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Standard Test Method for Particle Size Distribution of Catalytic Material by Laser Light Scattering¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D4464; 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 covers the determination of the particle size distribution of catalyst and catalyst carrier particles and is one of several found valuable for the measurement of particle size. The range of particle sizes investigated was 30 to 300 μm equivalent spherical diameter. The technique is capable of measuring particles above and below this range. The angle and intensity of laser light scattered by the particles are selectively measured to permit calculation of a volume distribution using light-scattering techniques.

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. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D3766 Terminology Relating to Catalysts and Catalysis

E105 Practice for Probability Sampling Of Materials

E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods

E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics

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

E1617 Practice for Reporting Particle Size Characterization Data

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions and recommended nomenclature pertaining to catalysts and to materials used in their manufacture can be found in Terminology D3766.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D32 on Catalysts and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D32.02 on Physical-Mechanical Properties.

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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.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *background*—extraneous scattering of light by material present in the dispersion fluid other than the particles to be measured. It includes scattering by contamination in the measurement path.

3.2.2 *Fraunhofer Diffraction*—the optical theory that describes the low-angle scattering of light by particles that are large compared to the wavelength of the incident light.

3.2.3 *Mie Scattering*—the complex electromagnetic theory that describes the scattering of light by spherical particles. It is usually applied to particles with diameters that are close to the wavelength of the incident light. The real and imaginary indices of light refraction of the particles are needed.

3.2.4 *multiple scattering*—the re-scattering of light by a particle in the path of light scattered by another particle. This usually occurs in heavy concentrations of a particle dispersion.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A prepared sample of particulate material is dispersed in water or a compatible organic liquid and is circulated through the path of a laser light beam or some other suitable source of light. The particles pass through the light beam and scatter it. Photodetector arrays collect the scattered light which is converted to electrical signals to be analyzed using Fraunhofer Diffraction, or Mie Scattering, or both. Scattering information, typically, is analyzed assuming a spherical geometry for the particles. Calculated particle sizes are, therefore, presented as equivalent spherical diameters.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 It is important to recognize that the results obtained by this test method or any other method for particle size determination utilizing different physical principles may disagree. The results are strongly influenced by physical principles employed by each method of particle size analysis. The results of any particle sizing method should be used only in a relative sense and should not be regarded as absolute when comparing results obtained by other methods.