



Designation: D4577 – 05 (Reapproved 2010)

Standard Test Method for Compression Resistance of a Container Under Constant Load¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D4577; 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 is designed to determine the resistance of a shipping container to a vertically applied constant load for either a specified time or to failure. The test method may also be used for palletized or unitized load configurations.

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 whoever uses this standard to consult and establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* For specific precautionary statements, see Section 6.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D642 Test Method for Determining Compressive Resistance of Shipping Containers, Components, and Unit Loads

D644 Test Method for Moisture Content of Paper and Paperboard by Oven Drying (Withdrawn 2010)³

D685 Practice for Conditioning Paper and Paper Products for Testing

<http://www.astm.org/standards/D996> Terminology of Packaging and Distribution Environments

D4332 Practice for Conditioning Containers, Packages, or Packaging Components for Testing

D4442 Test Methods for Direct Moisture Content Measurement of Wood and Wood-Base Materials

E122 Practice for Calculating Sample Size to Estimate, With Specified Precision, the Average for a Characteristic of a Lot or Process

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D10 on Packaging and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D10.21 on Shipping Containers and Systems - Application of Performance Test Methods.

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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.

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—General definitions for the packaging and distribution environments are found in Terminology D996.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *load*—the force applied to a body, lbf or N.

3.2.2 *constant load*—a load that is invariable or unchanging

3.2.3 *static load*—an imposed stationary force, constant in magnitude, direction, and sense

4. Significance and Use

4.1 In the distribution system for many products there is a phase wherein the packaged product may be stored for a period of time in a manner such that one or more containers are superimposed one upon the other. The bottom package is thus continually stressed with a constant load.

4.2 This test method subjects a container, empty or filled, to a predetermined static load, and to specified atmospheric conditions, if required.

5. Apparatus

5.1 The testing apparatus shall be capable of imposing a constant load on the test specimen and may be hydraulically, pneumatically, or mechanically activated. A test apparatus employing dead weights to impose the constant load may be used, as in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. Compression machines may also be used, as in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4, and shall contain two platens, or suitable framework and fixturing, one stationary and one movable in the vertical direction. The movable platen may be swiveled (floating) or fixed and should have proper mechanical, pneumatic, or hydraulic linkages to permit top-to-bottom loading. If the floor where the test is to be conducted is subject to severe vibration, it may be necessary to vibration-isolate the test apparatus. The test device should have a timer for measuring the period of time required to cause container failure and means such as a dial indicator to measure box deformation (inches or millimetres) while under load, or an autographic recording device that records load and deformation over a period of time.

5.2 *Closing Equipment for Fiberboard Boxes*—When empty boxes are to be tested, suitable closing facilities such as sealing



FIG. 1 Containers Under Constant Load of Dead Weights Imposed by Other Containers

boards and proper adhesive for closing the flaps of box specimens shall be used. See Test Method D642.

5.3 *Conditioning Apparatus*—Adequate facilities shall be provided to maintain a conditioned atmosphere of temperature and humidity as required for the purpose of the test.

5.4 *Miscellaneous Equipment*—Drying oven, scales, knife, saws, etc., for use in determination of the moisture content or for making other supplementary tests of the materials from which the containers are made. When testing unit loads, it is recommended that an empty pallet be placed on top of the unit load test specimen to achieve conditions similar to actual use.

6. Safety Precautions

6.1 Performance of a test should never be considered without regard to safety. Some apparent precautions against injuries are:

6.1.1 Care and caution should be observed while placing the shipping container filled or unfilled on the testing apparatus.

6.1.2 The testing apparatus should have load arrestors or safety interlocks to prevent complete crushing of the container after initial failure.

6.1.3 When using dead weights, caution should be taken when loading and unloading the weights from the apparatus.



FIG. 2 Container Under Constant Load of Dead Weights

7. Test Specimens and Number of Tests

7.1 The containers being tested shall be complete in all respects. Depending on the purpose of the test, interior packing may or may not be included. No related bracing material within the boxes that will give false results as to sample behavior shall be used. Tests may be made on containers with or without contents as prescribed. Packed containers should be closed and secured in the same manner as will be used in preparing them for shipment (for example, tape, strapping).

7.2 Performance normally should be based on tests of not fewer than five representative specimens of a given size and type of container. For large production runs, lot sampling is advised. Application of Practice E122 is suggested.

7.3 For testing unitized loads, multiple specimens are recommended but a single specimen is permissible.

8. Closing Fiberboard Containers Using Adhesive

8.1 Close the box specimen so as to avoid distortions that may affect its loadbearing ability. The method of preparing the

test specimen as described in the Annex of Test Method D642 will accomplish this, but any method that will produce the same results may be used.

9. Conditioning

9.1 When required, the container should be conditioned for the static load test by exposure to fixed or controlled variable conditions of temperature and humidity.

9.1.1 Where applicable, a special atmosphere selected from those specified in Practice D4332 may be used.

9.2 The test container shall be preconditioned in the desired atmosphere for such a time as is necessary to bring the container into equilibrium with that atmosphere and using the techniques given in Practice D685.

10. Acceptance Criteria

10.1 Acceptance criteria must be established prior to testing and should consider the required condition of the product at receipt. The organizations conducting the test may choose any