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Standard Terminology Relating to The Burning Behavior of Textiles¹

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The definitions in this standard have been approved by the Society and are included in D123 “Terminology Relating to Textiles”. They are published as a separate collection for the convenience of persons interested in the burning behavior of textiles. A bibliography of related literature is given in [Appendix X1](#).

afterflame, *n*—persistent flaming of a material after the ignition source has been removed. [D13.92] D4391

after-flame time, *n*—the length of time for which a material continues to flame after the ignition source has been removed. [D13.92] D4391

afterglow, *n*—glow in material after the removal of an external ignition source or after the cessation (natural or induced) of flaming of the material. (See also **flame**, **glow**, and **smoldering**.)

afterglow time, *n*—the time afterglow continues after the cessation of flaming or after removal of the ignition source. [D13.92] D4391

burning behavior, *n*—all the changes that take place when materials or products are exposed to a specified ignition source.

charring, *n*—the formation of carbonaceous residue as the result of pyrolysis or incomplete combustion.

combustible textile, *n*—a textile that will ignite and burn or that will give off vapors that will ignite and burn when subjected to external sources of ignition. (Compare **flammable textile**, **noncombustible textile**.)

combustion, *n*—a chemical process of oxidation that occurs at a rate fast enough to produce heat and usually light either as glow or flames.

DISCUSSION—Some oxidation such as that of hydrogen emits radiation outside the visible spectrum.

dangerously flammable textile, *n*—not defined. This term is implied in the Standard for the Flammability of Clothing Textiles (16 CFR Part 1610) under the Flammable Fabrics Act (15 USC 1191, et seq.) from which a meaning can be inferred. (See also **flammable textile**.)

embrittlement, *n*—the formation of a brittle residue as the result of pyrolysis or incomplete combustion.

fire, *n*—*as related to textile flammability*, an uncontrolled conflagration in which materials are destroyed by burning as evidenced by flames of varying size and shape, and a high intensity heat source of 5 kw or greater, such as a burning waste basket, grease-fire on a stove, burning building or forest fire.

flame, *n*—*as related to textile flammability*, a hot luminous zone of gas or matter in gaseous suspension, or both, that is undergoing combustion, that is relatively constant in size and shape, and that produces a relatively low heat flux. (Compare **fire**.)

DISCUSSION—Examples are a match flame, candle flame, or a Bunsen burner gas flame.

flame resistance, *n*—the property of a material whereby flaming combustion is prevented, terminated, or inhibited following application of a flaming or nonflaming source of ignition, with or without subsequent removal of the ignition source.

DISCUSSION—Flame resistance can be an inherent property of the basic material or product, or it may be imparted by specific treatment. The degree of flame resistance exhibited by a specific material during testing may vary with different test conditions.

flame resistant, *adj*—having flame resistance.

DISCUSSION—“Flame resistant” is the government mandated description for certain products that meet established governmental conformance standards or specifications when the product is tested by a specific method. Where no conformance standards exist, “flame resistant” is a relative term and is used to compare one material to another.

flame retardant, *adj*—not defined. This term should not be used as an adjective except in the terms “flame-retardant-treated” and “flame-retardant treatment”.

flame retardant, *n*—a chemical used to impart flame resistance.

flame-retardant-treated, *adj*—having received a flame-retardant treatment.

DISCUSSION—The term “flame-retardant-treated” does not apply to textiles that are inherently-flame-resistant due to the intrinsic properties of the material or the fiber-forming polymer.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D13 on Textiles and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D13.92 on Terminology.

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