



Designation: E 620 – 97

Standard Practice for Reporting Opinions of Technical Experts¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E 620; 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 practice covers the scope of information to be contained in formal written technical reports which express the opinions of the technical expert with respect to the study of items that are or may reasonably be expected to be the subject of litigation.

1.2 For additional standards promulgated by ASTM Committee E-30 on Forensic Sciences, see Practices E 678, E 860, E 1020, and E 1188.

1.3 *This standard may involve hazardous materials, operations, and equipment. This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns associated with its use. It is the responsibility of whoever uses this standard to consult and establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

E 678 Practice for Evaluation of Technical Data²

E 860 Practice for Examining and Testing Items that Are or May Become Involved in Litigation²

E 1020 Practice for Reporting Incidents²

E 1188 Practice for Collection and Preservation of Information and Physical Items by a Technical Investigator²

3. Significance and Use

3.1 This practice establishes those elements of the expert's opinion report which will make the report self-teaching and focus on the technical aspects germane to the purpose for which the opinion is rendered.

4. Report Content

4.1 Reports prepared pursuant to this standard shall comply with guidelines set forth in Section 4. The specific format of this report is not prescribed herein.

4.1.1 *Descriptive Information*—The following information shall be contained within the report, preferably in the introduction:

4.1.2 Identifying number and date the report was prepared,

4.1.3 Name, address, and affiliation of each person who has rendered an opinion contained in the report,

4.1.4 Name of the person or organization, or both, requesting the report (optional at the discretion of the expert),

4.1.5 Generic description of the item(s) examined together with specific data to uniquely identify the item(s) such as a serial number, marking, or some other means of adequately identifying the item(s) examined,

4.1.6 Date and location of examination,

4.1.7 The scope of investigative activities performed in preparation for reaching conclusions and opinions.

4.2 Pertinent Facts:

4.2.1 The report shall contain all facts that are pertinent to the opinion rendered and shall be reported in accordance with the classifications set forth in 4.2.1.1 and 4.2.1.2.

4.2.1.1 Identify those facts which are based on the observations by the expert of the item(s) in question or photographs thereof, and other item(s) which is (are) similar thereto.

4.2.1.2 Identify other facts based on the observations by the expert, and other facts and information that the expert relies upon in rendering an opinion.

4.2.2 Whenever pertinent findings of fact are established through examination or testing, the person(s) rendering the opinion based on such findings shall have either supervised, conducted, participated in or observed such examination or testing, and failing to do any one of them shall list the name and business address of each person who supervised or conducted each examination or test establishing such findings of fact.

4.3 Opinions and Conclusions:

4.3.1 The report shall contain all of the technical opinions and conclusions rendered by the expert concerning the purpose for which the expert was engaged.

4.3.2 The report shall contain the logic and reasoning of the expert by which each of the opinions and conclusions were reached.

4.4 Signature:

4.4.1 The report shall contain the signature of each person who has rendered a joint or separate opinion contained in the report. The signature(s) shall be at the end of the opinion. A professional seal should be used, if applicable. If an opinion rendered is that of two or more experts, a signature page may be used.

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.11 on Interdisciplinary Forensic Science Standards.

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.