



Standard Test Method for Vapor Pressure of Petroleum Products (Mini Method)¹

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This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the Department of Defense.

^{e1} NOTE—Replaced Figs. 1 and 2 images editorially in July 2006.

1. Scope*

1.1 This test method covers the use of automated vapor pressure instruments to determine the total vapor pressure exerted in vacuum by air-containing, volatile, liquid petroleum products. This test method is suitable for testing samples with boiling points above 0°C (32°F) that exert a vapor pressure between 7 and 130 kPa (1.0 and 18.6 psi) at 37.8°C (100°F) at a vapor-to-liquid ratio of 4:1. Measurements are made on liquid sample sizes in the range from 1 to 10 mL. No account is made for dissolved water in the sample.

NOTE 1—Samples can also be tested at other vapor-to-liquid ratios, temperatures, and pressures, but the precision and bias statements need not apply.

NOTE 2—The interlaboratory studies conducted in 1988, 1991, and 2003 to determine the precision statements in Test Method D 5191 did not include any crude oil in the sample sets. Test Method D 6377, as well as IP 481, have been shown to be suitable for vapor pressure measurements of crude oils.

1.1.1 Some gasoline-oxygenate blends may show a haze when cooled to 0 to 1°C. If a haze is observed in 8.5, it shall be indicated in the reporting of results. The precision and bias statements for hazy samples have not been determined (see Note 14).

1.2 This test method is suitable for calculation of the dry vapor pressure equivalent (DVPE) of gasoline and gasoline-oxygenate blends by means of a correlation equation (see Eq 1 in 14.2). The calculated DVPE very closely approximates the dry vapor pressure that would be obtained on the same material when tested by Test Method D 4953.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are regarded as standard. The inch-pound units given in parentheses are provided for information only.

1.4 *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. For specific safety warning statements, see 7.2 through 7.8.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D 2892 Test Method for Distillation of Crude Petroleum (15-Theoretical Plate Column)

D 4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products

D 4953 Test Method for Vapor Pressure of Gasoline and Gasoline-Oxygenate Blends (Dry Method)

D 6299 Practice for Applying Statistical Quality Assurance Techniques to Evaluate Analytical Measurement System Performance

D 6377 Test Method for Determination of Vapor Pressure of Crude Oil: VPCR_x (Expansion Method)

D 6378 Test Method for Determination of Vapor Pressure (VP_x) of Petroleum Products, Hydrocarbons, and Hydrocarbon-Oxygenate Mixtures (Triple Expansion Method)

2.2 *IP Standard:*

IP 481 Test Method for Determination of the Air Saturated Vapour Pressure (ASVP) of Crude Oil³

2.3 *EPA Standard:*

40 CFR Part 80 Appendix E, Method 3 Test for Determining Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) of Gasoline and Gasoline Oxygenate Blends—Evacuated Chamber Method⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D02 on Petroleum Products and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D02.08 on Volatility.

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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 Available from the Energy Institute, 61 New Cavendish St., London, WIG 7AR, U.K.

⁴ Available from the EPA Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/docs/epacfr40/chapt-1-info/>

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard.

3.1.1 *absolute vapor pressure*—the pressure of the air-free sample. It is calculated from the total vapor pressure of the sample by subtracting out the partial pressure of the dissolved air.

3.1.2 *dry vapor pressure equivalent (DVPE)*—a value calculated by a correlation equation (see 14.2) from the total vapor pressure.

3.1.2.1 *Discussion*—The DVPE is expected to be equivalent to the value obtained on the sample by Test Method D 4953, Procedure A.

3.1.3 *total vapor pressure (P_{tot})*—the observed pressure measured in the experiment that is the sum of the partial pressure of the sample and the partial pressure of the dissolved air.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A known volume of chilled, air-saturated sample is introduced into a thermostatically controlled, evacuated test chamber, or a test chamber with a moveable piston that expands the volume after sample introduction, the internal volume of which is five times that of the total test specimen introduced into the chamber. After introduction into the test chamber, the test specimen is allowed to reach thermal equilibrium at the test temperature, 37.8°C (100°F). The resulting rise in pressure in the chamber is measured using a pressure transducer sensor and indicator. Only total pressure measurements (sum of the partial pressure of the sample and the partial pressure of the dissolved air) are used in this test method, although some instruments can measure the absolute pressure of the sample as well.

4.2 The measured total vapor pressure is converted to a dry vapor pressure equivalent (DVPE) by use of a correlation equation (see Eq 1 in 14.2).

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Vapor pressure is a very important physical property of volatile liquids.

5.2 The vapor pressure of gasoline and gasoline-oxygenate blends is regulated by various government agencies.

5.3 Specifications for volatile petroleum products generally include vapor pressure limits to ensure products of suitable volatility performance.

5.4 This test method is more precise than Test Method D 4953, uses a small sample size (1 to 10 mL), and requires about 7 min to complete the test.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Vapor Pressure Apparatus*—The type of apparatus suitable for use in this test method employs a small volume test chamber incorporating a transducer for pressure measurements and associated equipment for thermostatically controlling the chamber temperature and for evacuating the test chamber prior to sample introduction or expanding the volume after sample introduction by a moveable piston.

6.1.1 The test chamber shall be designed to contain between 5 and 50 mL of liquid and vapor and be capable of maintaining a vapor-to-liquid ratio between 3.95 to 1.00 and 4.05 to 1.00.

NOTE 3—The test chamber employed by the instruments used in

generating the precision and bias statements were constructed of stainless steel, aluminum, or brass.

NOTE 4—Test chambers exceeding a 15 mL capacity can be used, but the precision and bias statements (see Section 16) are not known to apply.

6.1.2 The pressure transducer shall have a minimum operational range from 0 to 177 kPa (0 to 25.7 psi) with a minimum resolution of 0.1 kPa (0.01 psi) and a minimum accuracy of ± 0.8 kPa (± 0.12 psi). The pressure measurement system shall include associated electronics and readout devices to display the resulting pressure reading.

6.1.3 A thermostatically controlled heater shall be used to maintain the test chamber at $37.8 \pm 0.1^\circ\text{C}$ ($100 \pm 0.2^\circ\text{F}$) for the duration of the vapor pressure measurement.

6.1.4 A platinum resistance thermometer shall be used for measuring the temperature of the test chamber with a resolution of 0.1°C (0.2°F) and an accuracy of 0.1°C (0.2°F).

6.1.5 The vapor pressure apparatus shall have provisions for introduction of the test specimen into an evacuated test chamber, or into a test chamber by a moveable piston, and for the cleaning or purging of the chamber following or preceding the test.

6.2 *Vacuum Pump*, capable of reducing the pressure in the test chamber to less than 0.01 kPa (0.001 psi) absolute.

6.3 *Syringe*, (optional, depending on sample introduction mechanism employed with each instrument) gas-tight, 1 to 20 mL capacity with a $\pm 1\%$ or better accuracy and a $\pm 1\%$ or better precision. If a syringe is used to measure the sample volume, the capacity of the syringe should not exceed two times the volume of the test specimen being dispensed.

6.4 *Iced Water Bath, Refrigerator, or Air Bath*, for chilling the samples and syringe to temperatures between 0 to 1°C (32 to 34°F).

6.5 *Pressure Measuring Device*, capable of measuring local station pressure with an accuracy of 0.20 kPa (0.03 psi), or better, at the same elevation relative to sea level as the apparatus in the laboratory.

6.5.1 When a mercury barometer is not used as the pressure measuring device, the calibration of the pressure measuring device employed shall be periodically checked (with traceability to a nationally recognized standard) to ensure that the device remains within the required accuracy specified in 6.5.

6.6 *McLeod Vacuum Gage or Calibrated Electronic Vacuum Measuring Device for Calibration*, to cover at least the range from 0.01 to 0.67 kPa (0.1 to 5 mm Hg). The calibration of the electronic vacuum measuring device shall be regularly verified in accordance with the annex section on Vacuum Sensors (A6.3) of Test Method D 2892.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Use chemicals of at least 99 % purity for verification of instrument performance (see Section 11). Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society where such

TABLE 1 Accepted Reference Value (ARV) and Acceptable Testing Range for Reference Fluids⁶

Reference Fluid	ARV [P_{tot}] \pm Uncertainty, (kPa)	Recommended Instrument Manufacturer Tolerance, (kPa)	Acceptable Testing Range for Reference Fuel [P_{tot}], (kPa)
44.0/56.0 (m/m) Blend of Pentane/Toluene	70.0 \pm 0.2	\pm 1.0	70.0 \pm 1.2 (68.8 to 71.2)
Pentane	112.8 \pm 0.2	\pm 1.0	112.8 \pm 1.2 (111.6 to 114.0)
2,2 Dimethylbutane	74.1 \pm 0.2	\pm 1.0	74.1 \pm 1.2 (72.9 to 75.3)
2,3 Dimethylbutane	57.1 \pm 0.2	\pm 1.0	57.1 \pm 1.2 (55.9 to 58.3)

Reference Fluid	ARV [P_{tot}] \pm Uncertainty, (psi)	Recommended Instrument Manufacturer Tolerance, (psi)	Acceptable Testing Range for Reference Fuel [P_{tot}], (psi)
44.0/56.0 (m/m) Blend of Pentane/Toluene	10.15 \pm 0.03	\pm 0.14	10.15 \pm 0.17 (9.98 to 10.32)
Pentane	16.36 \pm 0.03	\pm 0.14	16.36 \pm 0.17 (16.19 to 16.53)
2,2 Dimethylbutane	10.75 \pm 0.03	\pm 0.14	10.75 \pm 0.17 (10.58 to 10.92)
2,3 Dimethylbutane	8.28 \pm 0.03	\pm 0.14	8.28 \pm 0.17 (8.11 to 8.45)

specifications are available.⁵ Lower purities can be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficient purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.1.1 The chemicals in sections 7.3, 7.4, 7.7, and 7.8 (blended by mass with pentane) are suggested for verification of instrument performance (see Section 11), based on the reference fuels analyzed in the 2003 interlaboratory study (ILS)⁶ (see Table 1). Such reference fuels are not to be used for instrument calibration. Table 1 identifies the accepted reference value (ARV) and uncertainty limits, as well as the acceptable testing range for each of the reference fuels listed.

NOTE 5—Verification fluids reported by 28 of the 29 D 5191 data set participants in the 2003 ILS⁶ included the following (with number of data sets identified in parenthesis): 2,2-dimethylbutane (18), cyclopentane (5), pentane (2), 2,3-dimethylbutane (1), 3-methylpentane (1), and methanol (1).

7.2 *Cyclopentane*, (**Warning**—Cyclopentane is flammable and a health hazard).

7.3 *2,2-Dimethylbutane*, (**Warning**—2,2-dimethylbutane is flammable and a health hazard).

7.4 *2,3-Dimethylbutane*, (**Warning**—2,3-dimethylbutane is flammable and a health hazard).

7.5 *Methanol*, (**Warning**—Methanol is flammable and a health hazard).

7.6 *2-Methylpentane*, (**Warning**—2-methylpentane is flammable and a health hazard).

7.7 *Pentane*, (**Warning**—Pentane is flammable and a health hazard).

7.8 *Toluene*, (**Warning**—Toluene is flammable and a health hazard).

8. Sampling

8.1 General Requirements:

8.1.1 The extreme sensitivity of vapor pressure measurements to losses through evaporation and the resulting changes

in composition is such as to require the utmost precaution and the most meticulous care in the drawing and handling of samples.

8.1.2 Obtain a sample and test specimen in accordance with Practice D 4057, except do not use the “Sampling by Water Displacement” section for fuels containing oxygenates. Use a 1 L (1 qt) sized container filled between 70 and 80 % with sample.

NOTE 6—The current precision statements were derived from the 2003 ILS⁶ using samples in 1 L (1 qt) clear glass containers. However, samples in containers of other sizes, as prescribed in Practice D 4057, may be used with the same ullage requirement if it is recognized that the precision can be affected. The 2003 ILS⁶ evaluated the precision of samples taken from 250-mL and 1 L clear glass containers. The differences in results were found to be statistically significant. In general, numerically better repeatability and reproducibility values were determined at lower vapor pressure levels for samples in 1 L containers.

8.1.3 In the case of referee testing, the 1 L (1 qt) sample container is mandatory.

8.1.4 Perform the vapor pressure determination on the first test specimen withdrawn from a sample container. Do not use the remaining sample in the container for a second vapor pressure determination. If a second determination is necessary, obtain a new sample.

NOTE 7—The effect of taking more than one test specimen from the same sample container was evaluated as part of the 2003 ILS.⁶ A precision effect was observed between the first and second replicates taken from both the 1 L and 250 mL containers evaluated. The current precision statements were derived from the 2003 ILS⁶ using the first test specimen withdrawn from the 1 L clear glass containers.

8.1.5 Protect samples from excessive temperatures prior to testing. This can be accomplished by storage in an appropriate ice bath or refrigerator.

8.1.6 Do not test samples stored in leaky containers. Discard and obtain a new sample if leaks are detected.

8.2 *Sampling Handling Temperature*—Place the sample container and contents in an ice bath or refrigerator to the 0 to 1°C (32 to 34°F) range prior to opening the sample container. Allow sufficient time to reach this temperature.

NOTE 8—One way to verify the sample temperature is by direct measurement of the temperature of a similar liquid in a similar container placed in the cooling bath or refrigerator at the same time as the sample. Alternatively, temperature-monitoring studies conducted by laboratories have determined the minimum amount of time necessary to achieve the

⁵ *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 *Analar 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.

⁶ Research report is pending.

required temperature requirements stated in 8.2, based upon typical sample receipt temperatures and cooling capacities of the instrumentation employed by the laboratory on samples included in such studies. The results of such studies have subsequently been applied to additional samples submitted for analysis. Typical minimum time durations reported by laboratories have ranged between approximately 30 and 45 min, however, laboratories choosing this option need to determine the minimum cooling time required for their specific operation by conducting their own temperature-monitoring study.

8.3 *Verification of Sample Container Filling*—With the sample at a temperature of 0 to 1°C, take the container from the cooling bath or refrigerator, and wipe dry with absorbent material. If the container is not transparent, unseal it and using a suitable gage, confirm that the sample volume equals 70 to 80 % of the container capacity (see Note 9). If the sample is contained in a transparent glass container, verify that the container is 70 to 80 % full by suitable means (see Note 9).

8.3.1 Discard the sample if the container is filled to less than 70 %, by volume, of the container capacity.

8.3.2 If the container is more than 80 % by volume full, pour out enough sample to bring the container contents within the 70 to 80 % by volume range. Do not return any sample to the container once it has been withdrawn.

8.3.3 Reseal the container if necessary, and return the sample container to the cooling bath or refrigerator.

NOTE 9—For non-transparent containers, one way to confirm that the sample volume equals 70 to 80 % of the container capacity is to use a dipstick that has been pre-marked to indicate the 70 and 80 % container capacities. The dipstick should be of such material that it shows wetting after being immersed and withdrawn from the sample. To confirm the sample volume, insert the dipstick into the sample container so that it touches the bottom of the container at a perpendicular angle, before removing the dipstick. For transparent containers, using a marked ruler or by comparing the sample container to a like container which has the 70 and 80 % levels clearly marked, has been found suitable.

8.4 *Air Saturation of the Sample in the Sample Container:*

8.4.1 *Transparent Containers Only*—Since 8.3 does not require that the sample container be opened to verify the sample capacity, it is necessary to unseal the cap momentarily before resealing it, so that samples in transparent containers are treated the same as samples in non-transparent containers.

8.4.2 With the sample again at a temperature of 0 to 1°C, take the container from the cooling bath or refrigerator, wipe it dry with an absorbent material, remove the cap momentarily, taking care that no water enters, reseal and shake vigorously. Return it to the cooling bath or refrigerator for a minimum of 2 min.

8.4.3 Repeat 8.4.2 twice more. Return the sample to the cooling bath or refrigerator until the beginning of the procedure.

8.5 *Verification of Single Phase Samples*—After drawing a test specimen and introducing it into the instrument for analysis, check the remaining sample for phase separation. If the sample is contained in a transparent container, this observation can be made prior to sample transfer. If the sample is contained in a non-transparent container, mix the sample thoroughly and immediately pour a portion of the remaining sample into a clear glass container and observe for evidence of phase separation. A hazy appearance is to be carefully distinguished from separation into two distinct phases. The hazy

appearance shall not be considered grounds for rejection of the fuel. If a second phase is observed, discard the test and the sample. Hazy samples may be analyzed (see Section 15).

9. Preparation of Apparatus

9.1 Prepare the instrument for operation in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

9.2 If a vacuum pump is used for evacuation, prior to sample introduction, visually determine from the instrument display that the test chamber pressure is stable and does not exceed 0.1 kPa (0.01 psi). When the pressure is not stable or exceeds this value, check that the chamber is clean of volatile materials remaining in the chamber from a previous sample or check the calibration of the transducer.

9.3 If a syringe is used for introduction of the sample specimen, chill it to between 0 and 4.5°C (32 and 40°F) in a refrigerator or ice bath before drawing in the sample. Avoid water contamination of the syringe reservoir by sealing the outlet of the syringe during the cooling process.

10. Calibration

10.1 *Pressure Transducer:*

10.1.1 Perform a calibration check of the transducer at least once every six months, or sooner, as indicated from the verification of instrument performance (see Section 11) and quality control checks (see Section 12). The calibration of the transducer is checked using two reference points, zero pressure (<0.1 kPa) and the ambient barometric pressure.

10.1.2 Connect a McLeod gage or a calibrated electronic vacuum measuring device to the vacuum source in line with the test chamber (Note 10). Apply vacuum to the test chamber. When the vacuum measuring device registers a pressure less than 0.1 kPa (0.8 mm Hg), adjust the indicator to zero or to the actual reading on the vacuum measuring device as dictated by the instrument design or manufacturer's instructions.

NOTE 10—Refer to the annex section on Vacuum Sensors (A6.3) of Test Method D 2892 for further details concerning the calibration of electronic vacuum measuring devices and proper maintenance of McLeod gages.

10.1.3 Open the test chamber of the apparatus to atmosphere and observe the corresponding pressure value of the transducer. Ensure that the apparatus is set to display the total pressure and not a calculated or corrected value. Compare this pressure value against the value obtained from the pressure measuring device, as the pressure reference standard. If the pressure units (for example, kPa, mm Hg, mbar, etc.) differ between the pressure measuring device employed and the vapor pressure apparatus display, use the appropriate conversion factor to convert pressure values to the same units, so that the pressure values can be compared directly. The pressure measuring device shall measure the local station pressure at the same elevation as the apparatus in the laboratory, at the time of pressure comparison. (**Warning**—Many aneroid barometers, such as those used at weather stations and airports, are pre-corrected to give sea level readings; these must not be used for calibration of the apparatus.)

10.1.3.1 For mercury barometers used as the pressure measuring device, the barometric pressure reading shall be corrected for the change in the density of the mercury column