



Designation: E 2403 – 04

Standard Test Method for Sulfated Ash of Organic Materials by Thermogravimetry¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This standard describes the determination of sulfated ash content (sometimes called residue-on-ignition) of organic materials by thermogravimetry. The method converts common metals found in organic materials (such as sodium, potassium, lithium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, and tin) into their sulfate salts permitting estimation of their total content as sulfates or oxides. The range of the test method is from 0.1 to 100 % metal content.

1.2 SI values are the standards.

1.3 *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 to determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D 874 Test Method for Sulfated Ash from Lubricating Oils and Additives

D 914 Test Method for Ethylcellulose

D 3516 Test Methods for Ashing Cellulose

E 473 Terminology Relating to Thermal Analysis

E 1131 Standard Test Method for Compositional Analysis by Thermogravimetry

E 1142 Terminology Relating to Thermophysical Properties

E 1582 Standard Practice for Calibration of Temperature Scale for Thermogravimetry

E 2040 Standard Test Method for Mass Scale Calibration of Thermogravimetric Analyzers

2.2 *Other Standards*

The United States Pharmacopeia XXII and The National Formulary XVII, United States Pharmacopeial Convention, Rockville, MD, 1990, Section 281, p.1527.

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:* Technical terms used in this standard are defined in Terminologies E 473 and E 1142

3.1.1 *sulfated ash, n*—the residue remaining after a specimen has been oxidized, and the residue subsequently treated with sulfuric acid and heated to constant weight.

3.1.2 *residue-on-ignition, ROI, n*—a commonly used alias for sulfated ash.

3.1.3 *volatiles, n*—for the purpose of this test, those materials evolving as gas at temperatures below 160 °C in an air atmosphere.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A test specimen is ignited and burned in an air atmosphere at temperatures up to 600 °C until only ash remains. After cooling, the residue is treated with sulfuric acid and heated to 800 °C to constant weight. The residue remaining is identified as sulfated ash.

4.2 This test method is similar to D 874 for lubricating oils and additives, D 914 for ethyl cellulose, D 3516 cellulose, and that of the U.S. Pharmacopeia and makes use of thermogravimetric apparatus to perform the determination.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The sulfated ash may be used to indicate the level of known metal-containing additives or impurities in an organic material. When phosphorus is absent, barium, calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium are converted to their sulfates. Tin and zinc are converted to their oxides.

5.2 This standard may be used for research and development, specification acceptance and quality assurance purposes.

6. Interferences

6.1 If phosphorus is present with metals, it partially or wholly remains in the sulfated ash as metal phosphates.

6.2 Sulfur and chlorides do not interfere.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E37 on Thermal Measurements and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E37.01 on Thermal and Rheological Test Methods and Practices.

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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.