



Standard Practice for Specimen Preparation and Mounting of Wall or Ceiling Coverings to Assess Surface Burning Characteristics¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2404; 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 practice describes procedures for specimen preparation and mounting when testing textile, paper or polymeric (including vinyl and expanded vinyl) wall or ceiling covering materials to assess flame spread and smoke development as surface burning characteristics using Test Method [E84](#).

1.2 This practice applies also to facings or wood veneers intended to be applied on site over a wood substrate (see [8.7](#)). This practice does not apply to laminated products factory-produced with a wood substrate, which are covered by Practice [E2579](#).

1.3 Testing is conducted with Test Method [E84](#).

1.4 This practice does not provide pass/fail criteria that can be used as a regulatory tool.

1.5 Use the values stated in inch-pound units as the standard, in referee decisions. The values in the SI system of units are given in parentheses, for information only; see [IEEE/ASTM SI-10](#) for further details.

1.6 This fire standard cannot be used to provide quantitative measures.

1.7 Fire testing of products and materials is inherently hazardous, and adequate safeguards for personnel and property shall be employed in conducting these tests. Fire testing involves hazardous materials, operations, and equipment. This standard gives instructions on specimen preparation and mounting, but the fire-test-response method is given in Test Method [E84](#). See also Section [10](#).

1.8 *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.*

1.9 The text of this standard references notes and footnotes which provide explanatory material. These notes and footnotes shall not be considered requirements of the standard.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

[C1186](#) Specification for Flat Fiber-Cement Sheets

[C1396/C1396M](#) Specification for Gypsum Board

[E84](#) Test Method for Surface Burning Characteristics of Building Materials

[E136](#) Test Method for Behavior of Materials in a Vertical Tube Furnace at 750°C

[E176](#) Terminology of Fire Standards

[E2573](#) Practice for Specimen Preparation and Mounting of Site-Fabricated Stretch Systems to Assess Surface Burning Characteristics

[E2579](#) Practice for Specimen Preparation and Mounting of Wood Products to Assess Surface Burning Characteristics

[IEEE/ASTM SI-10](#) International System of Units (SI): The Modern Metric System

2.2 *CSA Standard:*³

[CSA O121](#) Douglas Fir Plywood

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [E05](#) on Fire Standards and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [E05.22](#) on Surface Burning. Current edition approved July 1, 2012/April 1, 2013. Published August 2012/April 2013. Originally approved in 2005. Last previous edition approved in 2010 as [E2404-10-12](#). DOI: [10.1520/E2404-12.10.1520/E2404-13](#).

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 Available from Canadian Standards Association (CSA), 178 Rexdale Blvd., Toronto, ON Canada M9W 1R3.

2.3 NIST Standard:⁴

Voluntary Product Standard PS 1-07 Structural Plywood

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in this practice refer to the terminology contained in Terminology E176.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *expanded vinyl wall or ceiling covering, n*—a wall or ceiling covering consisting of a woven textile backing, an expanded vinyl base coat layer (which is a homogeneous vinyl layer that contains a blowing agent), and a nonexpanded vinyl skin coat.

3.2.2 *paper wall or ceiling covering, n*—a wall or ceiling covering with a top layer consisting of paper or an alternative cellulosic-based material, but not consisting of a wood product.

3.2.3 *polymeric wall or ceiling covering, n*—a wall or ceiling covering with a top layer consisting of polymeric-based material.

3.2.4 *self-supporting specimen, n*—a specimen that remains in place by its own structural characteristics both before and during the fire test.

3.2.5 *site-fabricated stretch system, n*—a system, fabricated on site and intended for acoustical, tackable or aesthetic purposes, that is comprised of three elements: (a) a frame (constructed of plastic, wood, metal, or other material) used to hold fabric in place, (b) a core material (infill, with the correct properties for the application), and (c) an outside layer, comprised of a textile, fabric or vinyl, that is stretched taut and held in place by tension or mechanical fasteners via the frame.

3.2.6 *textile, n*—originally a woven fabric, now generally applied to (1) staple fibers and filaments suitable for conversion to or use as yarns or for the preparation of nonwoven fabrics, (2) yarns made from natural or manufactured fibers, and (3) fabrics made from fibers as defined in (1) and (2) and from yarns.

3.2.7 *vinyl wall or ceiling covering, n*—a wall or ceiling covering produced by applying a poly(vinyl chloride) (PVC, vinyl) based coating, or laminating a preformed vinyl film, onto a woven or nonwoven fabric substrate or paper.

3.2.8 *wall or ceiling covering, n*—a textile-, paper- or polymeric (including vinyl) based product designed to be attached to a wall or ceiling surface for decorative or acoustical purposes.

⁴ Available from National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), 100 Bureau Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20899-3460.

3.2.8.1 *Discussion*—

Wall or ceiling coverings with ink or topcoat layers added as part of the manufacturing process are included in this definition.

3.2.9 *wall or ceiling covering system, n*—an assembly of a textile wall or ceiling covering, a paper wall or ceiling covering or a polymeric (including vinyl) wall or ceiling covering, adhesive (if used), and substrate (if it is part of the assembly) used as a wall or ceiling treatment for decorative or acoustical purposes.

3.2.9.1 *Discussion*—

The wall or ceiling covering material is usually intended to be directly attached to a substrate, via adhesives or mechanical fasteners. In some cases the wall or ceiling covering system will be supported by a frame system some distance away from the wall or ceiling covering material.

4. Summary of Practice

4.1 This practice describes procedures for specimen preparation and mounting when testing textile, paper or polymeric (including vinyl and expanded vinyl) wall or ceiling coverings to assess flame spread and smoke development as surface burning characteristics using Test Method E84.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Textile, paper and polymeric (including vinyl and expanded vinyl) wall or ceiling coverings and wall or ceiling covering systems used as interior finish are often evaluated with Test Method E84 to comply with building or life safety code requirements. This practice describes specimen preparation and mounting procedures for such materials and systems.

5.2 This practice is not applicable to the following materials:

5.2.1 Wall or ceiling coverings with exposed wood surfaces, and

5.2.2 Any wall or ceiling covering system where the top layer is not a textile material, a paper-based material, a polymeric material or a vinyl material.