



Designation: D6721 – 01(Reapproved 2006)

Standard Test Method for Determination of Chlorine in Coal by Oxidative Hydrolysis Microcoulometry¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of total chlorine in coal.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards*:²

D2013 Practice for Preparing Coal Samples for Analysis

D3173 Test Method for Moisture in the Analysis Sample of Coal and Coke

D3180 Practice for Calculating Coal and Coke Analyses from As-Determined to Different Bases

D4621 Guide for Quality Management in an Organization That Samples or Tests Coal and Coke (Withdrawn 2010)³

D5142 Test Methods for Proximate Analysis of the Analysis Sample of Coal and Coke by Instrumental Procedures (Withdrawn 2010)³

E29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications

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

2.2 *Other Standards*

ISO 5725-6:1994 Accuracy of measurement methods and results-Part 6: Use in practice of accuracy values⁴

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 A 5.00 to 40.00 mg sample of coal is combusted with tungsten accelerator in a humidified oxygen gas flow, at 900°C. Halogens are oxidized and converted to hydrogenated halides, which are flushed into a titration cell where they accumulate.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D05 on Coal and Coke and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D05.29 on Major Elements in Ash and Trace Elements of Coal.

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

⁴ Available from International Organization for Standardization 1 Rue de Varembe, Case Postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland

Chlorine is converted to hydrochloric acid. Once the chloride is captured in the electrolyte of the titration cell, it can be quantitatively determined by microcoulometry, where chloride ions react with silver ions present in the electrolyte. The silver ion thus consumed is coulometrically replaced and the total electrical work needed to replace it is proportional to the chloride in the test sample.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method permits measurements of the chlorine content of coals.

5. Interferences

5.1 Bromides and iodides, if present are calculated as chloride. However, fluorides are not detected by this test method.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Hydrolysis Furnace*, which can maintain a minimum temperature of 900°C.

6.2 *Hydrolysis Tube*, made of quartz and constructed such that when the sample is combusted in the presence of tungsten accelerator and humidified oxygen, the byproducts of combustion are swept into a humidified hydrolysis zone. The inlet end shall allow for the introduction and advancement of the sample boat into the heated zone. The inlet shall have a side arm for the introduction of the humidified oxygen gas. The hydrolysis tube must be of ample volume, and have a heated zone with quartz wool so that complete hydrolysis of the halogens is ensured.

6.3 *Titration Cell*, containing a reference electrode, a working electrode, and a silver sensor electrode, a magnetic stirrer as well as an inlet from the hydrolysis tube.

6.4 *Microcoulometer*, capable of measuring the potential of the sensing-reference electrode pair, comparing this potential with a bias potential, and amplifying the difference to the working electrode pair to generate current. The microcoulometer output voltage should be proportional to the generating current.

6.5 *Controller*, with connections for the reference, working, and sensor electrodes, for setting operating parameters and for data integration.

6.6 *Hydration Tube*, containing water, positioned before the gas inlet on the side arm of the combustion tube, through which oxygen gas bubbles to provide a hydrated gas flow.

6.7 *Dehydration Tube*, positioned at the end of the hydrolysis tube so that effluent gases are bubbled through a 95 % sulfuric acid solution. Water vapor is subsequently trapped while other gases flow into the titration cell.

6.8 *Gas-Tight Sampling Syringe*, having a 50 μL capacity, capable of accurately delivering 10 to 40 μL of standard solution.

6.9 *Sample Boats*, made of quartz, ceramic or platinum.

6.10 *Balance*, analytical, with a sensitivity to 0.00001 g.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *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 specification of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available. Other grades may be used, provided that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water conforming to Specification D1193, Type II or Type III.

7.3 *Acetic Acid* (*sp gr. 1.05*), glacial acetic acid (CH_3COOH).

7.4 *Argon or Helium*, carrier gas, minimum 99.9 % purity.

7.5 *Sodium Acetate*, anhydrous, (NaCH_3CO_2), fine granular.

7.6 *Cell Electrolyte Solution*—Dissolve 1.35 g sodium acetate (NaCH_3CO_2) in 100 mL water. Add to 850 mL of acetic acid (CH_3COOH) and dilute to 1000 mL with water.

7.7 *Tungsten Powder*, combustion accelerator, (-100 mesh) minimum 99.9 % purity.

7.8 *Oxygen*, combustion gas minimum 99.6 % purity.

7.9 *Gas Regulators*—Use two-stage gas regulators for the carrier and combustion gases.

7.10 *Potassium Nitrate* (KNO_3), fine granular.

7.11 *Potassium Chloride* (KCl), fine granular.

7.12 *Working Electrode Solution* (10 % KNO_3), Dissolve 50 g potassium nitrate (KNO_3) in 500 mL of water.

7.13 *Inner Chamber Reference Electrode Solution* (1 M KCl)—Dissolve 7.46 g potassium chloride (KCl) in 100 mL of water.

7.14 *Outer Chamber Reference Electrode Solution* (1 M KNO_3)—Dissolve 10.1 g potassium nitrate (KNO_3) in 100 mL of water.

7.15 *Sodium Chloride* (NaCl), fine granular.

7.16 *Sulfuric Acid* (*sp gr. 1.84*), (H_2SO_4), concentrated.

7.17 *2,4,6-Trichlorophenol* (TCP) ($\text{C}_6\text{H}_3\text{OCl}_3$), fine granular.

7.18 *Methanol* (MeOH) (CH_3OH), 99.9 % minimum purity.

7.19 *Working Chlorine Standard* ($1\mu\text{g}/\mu\text{L}$)—Weigh accurately 0.1856 g of 2,4,6-Trichlorophenol to the nearest 0.1 mg. Transfer to a 100 mL volumetric flask. Dilute to the mark with methanol.

$$WS_{Cl} = (\text{g of TCP} \times 0.5386 \times 1000/100) \quad (1)$$

where:

TCP = 2,4,6-Trichlorophenol, and

WS_{Cl} = the working chlorine standard concentration.

8. Hazards

8.1 Consult the current version of OSHA regulations, supplier's Material Safety Data Sheets, and local regulations for all materials used in this test method.

9. Sampling

9.1 Prepare the analysis sample in accordance with Method **D2013** to pass a 250- μm (60 mesh) sieve.

9.2 Analyze a separate portion of the analysis sample for moisture content in accordance with Test Method **D3173** or Test Methods **D5142**.

10. Preparation of Apparatus

10.1 Fill the hydration tower with water and connect it to the quartz furnace tube inlet.

10.2 Set the furnace temperature to 900°C.

10.3 Adjust the gas flows according to manufacturers specification, typically 200 mL/min for oxygen and 100 mL/min for the carrier gas.

10.4 Prepare the sulfuric acid dehydration scrubber, and connect it to the outlet of the quartz furnace combustion tube.

10.5 Clean and prepare the electrode system for the titration cell per instrument specifications.

10.6 Fill the titration cell with fresh electrolyte solution to just above the top fill mark.

10.7 Place the titration cell on the magnetic stirring device and connect the electrode system to the controller. Do not connect the gas flow from the dehydration scrubber to the titration cell.

10.8 Initiate a conditioning run of the titration cell to establish titration gain and endpoint values.

10.9 Once the titration cell is properly conditioned, connect the gas flow from the dehydration scrubber to the titration cell.

10.10 Let the titration cell stabilize to a background potential of less than 1.0 mv.

10.11 To ensure quality data, care must be taken to avoid contaminating the sample boats during the course of the analytical procedure. Do not touch the boats with fingers. Handle and transfer the boats using tongs and store said boats in a sealed container such as a glass desiccator, containing no desiccant. Prepare the combustion boats by heating them in the combustion tube with oxygen flow for a minimum of five min.