



Designation: D5567 – 94 (Reapproved 2006)

Standard Test Method for Hydraulic Conductivity Ratio (HCR) Testing of Soil/Geotextile Systems¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D5567; 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 laboratory measurement of the hydraulic conductivity of water-saturated porous materials with a flexible-wall permeameter.

1.2 This test method may be used with undisturbed or compacted soil specimens that have a hydraulic conductivity less than or equal to 5×10^{-2} cm/s.

1.3 The filtration behavior of soils with hydraulic conductivities greater than 5×10^{-2} cm/s may be determined by the gradient ratio test (Test Method D5101).

1.4 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard, although other units are provided for information and clarification purposes.

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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

- D422 Test Method for Particle-Size Analysis of Soils
- D653 Terminology Relating to Soil, Rock, and Contained Fluids
- D698 Test Methods for Laboratory Compaction Characteristics of Soil Using Standard Effort (12 400 ft-lbf/ft³(600 kN-m/m³))
- D854 Test Methods for Specific Gravity of Soil Solids by Water Pycnometer
- D1587 Practice for Thin-Walled Tube Sampling of Soils for Geotechnical Purposes
- D2216 Test Methods for Laboratory Determination of Wa-

- ter (Moisture) Content of Soil and Rock by Mass
- D2487 Practice for Classification of Soils for Engineering Purposes (Unified Soil Classification System)
- D2488 Practice for Description and Identification of Soils (Visual-Manual Procedure)
- D4220 Practices for Preserving and Transporting Soil Samples
- D4318 Test Methods for Liquid Limit, Plastic Limit, and Plasticity Index of Soils
- D4354 Practice for Sampling of Geosynthetics for Testing
- D4439 Terminology for Geosynthetics
- D4491 Test Methods for Water Permeability of Geotextiles by Permittivity
- D4647 Test Method for Identification and Classification of Dispersive Clay Soils by the Pinhole Test
- D4751 Test Method for Determining Apparent Opening Size of a Geotextile
- D5084 Test Methods for Measurement of Hydraulic Conductivity of Saturated Porous Materials Using a Flexible Wall Permeameter
- D5101 Test Method for Measuring the Soil-Geotextile System Clogging Potential by the Gradient Ratio

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 *filter, n*—a layer or combination of layers of previous materials designed and installed in such a manner as to provide drainage, yet prevent the movement of soil particles due to flowing water (Terminology D653).

3.1.1.1 *Discussion*—A *geotextile filter* is the term used for a layer or combination of layers of pervious geosynthetic material(s) that are used in the capacity of a filter as defined above.

3.1.2 *geotextile, n*—any permeable textile material used with foundation, soil, rock, earth, or any other geotechnical engineering related material, as an integral part of a man-made product, structure, or system (Terminology D4439).

3.1.3 *hydraulic conductivity (k), n*—the rate of discharge of water under laminar flow conditions through a unit cross-sectional area of a porous medium under a unit hydraulic gradient and standard temperature conditions (20°C) (Test Method D5084).

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D35 on Geosynthetics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D35.03 on Permeability and Filtration.

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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.

3.1.3.1 *Discussion*—The term *coefficient of permeability* is often used instead of *hydraulic conductivity*, but *hydraulic conductivity* is used exclusively in this test method. A complete discussion of the terminology associated with Darcy's law is given in the literature.³

3.1.4 *permeation, n*—the transmission of a fluid through a porous medium (NEW).

3.1.5 *pore volumes of flow (V_{pq}), n*—the cumulative volume of flow through a test specimen divided by the volume of voids within the specimen (modified from Test Method D5084).

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *hydraulic conductivity ratio (HCR), n*—the ratio of the hydraulic conductivity of the soil/geotextile system, k_{sg} , at any time during the test, to the initial hydraulic conductivity, k_{sg0} , measured at the beginning of the test (NEW).

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 This test method presents a procedure for performing permeability tests of soil/geotextile systems. The technique requires placement of the soil and geotextile in a flexible-wall permeameter.

4.2 The soil/geotextile specimen is saturated using de-aired water and back pressure techniques. The specimen is consolidated at the effective stress anticipated in the proposed application. The sample is then permeated with water. The hydraulic conductivity of the soil/geotextile specimen is measured and plotted as a function of elapsed time and volume of water passing through the sample. The hydraulic conductivity may either increase or decrease during the test, depending on the behavior of the geotextile filter. The test is terminated when a stabilized hydraulic conductivity is obtained, or when the hydraulic conductivity decreases below the minimum value allowed by the drainage design.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method is to be used for measuring the hydraulic conductivity of water-saturated soil/geotextile systems.

5.2 This test method is to be used as a design performance test, or as a comparative tool for evaluating the filtration behavior of soils with geotextiles. This test method is not intended for routine (index-style) testing, since the results will depend on the specific soil and hydraulic conditions that are evaluated. It is not appropriate to use the test results for job specifications or manufacturers' certifications.

5.3 This test method applies to the permeation of porous materials with water. Permeation with other liquids, such as chemical wastes, can be accomplished using procedures similar to those described in this test method. However, this test method is intended to be used only when water is the permeant liquid.

5.4 The mathematical concepts (primarily Darcy's law) used in this test method were originally developed for one-dimensional, laminar flow of water within porous materials, which is often the case with soil and geotextiles. When flow

conditions are laminar and one-dimensional, the hydraulic conductivity is unaffected by hydraulic gradient. However, when flow occurs through some soil/geotextile systems, a change in hydraulic gradient could cause movement of soil particles, thereby changing the structure of the test specimen and hence changing the hydraulic conductivity of the soil/geotextile system. The mathematical expressions given by Darcy's law are still appropriate for application to this situation; however, it is therefore imperative that the hydraulic gradient be controlled carefully in the HCR test to simulate field conditions.

5.5 This test method provides a means of determining hydraulic conductivity at a controlled level of effective stress. Hydraulic conductivity varies with void ratio, which in turn varies with effective stress. The hydraulic conductivity of the test specimen will probably change if the void ratio is changed. It is therefore imperative that the effective stress (that is, the effective confining pressure) be controlled carefully in the HCR test to simulate field conditions.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Triaxial Pressure Control Panel*—The triaxial control panel consists of three independent pressure-regulating systems. These three systems control the pressure of the following: (1) the triaxial chamber, (2) the specimen influent, and (3) the specimen effluent. Each system shall be capable of applying and controlling the pressure to within $\pm 1\%$ of the applied pressure. The influent and effluent pressure systems each consist of a reservoir connected to the permeameter cell and partially filled with fluid (usually water). The upper part of the reservoir is connected to a compressed gas supply. The gas pressure is controlled by a pressure regulator and measured by a pressure gage, electronic pressure transducer, or any other device capable of measuring to the prescribed tolerance. A schematic diagram of the HCR test equipment is shown in Fig. 1.

6.2 *Permeameter Cell*—An apparatus shall be provided in which the specimen and porous end pieces, enclosed by a membrane sealed to the cap and base, are subjected to controlled fluid pressures. It shall consist of a top plate and baseplate separated by a cylinder. The cylinder may be constructed of any material capable of withstanding the applied pressures. It is desirable to use a transparent material or have a cylinder provided with viewing ports so the specimen may be observed. The top plate shall have a vent valve such that air can be forced out of the chamber as it is filled. The baseplate shall have an inlet through which the permeameter cell is filled with the cell fluid. The baseplate shall have ports available for the influent and effluent flow lines to the test specimen. A diagram of the permeameter cell is shown in Fig. 2.

NOTE 1—The permeameter cell may allow for observation of the changes in height of the specimen, either by observation through the cell wall or by monitoring of either a loading piston or an extensometer extending through the top plate of the cell bearing on the top cap and attached to a dial indicator or other measuring device. The piston or extensometer should pass through a bushing and seal incorporated into the top plate and shall be loaded with sufficient force to compensate for cell pressure acting on the piston tip. If deformations are measured, the deformation indicator shall be a dial indicator or cathetometer graduated

³ Olsen and Daniel, "Measurement of Hydraulic Conductivity of Fine-Grained Soils," *ASTM STP 746*, ASTM, Philadelphia, PA, 1981, pp. 18–64.

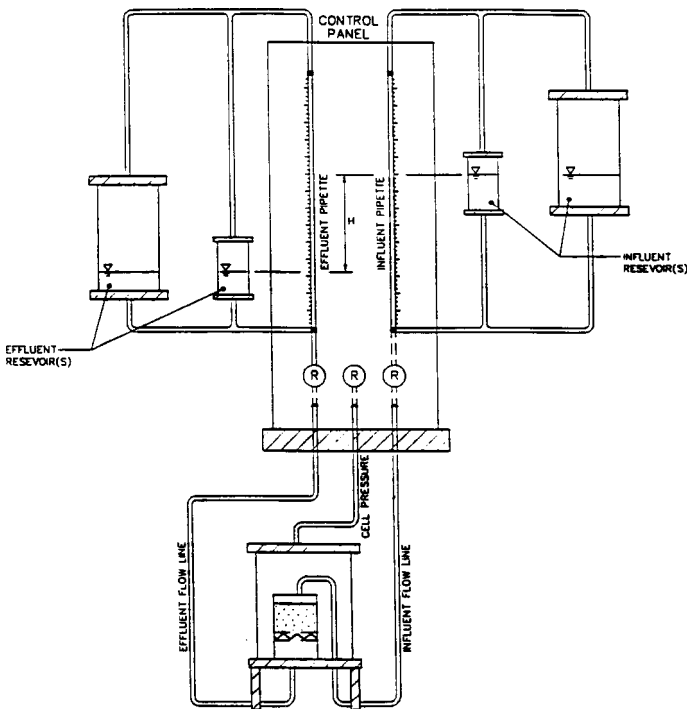


FIG. 1 Schematic Diagram of HCR Test Equipment

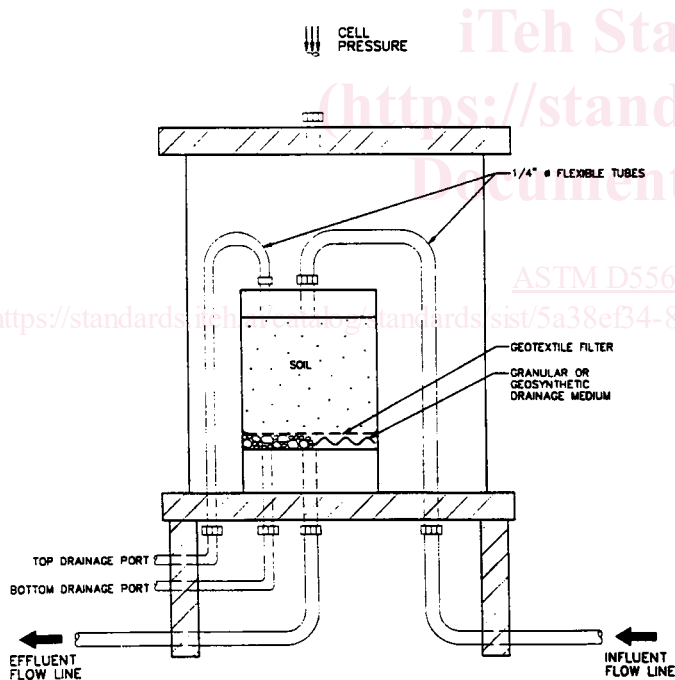


FIG. 2 HCR Permeameter Cell

to 0.3 mm (0.01 in.) or finer and having an adequate travel range. Other measuring devices meeting these requirements are acceptable.

NOTE 2—Four drainage lines leading to the specimen, two each to the base and top cap, are recommended in order to facilitate gas removal and thus saturation of the hydraulic system. These lines may be used to flush air bubbles from the lines without causing permeation through the specimen. The drainage lines shall have controlled no-volume-change valves, such as ball valves, and shall be designed to minimize dead space in the lines.

6.3 *Influent and Effluent Reservoirs*—Reservoirs shall be provided to dispense and collect the permeant through the specimen. These reservoirs may vary in size (diameter and height), depending on the anticipated hydraulic conductivity of the specimen and the gradient at which the test is conducted. In general, large reservoirs are necessary for fast flow rates and small reservoirs are necessary for slow flow rates. The most versatile HCR panels have two or three sets of interchangeable reservoirs, with diameters ranging from 2 to 15 cm (1 to 6 in.). For materials with anticipated hydraulic conductivity values greater than 10^3 cm/s, 6-mm (0.25-in.) or larger diameter lines should be used for all flow lines to and from the reservoirs, and through the permeameter cell to the top and bottom of the specimen. The reservoirs are shown on the diagram in Fig. 1, and recommended sizes for the reservoirs are provided in 8.4.2.

6.4 *Specimen Cap and Base*—An impermeable rigid cap and base shall be used to prevent drainage of the specimen. The specimen cap and base shall be constructed of a noncorrosive impermeable material, and each shall have a circular plane surface of contact with the specimen and a circular cross section. The weight of the specimen cap shall produce an axial stress on the specimen below 1 kN/m^2 (0.15 psi). The diameter of the cap and base shall be equal to the initial diameter of the specimen. The specimen base shall be coupled to the base of the permeameter cell so as to prevent lateral motion or tilting. The cylindrical surface of the specimen base and cap that contacts the membrane to form a seal shall be smooth and free of scratches so as to minimize the potential for leaks. The specimen cap and base are shown in Fig. 2.

6.5 *Rubber Membranes*—The rubber membrane used to encase the specimen shall provide reliable protection from leakage. Membranes shall be inspected carefully prior to use, and the membrane shall be discarded if any flaws or pinholes are evident. In order to offer minimum restraint to the specimen, the unstretched membrane diameter shall be approximately 95 % of that of the specimen. The membrane shall be sealed to the specimen base and cap by any method that will produce a positive seal, preferably with O-rings or a combination of O-rings and rubber bands.

6.6 *Sample Extruder*—The sample extruder shall be capable of extruding the soil core from the sampling tube in the same direction of travel in which the sample entered the tube and with minimum disturbance of the sample. Care should be taken to avoid bending stresses on the soil core due to gravity if the core is not extruded vertically. Conditions at the time of sample removal may dictate the removal procedure, but the principal concern is to keep the degree of disturbance minimal.

6.7 *Equipment for Compacting a Specimen*—Equipment (including compactor and mold) suitable for the method of compaction specified by the requester shall be used.

6.8 *Specimen Size Measurement Devices*—Devices used to measure the height and diameter of the specimen shall be capable of measuring the desired dimension to within 1 % of its actual length and shall be constructed such that their use will not disturb the specimen.

6.9 *Timer*—A timing device indicating the elapsed testing time to the nearest 1 s shall be used for establishing the hydraulic conductivity.

6.10 *Balances*—The balance used to weigh specimens shall determine the mass of the specimens to within 0.1 % of the total mass.

6.11 *Apparatus for Water Content Determination*, as specified in Test Method [D2216](#).

6.12 *Miscellaneous Apparatus*—Specimen trimming and carving tools, membrane and O-ring expanders, and data sheets, as required.

6.13 *Head Losses*—Head losses in the tubes, valves, and other portions of the equipment may lead to error in determining the hydraulic conductivity. The permeameter shall be assembled with no specimen inside and then the hydraulic system filled to guard against such errors. The hydraulic pressures or heads that will be used in testing a specimen shall be applied, and the rate of flow measured with an accuracy of 5 % or better. This flow rate shall be at least two times greater than that which is measured when a specimen is placed inside the permeameter with the same hydraulic pressures or heads applied.

7. Sampling Test Specimens and Test Units

7.1 *Soil Specimen Size*—Cylindrical specimens shall have a minimum diameter of 30 mm, and the largest particle contained within the test specimen shall be smaller than $\frac{1}{6}$ of the specimen diameter. For the purposes of establishing a reference standard, the recommended height of the standard HCR sample is to be 5.0 cm. The length may be increased if the maximum particle size is larger than 0.47 cm (U.S. Standard No. 4 sieve) or if the specimen hydraulic conductivity may be governed by the macro-structure (that is, cracks) of the specimen. If it is found that oversize particles are present after completion of a test, indicate this information in the report of test data under remarks. The average height and diameter of the test specimen shall be determined using the apparatus specified in [6.8](#).

7.2 *Undisturbed Soil Specimens*—Prepare undisturbed specimens from samples secured in accordance with Method [D1587](#) or other acceptable undisturbed tube sampling procedures. Undisturbed samples shall be preserved and transported as outlined for Groups C or D samples in Practice [D4220](#).

7.3 *Compacted Soil Specimens*—Prepare specimens using the compaction method, predetermined water content, and unit weight prescribed by the individual assigning the test.

NOTE 3—It is common for the unit weight of the specimen after removal from the mold to be less than the value based on the volume of the mold. This occurs as a result of the specimen swelling after removal of the lateral confinement due to the mold.

7.4 *Geotextile Filter Specimens*—The geotextile specimen should be selected from a larger geotextile sample in accordance with the procedures set forth in Practice [D4354](#). The geotextile specimen should be trimmed to a diameter that is approximately 0.6 cm (0.25 in.) greater than that of the soil specimen.

8. Procedure

8.1 *Specimen Setup*:

8.1.1 Prepare the soil specimen in such a way as to model the anticipated field conditions or to achieve the desired test objective. If the filter will be placed in in-situ conditions,

obtain undisturbed samples of the soil as described in [7.2](#). If the filter will be placed in compacted fill, compact the soil specimen to meet the specified compaction criteria described in [7.3](#).

8.1.2 Obtain a specimen from an undisturbed sample by trimming the ends of the specimen such that they are perpendicular to the long axis of the sample, provided the soil characteristics are such that no significant disturbance results from sampling and the specimen is uniformly circular. Handle the specimens carefully in order to minimize disturbance, changes in cross section, or loss of water content. If compression or any type of noticeable disturbance would be caused by the extrusion device, split the sample tube lengthwise or cut it off in small sections to facilitate removal of the specimen with minimum disturbance. Prepare trimmed specimens in an environment in which the change in the water content of the soil is minimized. Specimens shall be of uniform, circular cross section perpendicular to the axis of the specimen. Where pebbles or crumbling cause excessive irregularity along the outside edges of the specimen or at the ends, pack soil from the trimmings in the irregularities to produce the desired surface. Determine the mass and dimensions (length and diameter) of the test specimen. Determine the water content using soil trimmings taken from the ends of the test specimen, in accordance with Test Method [D2216](#).

8.1.3 Prepare compacted specimens by compacting material in at least six layers, using a pressing or kneading action, into a split mold of circular cross section having dimensions meeting the requirements of [7.1](#). Batch the material required for the specimen by mixing soil thoroughly with sufficient water to produce the desired water content. After batching, store the material in a covered container in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Table 2 of Test Method [D698](#). Mold the specimens to the desired density by either (1) kneading or tamping each layer until the cumulative weight of the soil placed in the mold is compacted to a known volume or (2) adjusting the number of layers, number of tamps per layer, and force per tamp. Scarify the top of each layer prior to the addition of material for the next layer. The tamper used to compact the material shall have an area in contact with the soil equal to or less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the area of the mold. After a specimen is formed, with the ends perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, remove the mold and determine the mass and dimensions of the specimen using the devices described in Section 6. Perform one or more water content determinations on excess material used to prepare the specimen in accordance with Test Method [D2216](#).

8.1.4 Mount the soil specimen in the triaxial cell using the configuration shown in [Fig. 2](#). Place the proposed drainage material (typically pea gravel, coarse sand, or geosynthetic drainage core) on the bottom plate. Place the geotextile filter directly over the drain material. Then place the soil sample directly over the geotextile with a screen directly over the soil. The top screen may vary in opening size from approximately 1 mm (0.04 in.) for sandy soils to as small as 0.07 mm (0.0028 in.) for fine-grained soils. Several layers of the top screen may be placed on top of the soil specimen to help distribute the flow evenly across the entire specimen cross section. Then place the