



Designation: G153 – 04

Standard Practice for Operating Enclosed Carbon Arc Light Apparatus for Exposure of Nonmetallic Materials¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers the basic principles and operating procedures for using enclosed carbon-arc light and water apparatus intended to reproduce the weathering effects that occur when materials are exposed to sunlight (either direct or through window glass) and moisture as rain or dew in actual use. This practice is limited to the procedures for obtaining, measuring, and controlling conditions of exposure. A number of exposure procedures are listed in an appendix; however, this practice does not specify the exposure conditions best suited for the material to be tested.

NOTE 1—Practice G151 describes performance criteria for all exposure devices that use laboratory light sources. This practice replaces Practice G23, which describes very specific designs for devices used for carbon-arc exposures. The apparatus described in Practice G23 is covered by this practice.

1.2 Test specimens are exposed to enclosed carbon arc light under controlled environmental conditions.

1.3 Specimen preparation and evaluation of the results are covered in various methods or specifications for specific materials. General guidance is given in Practice G151 and ISO 4892-1. More specific information about methods for determining the change in properties after exposure and reporting these results is described in ISO 4582.

1.4 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard.

1.5 *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.*

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee G03 on Weathering and Durability and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee G03.03 on Simulated and Controlled Exposure Tests.

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1.5.1 Should any ozone be generated from the operation of the light source, it shall be carried away from the test specimens and operating personnel by an exhaust system.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D3980 Practice for Interlaboratory Testing of Paint and Related Materials³

E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

G23 Practice for Operating Light-Exposure Apparatus (Carbon-Arc Type) With and Without Water for Exposure of Nonmetallic Materials³

G113 Terminology Relating to Natural and Artificial Weathering Tests of Nonmetallic Materials

G151 Practice for Exposing Nonmetallic Materials in Accelerated Test Devices that Use Laboratory Light Sources

2.2 ISO Standards:

ISO 4582 Plastics—Determination of the Changes of Colour and Variations in Properties After Exposure to Daylight Under Glass, Natural Weathering or Artificial Light⁴

ISO 4892-1 Plastics—Methods of Exposure to Laboratory Light Sources, Part 1, General Guidance⁴

ISO 4892-4 Plastics—Methods of Exposure to Laboratory Light Sources, Part 4, Open-Flame Carbon Arc Lamp⁴

2.3 CIE Standards:

CIE-Publ. No. 85: Recommendations for the Integrated Irradiance and the Spectral Distribution of Simulated Solar Radiation for Testing Purposes⁵

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 Withdrawn. The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

⁵ Available from Secretary, U.S. National Committee, CIE, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899.

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—The definitions that are applicable to this practice are provided in Terminology **G113**.

3.1.1 As used in this practice, the term *sunlight* is identical to the terms *daylight* and *solar irradiance, global* as they are defined in Terminology **G113**.

4. Summary of Practice

4.1 Specimens are exposed to repetitive cycles of light and moisture under controlled environmental conditions. Moisture usually is produced by spraying the test specimen with demineralized/deionized water or by condensation of water vapor onto the specimen.

4.2 The exposure condition may be varied by selection of the following:

- 4.2.1 Filter,
- 4.2.2 The type of moisture exposure,
- 4.2.3 The timing of the light and moisture exposure,
- 4.2.4 The temperature of light exposure, and
- 4.2.5 The timing of a light/dark cycle.

4.3 Comparison of results obtained from specimens exposed in same model of apparatus should not be made unless reproducibility has been established among devices for the material to be tested.

4.4 Comparison of results obtained from specimens exposed in different models of apparatus should not be made unless correlation has been established among devices for the material to be tested.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The use of this apparatus is intended to induce property changes associated with the end use conditions, including the effects of sunlight, moisture, and heat. These exposures may include a means to introduce moisture to the test specimen. Exposures are not intended to simulate the deterioration caused by localized weather phenomena, such as atmospheric pollution, biological attack, and saltwater exposure. Alternatively, the exposure may simulate the effects of sunlight through window glass. Typically, these exposures would include moisture in the form of humidity.

5.2 *Cautions*—Refer to Practice **G151** for full cautionary guidance applicable to all laboratory weathering devices.

5.2.1 Variation in results may be expected when operating conditions are varied within the accepted limits of this practice. Therefore, no reference shall be made to results from the use of this practice unless accompanied by a report detailing the specific operating conditions in conformance with Section **10**.

5.2.2 It is recommended that a similar material of known performance, a control, be exposed simultaneously with the test specimen to provide a standard for comparative purposes. It is recommended that at least three replicates of each material evaluated be exposed in each test to allow for statistical evaluation of results.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Laboratory Light Source*—Enclosed carbon arc light sources typically use carbon rods which contain a mixture of metal salts. An electric current is passed between the carbon

rods which burn and give off ultraviolet, visible, and infrared radiation. Use carbon rods recommended by the device manufacturer.

6.1.1 *Filter*—The most commonly used filters are borosilicate glass globes which fit around the carbon burners. Other filters may be used by mutual agreement by the interested parties as long as the filter type is reported in conformance with the report section in Practice **G151**.

6.1.2 The emission spectra of the enclosed carbon arc shows strong emission in the long wavelength ultraviolet region. Emissions in the visible, infrared, and short wavelength ultraviolet below 350 nm generally are weaker than in sunlight (see **Table 1**).

6.1.3 The following factors can affect the spectral power distribution of enclosed carbon arc light sources:

6.1.3.1 Differences in the composition and thickness of filters can have large effects on the amount of short wavelength UV radiation transmitted.

6.1.3.2 Aging (solarization) of filters can result in changes in filter transmission. The aging properties of filters can be influenced by the composition. Aging of filters can result in a significant reduction in the short wavelength UV emission of a burner.

6.1.3.3 Accumulation of dirt or other residue on filters can affect filter transmission.

6.1.3.4 Differences in chemical composition of carbons.

6.1.4 *Spectral Irradiance for Enclosed Carbon with Daylight Filters*—The data in **Table 1** are representative of the spectral irradiance received by a test specimen mounted in the specimen plane.

TABLE 1 Typical Relative Spectral Power Distribution for Enclosed Carbon-Arc with Daylight Filters^{A,B}

Spectral Bandpass Wavelength λ in nm	Typical Percent ^C	Benchmark Solar Radiation Percent ^{D,E,F}
$\lambda < 290$	0.0	
$290 \leq \lambda \leq 320$	0.1	5.8
$320 < \lambda \leq 360$	19.9	40.0
$360 < \lambda \leq 400$	80.1	54.2

^A Data in **Table 1** are the irradiance in the given bandpass expressed as a percentage of the total irradiance from 290 to 400 nm. **Annex A1** states how to determine relative spectral irradiance.

^B The data in **Table 1** is representative and is based on the rectangular integration of the spectral power distributions enclosed carbon arcs with daylight filters. There is not enough data available to establish a meaningful specification.

^C For any individual spectral power distribution, the calculated percentage for the bandpasses in **Table 1** will sum to 100 %. Test results can be expected to differ between exposures using enclosed carbon arc devices in which the spectral power distributions differ by as much as that allowed by the tolerances typical for daylight filters. Contact the manufacturer of the enclosed carbon-arc devices for specific spectral power distribution data for the enclosed carbon-arc and filters used.

^D The benchmark solar radiation data is defined in ASTM G177 and is for atmospheric conditions and altitude chosen to maximize the short wavelength UV fraction of solar UV. While this data is provided for comparison purposes only, it is desirable for a laboratory accelerated light source with daylight filters to provide a spectrum that is a close match to this solar spectrum.

^E Previous versions of this standard used solar radiation data from Table 4 of CIE Publication Number 85. See **Appendix X2** for more information comparing the solar radiation data used in this standard with that for CIE 85 Table 4.

^F For the benchmark solar spectrum, the UV irradiance (290 to 400 nm) is 9.8 % and the visible irradiance (400 to 800 nm) is 90.2 % expressed as a percentage of the total irradiance from 290 to 800 nm. The percentages of UV and visible irradiances on samples exposed in enclosed carbon-arc devices may vary due to the number and reflectance properties of specimens being exposed. This is based on measurements in xenon-arc devices but similar measurements have not been made in enclosed carbon-arc devices.

6.2 *Test Chamber*—The design of the test chamber may vary, but it should be constructed from corrosion resistant material, and in addition to the radiant source, may provide for means of controlling temperature and relative humidity. When required, provision shall be made for the spraying of water on the test specimen or for the formation of condensate on the exposed face of the specimen.

6.2.1 The radiant source(s) shall be located with respect to the specimens such that the irradiance at the specimen face complies with the requirements in Practice **G151**.

6.3 *Instrument Calibration*—To ensure standardization and accuracy, the instruments associated with the exposure apparatus, for example, timers, thermometers, wet bulb sensors, dry bulb sensors, humidity sensors, UV sensors and radiometers, require periodic calibration to ensure repeatability of test results. Whenever possible, calibration should be traceable to national or international standards. Calibration schedule and procedure should be in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

6.4 *Thermometer*—Either insulated or uninsulated black or white panel thermometers may be used. Thermometers shall conform to the descriptions found in Practice **G151**. The type of thermometer used, the method of mounting on specimen holder, and the exposure temperature shall be stated in the test report.

6.4.1 Some specifications may require chamber air temperature control. Positioning and calibration of chamber air temperature sensors shall be in accordance with the descriptions found in Practice **G151**.

NOTE 2—Typically, these devices control by black panel temperature only.

6.4.2 The thermometer shall be mounted on the specimen rack so that its surface is in the relative position and subjected to the same influences as the test specimens.

6.5 *Moisture*—The test specimens may be exposed to moisture in the form of water spray, condensation, or high humidity.

6.5.1 *Water Spray*—The test chamber may be equipped with a means to introduce intermittent water spray onto the test specimens under specified conditions. The spray shall be applied so that the specimens are uniformly wetted. The spray system shall be made from corrosion resistant materials that do not contaminate the water used.

6.5.1.1 *Quality of Water for Sprays*—Spray water must have a conductivity below 5 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$, contain less than 1-ppm solids, and leave no observable stains or deposits on the specimens. Very low levels of silica in spray water can cause significant deposits on the surface of test specimens. Care should be taken to keep silica levels below 0.1 ppm. In addition to distillation, a combination of deionization and reverse osmosis can effectively produce water of the required quality. The pH of the water used should be reported. See Practice **G151** for detailed water quality instructions.

6.5.1.2 A spray system designed to cool the specimen by spraying the back surface of the specimen or specimen substrate may be required when the exposure program specifies periods of condensation.

6.5.2 *Relative Humidity*—The test chamber may be equipped with a means to measure and control the relative humidity. Such instruments shall be shielded from the light source.

6.6 *Specimen Holders*—Holders for test specimens shall be made from corrosion resistant materials that will not affect the test results. Corrosion resistant alloys of aluminum or stainless steel have been found acceptable. Brass, steel, or copper shall not be used in the vicinity of the test specimens.

6.6.1 The specimen holders typically, but not necessarily, are mounted on a revolving cylindrical rack, which is rotated around the light source at a speed dependent on the type of equipment, and which is centered both horizontally and vertically with respect to the exposure area in the specimen holders.

6.6.2 Specimen holders may be in the form of an open frame, leaving the back of the specimen exposed, or they may provide the specimen with a solid backing. Any backing used may affect test results and shall be agreed upon in advance between the interested parties.

6.7 *Apparatus to Assess Changes in Properties*—Use the apparatus required by the ASTM or other standard that describes determination of the property or properties being monitored.

7. Test Specimen

7.1 Refer to Practice **G151**.

8. Test Conditions

8.1 Any exposure conditions may be used, as long as the exact conditions are detailed in the report. **Appendix X1** lists some representative exposure conditions. These are not necessarily preferred and no recommendation is implied. These conditions are provided for reference only.

9. Procedure

9.1 Identify each test specimen by suitable indelible marking, but not on areas to be used in testing.

9.2 Determine which property of the test specimens will be evaluated. Prior to exposing the specimens, quantify the appropriate properties in accordance with recognized ASTM or international standards. If required, for example, destructive testing, use unexposed file specimens to quantify the property. See **ISO 4582** for detailed guidance.

9.3 *Mounting of Test Specimens*. Attach the specimens to the specimen holders in the equipment in such a manner that the specimens are not subject to any applied stress. To assure uniform exposure conditions, fill all of the spaces, using blank panels of corrosion resistant material if necessary.

NOTE 3—Evaluation of color and appearance changes of exposed materials must be made based on comparisons to unexposed specimens of the same material, which have been stored in the dark. Masking or shielding the face of test specimens with an opaque cover for the purpose of showing the effects of exposure on one panel is not recommended. Misleading results may be obtained by this method, since the masked portion of the specimen is still exposed to temperature and humidity that in many cases will affect results.

9.4 *Exposure to Test Conditions*—Program the selected test conditions to operate continuously throughout the required number of repetitive cycles. Maintain these conditions

throughout the exposure. Interruptions to service the apparatus and to inspect specimens shall be minimized.

9.5 Specimen Repositioning—Periodic repositioning of the specimens during exposure is not necessary if the irradiance at the positions farthest from the center of the specimen area is at least 90 % of that measured at the center of the exposure area. Irradiance uniformity shall be determined in accordance with Practice **G151**.

9.5.1 If irradiance at positions farthest from the center of the exposure area is between 70 and 90 % of that measured at the center, one of the following three techniques shall be used for specimen placement.

9.5.1.1 Periodically reposition specimens during the exposure period to ensure that each receives an equal amount of radiant exposure. The repositioning schedule shall be agreed upon by all interested parties.

9.5.1.2 Place specimens only in the exposure area where the irradiance is at least 90 % of the maximum irradiance.

9.5.1.3 To compensate for test variability, randomly position replicate specimens within the exposure area which meets the irradiance uniformity requirements as defined in **9.5.1**.

9.5.2 When the exposure interval does not exceed 24 h, each specimen should be located equidistant from the horizontal axis of the arc. For exposure periods not exceeding 100 h, daily repositioning of the specimens is recommended. Other methods of achieving uniform total radiant exposure may be used if mutually agreed upon by interested parties.

9.6 Inspection—If it is necessary to remove a test specimen for periodic inspection, take care not to handle or disturb the test surface. After inspection, the test specimen shall be returned to the test chamber with its test surface in the same orientation as previously tested.

9.7 Apparatus Maintenance—The test apparatus requires periodic maintenance to maintain uniform exposure conditions. Perform required maintenance and calibration in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

9.8 Expose the test specimens for the specified period of exposure. See Practice **G151** for further guidance.

9.9 At the end of the exposure, quantify the appropriate properties in accordance with recognized ASTM or international standards and report the results in conformance with Practice **G151**.

NOTE 4—Periods of exposure and evaluation of test results are addressed in Practice **G151**.

10. Test Report

10.1 The test report shall conform to Practice **G151**.

11. Precision and Bias

11.1 Precision:

11.1.1 The repeatability and reproducibility of results obtained in exposures conducted according to this practice will vary with the materials being tested, the material property

being measured, and the specific test conditions and cycles that are used. In round-robin studies conducted by ASTM Subcommittee G03.03, the 60° gloss values of replicate PVC tape specimens exposed in different laboratories using identical test devices and exposure cycles showed significant variability.⁶ The variability shown in these round-robin studies restricts the use of absolute specifications, such as requiring a specific property level after a specific exposure period.

11.1.2 If a standard or specification for general use requires a definite property level after a specific time or radiant exposure in an exposure test conducted according to this practice, the specified property level shall be based on results obtained in a round-robin that takes into consideration the variability due to the exposure and the test method used to measure the property of interest. The round-robin shall be conducted according to Practices **D3980** or **E691** and shall include a statistically representative sample of all laboratories or organizations who normally would conduct the exposure and property measurement.

11.1.3 If a specification for use between two or three parties requires a definite property level after a specific time or radiant exposure in an exposure test conducted according to this practice, the specified property level shall be based on statistical analysis of results from at least two separate, independent exposures in each laboratory. The design of the experiment used to determine the specification shall take into consideration the variability due to the exposure and the test method used to measure the property of interest.

11.1.4 The round-robin studies cited in **11.1.1** demonstrate that the gloss values for a series of materials could be ranked with a high level of reproducibility between laboratories. When reproducibility in results from an exposure test conducted according to this practice have not been established through round-robin testing, performance requirements for materials shall be specified in terms of comparison (ranked) to a control material. The control specimens shall be exposed simultaneously with the test specimen(s) in the same device. The specific control material used shall be agreed upon by the concerned parties. Expose replicates of the test specimen and the control specimen so that statistically significant performance differences can be determined.

11.2 *Bias*—Bias cannot be determined because no acceptable standard weathering reference materials are available.

12. Keywords

12.1 accelerated; accelerated weathering; carbon arc; durability; enclosed carbon arc; exposure; laboratory weathering; light; lightfastness; nonmetallic materials; temperature; ultraviolet; weathering

⁶ Fischer, R. M., "Results of Round-Robin Studies of Light- and Water-Exposure Standard Practices," *Symposium on Accelerated and Outdoor Durability Testing of Organic Materials*, ASTM STP 1202, Warren Ketola and Douglas Grossman, Editors, ASTM 1993.