide-free conditions.

5.3 *Acid Potassium Phthalate Buffer Solution (0.05 M)*—Dissolve 10.21 g (dried 1 h at 105°C) of potassium phthalate (NBS Standard Samples) in water and dilute to 1 L. Protect the solution against evaporation and contamination with molds. Replace the solution when mold is apparent. The effect of temperature is as follows:

°C	pH
5 to 24	4.00
25 to 33	4.01
34 to 37	4.02

5.4 *Calcium Chloride, Stock Solution (1.0 M)*—Dissolve 147 g of CaCl<sub>2</sub>·2H<sub>2</sub>O in distilled water in a 1-L volumetric flask, cool, dilute to volume with distilled water, and mix. Dilute 15 mL of this solution to 200 mL with distilled water in a volumetric flask, and standardize by titrating a 25-mL aliquot of the diluted solution with standard 0.1 N silver nitrate (AgNO<sub>3</sub>) solution using 1 mL of 5 % potassium chromate (K<sub>2</sub>CrO<sub>4</sub>) solution as the indicator.

5.5 *Calcium Chloride Solution (0.01 M)*—Dilute 20.0 mL of stock 1.0 M CaCl<sub>2</sub> solution to 2 L with distilled water. The pH of this solution should be between 5 and 6.5.

5.6 *Phosphate Buffer Solution (0.025 M)*—Dissolve 3.40 g of KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> and 3.55 g of Na<sub>2</sub>HPO<sub>4</sub> (NBS Standard Samples 186-I and II) in water and dilute to 1 L. Dry salts 2 h at 130°C before use. Effect of temperature on pH is:

<sup>3</sup> *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For Suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Annual 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.