



Designation: F1869 – 11

# Standard Test Method for Measuring Moisture Vapor Emission Rate of Concrete Subfloor Using Anhydrous Calcium Chloride<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1869; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the quantitative determination of the rate of moisture vapor emitted from below-grade, on-grade, and above-grade (suspended) bare concrete floors.

1.2 This test shall not be used to evaluate the rate of moisture vapor emitted by lightweight or gypsum concrete floors containing lightweight aggregate.

1.3 This test shall not be used to evaluate moisture vapor emissions over coatings on concrete or through reactive penetrants or over patching or leveling compounds.

1.4 This quantity of moisture shall be expressed as the rate of moisture vapor emission, measured in pounds of moisture over a 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> area during a 24-h period.

1.5 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.6 *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:<sup>2</sup>

[E1745 Specification for Plastic Water Vapor Retarders Used in Contact with Soil or Granular Fill under Concrete Slabs](#)

[E1993 Specification for Bituminous Water Vapor Retarders Used in Contact with Soil or Granular Fill Under Concrete Slabs](#)

[F141 Terminology Relating to Resilient Floor Coverings](#)

<sup>1</sup> This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F06 on Resilient Floor Coverings and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F06.40 on Practices.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

### 2.2 Resilient Floor Covering Institute Standard:<sup>3</sup>

[Recommended Work Practices](#)

### 2.3 Military Standard:<sup>4</sup>

[MIL-PRF-131 Barrier Materials, Waterproof, Greaseproof, Flexible, Heat-Sealable](#)

### 2.4 ICRI Guide:<sup>5</sup>

[ICRI Technical Guideline 310.1-1997 Selecting and Specifying Concrete Surface Preparation for Sealers, Coatings, and Polymer Overlays](#)

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:* See Terminology F141 for definitions of the terms, above-grade (suspended), below-grade, concrete, on-grade, and resilient flooring.

### 3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *moisture vapor emission rate (MVER)*—amount of water vapor in pounds emitted from a 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> area of concrete flooring during a 24-h period (multiply by 56.51 to convert to  $\mu\text{g/s m}^2$ ).

## 4. Significance and Use

4.1 Use this test method to obtain a quantitative value indicating the rate of moisture vapor emission from the surface of a concrete floor and whether or not that floor is acceptable to receive resilient floor covering. The moisture vapor emission rate only reflects the condition of the concrete floor at the time of the test. All concrete subfloors emit some amount of moisture in vapor form. Concrete moisture emission is a natural process driven by environmental conditions. All floor coverings are susceptible to failure from excessive moisture vapor emissions. The moisture vapor emitted from a concrete slab is measured in pounds. This measurement is the equivalent weight of water evaporating from 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> of concrete surface in a 24-h period. The calcium chloride moisture test has been the industry standard for making this determination and is a

<sup>3</sup> Available from Resilient Floor Covering Institute, 966 Hungerford Drive, Suite 12-B, Rockville, MD 20850.

<sup>4</sup> Available from Standardization Documents Order Desk, Bldg. 4 Section D, 700 Robbins Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094, Attn: NPODS.

<sup>5</sup> Available from International Concrete Repair Institute, International Concrete Repair Institute 3 166 S. River Road, Suite 132, Des Plaines, IL 60018; [www.icri.org](http://www.icri.org)

practical, well-established and accepted test of dynamic moisture. It will produce quantified results directly applicable to flooring manufacturer's specifications. The results obtained reflect the condition of the concrete floor surface at the time of testing and may not indicate future conditions.

## 5. Apparatus

### 5.1 Test Unit Contents:

5.1.1 *Cylindrical Plastic Dish with Lid Containing Anhydrous Calcium Chloride*, heat sealed in a heat sealable bag meeting the latest version of MIL-PRF-131, Class 1 or 2, to protect from moisture intrusion.

5.1.1.1 Anhydrous calcium chloride shall be in the form of prilled beads and shall have a minimum purity of 94 %. Net weight of the anhydrous calcium chloride shall be  $16 \pm 1$  g.

5.1.1.2 Dish shall be made of a material that does not absorb moisture. Dimensions of the dish shall be  $2.7 \pm 0.08$  in. ( $69 \pm 2$  mm) outside diameter as measured at the bottom area of the dish that contacts the floor, 0.6 to 0.8 in. (15 to 20 mm) height without cover, wall thickness less than 0.08 in. (2 mm). Dish shall be supplied with a tight-fitting lid. The lid shall be secured to the dish with pressure-sensitive-adhesive backed vinyl tape that does not absorb moisture, or a mechanical seal shall be provided such as a screw-top or snap-top lid.

5.1.2 *Pressure Sensitive Label*, to be used to identify the container of calcium chloride and to record the date, time, and container weight when the test is started and completed.

5.1.3 *Transparent Cover*, with 0.5 in. (12 mm) flanges around the perimeter, approximately  $0.5 \text{ ft}^2$  ( $460 \pm 46 \text{ cm}^2$ ), as measured between the inside of the flanges, is required to seal the test area of the floor. The transparent cover shall have a depth greater than the height of the dish of anhydrous calcium chloride. The height of the transparent cover shall be 1.5 in.  $\pm$  0.125 ( $38 \pm 3.2$  mm).

5.1.4 *Strip of Sealant*, to secure the plastic cover to the floor in an airtight fashion.

5.1.5 *Brightly Colored Warning Label*, to be placed on the transparent cover as a protective warning while the test is being conducted.

5.1.6 *Optional Mailing Bag*, for the return of the sample to the party responsible for weighing the dish and calculating the test results.

5.2 *Gram Scale*, capable of measuring  $\pm 0.1$  g. This scale will be used to weigh the calcium chloride dish at the start and end of the test. On-site measurement is preferred to mailing the container back to the supplier for results.

5.3 *Thermometer*, capable of measuring room temperature.

5.4 *Hygrometer*, capable of measuring the relative humidity of the test site.

## 6. Conditioning

6.1 The test site should be at the same temperature and humidity expected during normal use. If this is not possible, then the test conditions shall be  $75 \pm 10^\circ\text{F}$  ( $23.9 \pm 5.5^\circ\text{C}$ ) and  $50 \pm 10$  % relative humidity. Maintain these conditions 48 h prior to, and during testing. For floors intended to be used at high or low temperatures or humidity (such as cold storage rooms), the test site must be within the temperature and

humidity range given above, not at the anticipated service temperature or humidity.

6.2 Prior to placement of the anhydrous calcium chloride tests, the actual test area shall be clean and free of all foreign substances. All residual adhesives, curing compounds, sealers, paints, floor coverings, etc. shall be removed. Removal shall be accomplished using approved OSHA work practices. For removal of existing resilient floorings or residual adhesive, strictly observe the Warning that follows and **Notes 1 and 2**. (**Warning**—Do not sand, dry sweep, dry scrape, drill, saw, beadblast, or mechanically chip or pulverize existing resilient flooring, backing, lining felt, or asphaltic cut-back adhesives. These products may contain either asbestos fibers or crystalline silica. Avoid creating dust. Inhalation of such dust is a cancer and respiratory tract hazard. Smoking by individuals exposed to asbestos fibers greatly increases the risk of serious bodily harm. Unless positively certain that the product contains non-asbestos material, presume it contains asbestos. Regulations may require that the material be tested to determine asbestos content. RFCI's recommended work practices are a defined set of instructions addressed to the task of removing all resilient floor covering structures whether or not they contain asbestos. When RFCI's recommended work practices are followed, resilient floor covering structures that contain (or are presumed to contain) asbestos can be removed in a manner that will comply with the current occupational exposure to asbestos standard's permissible exposure limits (PEL) issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (OSHA).

NOTE 1—Various federal, state, and local government agencies have regulations covering the removal of asbestos-containing material. If considering the removal of resilient floor covering or asphaltic cut-back adhesive that contains or is presumed to contain asbestos, review and comply with the applicable regulations.

NOTE 2—Certain paints may contain lead. Exposure to excessive amounts of lead dust presents a health hazard. Refer to applicable federal, state, and local laws and "Lead-based Paint: Interim Guidelines for Hazard Identification and Abatement in Public and Indian Housing"<sup>6</sup> regarding: (1) appropriate methods for identifying lead-based paint and removing of such paint, and (2) any licensing, certification, and training requirements for persons performing lead abatement work. (Use only qualified of certified lead abatement contractors to remove lead-based paint.)

## 7. Procedure

7.1 Remove floor coverings or coatings, if present. Lightly grind an area 20 by 20 in. (50 by 50 cm) to produce a surface profile equal to ICRI CSP-1 to CSP-2 (see ICRI Technical Guideline 310.1-1997). Grinding should remove a thin layer of the finished concrete but not expose coarse aggregate, unless the surface had been abrasively treated previously. A vacuum equipped with a suitable filter and grinder equipped with a dust shroud may be required to reduce airborne dust from grinding. Expose a minimum area of 20 by 20 in. (50 by 50 cm) to conditions specified in 6.1 and 6.2 for a minimum period of 24 h prior to starting each test. New concrete and/or concrete floors that have had floor coverings or coatings removed for at

<sup>6</sup> Available from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC. Use September 1990 or subsequent editions.