



Designation: D4459 – 12

Standard Practice for Xenon-Arc Exposure of Plastics Intended for Indoor Applications¹

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1. Scope*

1.1 This practice covers specific procedures and test conditions that are applicable for exposure of plastics in window glass-filtered xenon-arc devices in accordance with Practices [G151](#) and [G155](#) for evaluating the stability of plastics intended for use in indoor applications.

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 the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

NOTE 1—There is no known ISO equivalent to this practice.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

[D1729 Practice for Visual Appraisal of Colors and Color Differences of Diffusely-Illuminated Opaque Materials](#)

[D2244 Practice for Calculation of Color Tolerances and Color Differences from Instrumentally Measured Color Coordinates](#)

[D3980 Practice for Interlaboratory Testing of Paint and Related Materials \(Withdrawn 1998\)](#)³

[D4674 Practice for Accelerated Testing for Color Stability of Plastics Exposed to Indoor Office Environments](#)

[D5870 Practice for Calculating Property Retention Index of Plastics](#)

[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

[G113 Terminology Relating to Natural and Artificial Weathering Tests of Nonmetallic Materials](#)

[G141 Guide for Addressing Variability in Exposure Testing](#)

[of Nonmetallic Materials](#)

[G147 Practice for Conditioning and Handling of Nonmetallic Materials for Natural and Artificial Weathering Tests](#)

[G151 Practice for Exposing Nonmetallic Materials in Accelerated Test Devices that Use Laboratory Light Sources](#)

[G155 Practice for Operating Xenon Arc Light Apparatus for Exposure of Non-Metallic Materials](#)

[G169 Guide for Application of Basic Statistical Methods to Weathering Tests](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 The definitions in Terminology [G113](#) are applicable to this practice.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This practice is intended to simulate the effects produced by exposure to solar radiation through glass. This practice uses exposure in a xenon-arc device equipped with window glass filters and operated in accordance with Practices [G151](#) and [G155](#).

NOTE 2—Practice [D4674](#) describes exposures in a device that uses a combination of fluorescent “cool white” and ultraviolet (UV) lamps to simulate the effects of exposures to indoor fluorescent light and window glass filtered daylight.

4.2 **Warning**—Variation in results may be expected when operating conditions are varied within the accepted limits of this practice. Therefore, all references to the use of this practice must be accompanied by a report prepared in accordance with Section 9 that describes the specific operating conditions used. Refer to Practice [G151](#) for detailed information on the caveats applicable to use of results obtained in accordance with this practice.

NOTE 3—Additional information on sources of variability and on strategies for addressing variability in the design, execution and data analysis of laboratory accelerated exposure tests is found in Guide [G141](#).

4.3 Test results will depend upon the care that is taken to operate the equipment in accordance with Practice [G155](#). Significant factors include regulation of line voltage, temperature and humidity control, and condition and age of the lamps and filters.

4.4 Reproducibility of test results between laboratories has been shown to be good when the stability of materials is

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D20](#) on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D20.50](#) on Durability of Plastics.

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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.

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

evaluated in terms of performance ranking compared to other materials or to a control.^{4,5} Therefore, exposure of a similar material of known performance (a control) at the same time as the test materials is strongly recommended. It is recommended that at least three replicates of each material be exposed to allow for statistical evaluation of results.

5. Apparatus

5.1 Use xenon-arc apparatus that conforms to the requirements defined in Practices **G151** and **G155**.

5.2 The spectral power distribution of the xenon-arc lamp shall conform to the requirements described in Practice **G155** for a xenon-arc lamp with window glass filters.

5.3 Unless otherwise specified, use a xenon-arc device equipped with a radiometer capable of monitoring either narrow-band or broad-band irradiance incident on test specimens.

6. Test Specimen

6.1 The size and shape of specimens to be exposed will be determined by the specifications of the particular test method used to evaluate the effects of the exposure on the specimens; the test method shall be determined by the parties concerned. Where practical, it is recommended that specimens be sized to fit specimen holders and racks supplied with the exposure apparatus. Unless supplied with a specific backing as an integral part of the test, specimens shall be mounted so that only the minimum specimen area required for support by the holder shall be covered. This unexposed surface must not be used as part of the test area.

6.2 Unless otherwise specified, expose at least three replicate specimens of each test material and of the control material, if used.

6.3 Follow the procedures described in Practice **G147** for identification and conditioning and handling of specimens of test, control, and reference materials prior to, during, and after exposure.

6.4 Do not mask the face of specimen for the purpose of showing on one panel the effects of various exposure times. Misleading results may be obtained by this method, since the masked portion of the specimen is still exposed to temperature and humidity cycles that in many cases will affect results.

6.5 Since the thickness of a specimen may affect markedly the results, thickness of test and control specimens shall be within $\pm 10\%$ of the nominal dimensions.

NOTE 4—This is especially important if changes in mechanical properties are being investigated.

6.6 Incident energy at the extremes of the specimen exposure area in older equipment may be only 70 % of that at the

center. If the irradiance at any position within the exposure area is less than 90 % of the peak irradiance, follow one of the procedures outlined in Practice **G155** to ensure either equal radiant exposure or compensation for differences in radiant exposure.

6.7 Retain a supply of unexposed file specimens of all materials evaluated.

6.7.1 When destructive tests are run, ensure that sufficient file specimens are retained so that the property of interest can be determined on unexposed file specimens each time exposed materials are evaluated.

6.8 Specimens should not be removed from the exposure apparatus for more than 24 h and then returned for additional tests, since this does not produce the same results on all materials as tests run without this type of interruption. When specimens are removed from the exposure apparatus for 24 h or more then returned for additional exposure, report the elapsed time as noted in accordance with Section 9.

NOTE 5—Since the stability of the file specimens is also time-dependent, users are cautioned that over prolonged exposure periods, or where small differences in the order of acceptable limits are anticipated, comparison of exposed specimens with the file specimen may not be valid. Instrumental measurements are recommended whenever possible.

7. Procedure

7.1 Operate the xenon-arc device in continuous light mode without any water spray.

7.2 Unless otherwise specified, control the irradiance at one of the following levels:

7.2.1 0.30 ± 0.02 W/(m² · nm) at 340 nm.

7.2.2 0.80 ± 0.05 W/(m² · nm) at 420 nm.

7.2.3 36.5 ± 2.5 W/m² between 300 and 400 nm.

7.2.4 If the exposure device is not equipped with irradiance control, follow the manufacturer's recommendations to produce the specified irradiance levels.

7.3 Unless otherwise specified, control the temperature of an uninsulated black panel at $55 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$ ($131 \pm 4^\circ\text{F}$).

7.4 Unless otherwise specified, control relative humidity at $50 \pm 10\%$.

NOTE 6—The \pm are the operational fluctuations and are the allowable deviations from the specified set points for irradiance, temperature and relative humidity during equilibrium operation. They do not imply that the user is allowed to program a set point higher or lower than that specified. If the operational fluctuations are greater than the maximum allowable after the equipment has stabilized, discontinue the test and correct the cause of the problem before continuing.

7.5 It is recommended that a control material be exposed at the same time as the test specimens for comparison purposes, if performance comparisons are not being made between the test materials themselves. All concerned parties must agree on the control material used.

7.6 Unless otherwise specified, expose at least three replicates of each test and control material evaluated to allow for statistical evaluation of results.

7.6.1 It is recommended that all unused spaces in the specimen exposure area be filled with non-ultraviolet reflecting blanks, for example, grey card stock.

⁴ Fischer, R., "Results of Round Robin Studies of Light- and Water-Exposure Standard Practices," *Accelerated and Outdoor Durability Testing of Organic Materials*, ASTM STP 1202, Warren D. Ketola and Douglas Grossman, eds., American Society for Testing and Materials, Philadelphia, 1993.

⁵ Ketola, W., and Fischer, R., "Characterization and Use of Reference Materials in Accelerated Durability Tests," *VAMAS Technical Report No. 30*, available from NIST, Gaithersburg, MD.