Designation: ~~D4443 – 07~~ D4443 – 12

Standard Test Method for Determining Residual Vinyl Chloride Monomer Content in PPB Range in Vinyl Chloride Homo- and Co-Polymers by Headspace Gas Chromatography[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D4443; 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 suitable for determining the residual vinyl chloride monomer (RVM) content of homopolymer and copolymers of vinyl chloride down to a level of ~5 ppb.

1.2 This test method is applicable to any polymer form, such as resin, compound, film, bottle wall, etc. that can be dissolved in a suitable solvent.

1.3 *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.* Specific hazard statements are given in Section 9 and Note 13.

NOTE 1—This standard is equivalent to ISO 6401.
~~NOTE 1—This test method is similar to ISO 6401.~~

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ISO Standard:*
ISO 6401 Plastics—Homopolymer and Copolymer Resins of Vinyl Chloride—Determination of Residual Vinyl Chloride Monomer—Gas Chromatographic Method[2]
2.2 *OSHA Standard:*
29 CFR 1919.1017 Vinyl Chloride[3]

3. Terminology

3.1 *Abbreviations:*
3.1.1 *DMAc*—N,N-dimethylacetamide.
3.1.2 *VCM*—Vinyl chloride monomer.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 Samples of vinyl chloride-containing polymers are dissolved in a suitable solvent in a closed system.

4.2 The polymer solution and headspace are equilibrated at an elevated temperature.

4.3 Aliquots of headspace gas are injected into a gas chromatograph and the vinyl chloride monomer is separated. The response of vinyl chloride monomer is determined by the use of one of several suggested detectors.

4.4 Calibration is accomplished using either *(a)* vinyl chloride monomer in nitrogen gas standards, *(b)* standard solutions containing known amounts of vinyl chloride monomer, or *(c)* a method of standard addition.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Vinyl chloride-containing polymers are widely used to package a variety of materials, including foods.

5.2 Vinyl chloride monomer has been shown to be a human carcinogen. Threshold toxicity value has not been established.

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[1] This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D20 on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D20.70 on Analytical Methods.
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[2] Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, http://www.ansi.org.
[3] Available from Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

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

5.3 Plastic manufacturers, food packagers, government agencies, etc. have a need to know the residual vinyl chloride monomer content of vinyl chloride-containing polymers.

6. Interferences

6.1 *N,N-* dimethylacetamide should be analyzed under identical conditions to determine the absence of interferences at the vinyl chloride monomer gas chromatography (GC) retention time.

6.2 Other solvents, monomers, or compounding aids may cause interference at the vinyl chloride monomer GC retention time.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Gas Chromatography,* equipped with either a flame ionization detector (FID), a photo ionization detector (PID), or a Hall electroconductivity detector (HED), backflushing valve, and either automatic capability or manual sampling (Note 2) and ability to analyze the headspace vapors contained in a sealed vial.

NOTE 2—If the analyses are to be performed manually (that is, by syringe injection), then the following equipment will also be needed:
(*1*) Constant-temperature bath or oven capable of maintaining a temperature of 90 ± 1°C.
(*2*) Gas-tight GC syringes for sampling and injection.
(*3*) Sample bottles with fluoropolymer faces septa and caps (size optional).
(*4*) Gloves for handling hot syringes.

7.2 *Chromatographic Column,* 3 % OV-101 on 80/100[4,5] mesh Chromosorb WHP[4,5], ⅛-in. (3.2-mm) outside diameter by 2 ft (0.6 m), stainless steel connected through ⅛-in. "tee" to 0.19 % picric acid on 80/100 mesh Carbopack C[4,5], ⅛-in. outside diameter by 8 ft (2.4 m), stainless steel.

NOTE 3—Any column packing that will resolve VCM from interferences and elute VCM in a reasonable length of time (1 to 5 min) is satisfactory. For example, a 3-ft (0.9-m) by ⅛-in. (3.2-mm) outside diameter column containing 0.19 % picric acid on 80/100 mesh Carbopack C can replace the recommended 3 % OV − 101 column. Settings recommended in 11.3.1 may have to be modified to suit the packing material being used.

NOTE 4—The VCM peak must be kept on scale to manually measure the correct peak area or peak height. One method of achieving this without undue operator attention is to use a dual-channel recorder. One channel is set at a high sensitivity to obtain measurable small peaks for low-VCM samples. The other channel is set at a lower sensitivity to keep the larger peaks from high-VCM samples on scale. Most instruments will calculate peak height (or area) even if the peak goes off the scale on the recorder.

7.3 *Detector Output Filter/Amplifier*—The extreme sensitivity of this test method is best realized when the detector (usually operated at the maximum sensitivity) output is (*1*) filtered to remove the high-frequency noise and (*2*) amplified to give a visible or measurable signal. The filter/amplifier is connected in series between the detector and the recorder/computer.

NOTE 5—A Spectrum Scientific Model 1021A filter/amplifier[5,6] can fulfill these requirements. Other filter/amplifiers may be available that are suitable.

7.4 *Sample Headspace Vials,* glass, 23 mL, with fluoropolymer-lined septa and aluminum caps.

7.5 *Vial Sealer.*

7.6 *Analytical Balance,* capable of weighing to ±0.001 g.

7.7 *Statistical Programmable Calculator.*

NOTE 6—A programmable calculator is not absolutely necessary, but can save a considerable amount of time when large numbers of samples are being analyzed.

8. Reagents and Materials

8.1 *Vinyl Chloride Monomer (neat),* pure, preferably in small cylinder.

8.2 *Standard Cylinders,* vinyl chloride monomer in nitrogen at 1 and 10 ppm by volume.

8.3 *Hydrogen Cylinder,* prepurified gas.

8.4 *Nitrogen,* oxygen-free.

NOTE 7—Helium may replace nitrogen as the carrier gas.

8.5 *Air,* breathing or water-pumped.

8.6 *N,N-Dimethylacetamide (DMAc),* sparged with nitrogen gas for up to a week at room temperature to remove chromatographic interferences.

9. Hazards

9.1 *Safety Precautions:*

[4] The sole source of supply of column packing known to the committee at this time is Supelco, Inc., P.O. Box 628, 146 S. Water St., Bellefonte, PA 16823.
[5] If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee,[1] which you may attend.
[6] The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Spectrum Scientific Corp., 2401 Ogletown Rd., Newark, DE 19711.