



Designation: **D1886—08 D1886 – 14**

Standard Test Methods for Nickel in Water¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D1886; 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^{Scope*}

1.1 These test methods^{2, 3, 4} cover the atomic absorption determination of nickel in water and wastewaters. Three test methods are given as follows:

Test Method	Concentration Range	Sections
Test Method A—Atomic Absorption, Direct	0.1 to 10 mg/L	7 – 16
Test Method B—Atomic Absorption, Chelation-Extraction	10 to 1000 μ g/L	17 – 26
Test Method C—Atomic Absorption, Graphite Furnace	5 to 100 μ g/L	27 – 36

1.2 Test Methods A, B, and C have been used successfully with reagent grade water and natural waters. Evaluation of Test Method C was also made in condensate from a medium Btu coal gasification process. It is the user's responsibility to ensure the validity of these test methods for other matrices.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. ~~No other units of measurement are included in this~~ The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversion to inch-pound units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.4 *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.* For specific hazards statements, see [Note 45.11.7.11.8.1](#), [21.921.11](#), [23.7](#), and [23.10](#).

1.5 Two former colorimetric test methods were discontinued. Refer to [Appendix X1](#) for historical information.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:⁵

- [D858 Test Methods for Manganese in Water](#)
- [D1066 Practice for Sampling Steam](#)
- [D1068 Test Methods for Iron in Water](#)
- [D1129 Terminology Relating to Water](#)
- [D1193 Specification for Reagent Water](#)
- [D1687 Test Methods for Chromium in Water](#)
- [D1688 Test Methods for Copper in Water](#)
- [D1691 Test Methods for Zinc in Water](#)
- [D2777 Practice for Determination of Precision and Bias of Applicable Test Methods of Committee D19 on Water](#)
- [D3370 Practices for Sampling Water from Closed Conduits](#)
- [D3557 Test Methods for Cadmium in Water](#)

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D19](#) on Water and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D19.05](#) on Inorganic Constituents in Water.

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² Chilton, J. M., "Simultaneous Colorimetric Determination of Copper, Cobalt, and Nickel as Diethyldithiocarbamates," *Analytical Chemistry*, Vol 25, 1953, pp. 1274–1275.

³ Platte, J. A., and Marcy, V. M., "A New Tool for the Water Chemist," *Industrial Water Engineering*, ~~May~~ May 1965.

⁴ Brown, E., Skougstad, M. W., and Fishman, M. J., "Methods for Collection and Analysis of Water Samples for Dissolved Minerals and Gases," *Techniques of Water-Resources Investigations of the U.S. Geological Survey*, Book 5, 1970, p. 115.

⁵ 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.

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

[D3558 Test Methods for Cobalt in Water](#)

[D3559 Test Methods for Lead in Water](#)

[D3919 Practice for Measuring Trace Elements in Water by Graphite Furnace Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry](#)

[D4841 Practice for Estimation of Holding Time for Water Samples Containing Organic and Inorganic Constituents](#)

[D5673 Test Method for Elements in Water by Inductively Coupled Plasma—Mass Spectrometry](#)

[D5810 Guide for Spiking into Aqueous Samples](#)

[D5847 Practice for Writing Quality Control Specifications for Standard Test Methods for Water Analysis](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 For definitions of terms used in these test methods, refer to Terminology [D1129](#).

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 ~~total recoverable nickel—nickel, *n*—an arbitrary analytical a descriptive term relating to the recoverable forms of nickel that are determinable by the digestion method that is included—nickel forms recovered in the acid-digestion procedure specified in these test methods.~~

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Elemental constituents in potable water, receiving water, and wastewater need to be identified for support of effective pollution control programs. Test Methods A, B, and C provide the techniques necessary to make such measurements.

4.2 Nickel is considered to be relatively nontoxic to man and a limit for nickel is not included in the EPA National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations.⁶ The toxicity of nickel to aquatic life indicates tolerances that vary widely and that are influenced by species, pH, synergistic effects, and other factors.

4.3 Nickel is a silver-white metallic element seldom occurring in nature in the elemental form. Nickel salts are soluble and can occur as a leachate from nickel-bearing ores. Nickel salts are used in metal-plating and may be discharged to surface or ground waters.

5. Purity of Reagents

5.1 Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society where such specifications are available.⁷ Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

5.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water conforming to Specification [D1193](#), Type I. Other reagent water types may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the water is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the bias and precision of the determination. Type II water was specified at the time of the round-robin testing of this test method.

6. Sampling

6.1 Collect the sample in accordance with Practice [D1066](#) or Practices [D3370](#), as applicable.

6.2 Samples shall be preserved with HNO₃ (sp gr 1.42) to a pH of 2 or less immediately at the time of collection, normally about 2 mL/L. If only dissolved nickel is to be determined, the sample shall be filtered through a 0.45- μ m membrane filter before acidification. The holding time for samples may be calculated in accordance with Practice [D4841](#).

NOTE 1—Alternatively, the pH may be adjusted in the laboratory if the sample is returned within 14 days. However, acid must be added at least 24 hours before analysis to dissolve any metals that adsorb to the container walls. This could reduce hazards of working with acids in the field when appropriate.

TEST METHOD A—ATOMIC ABSORPTION, DIRECT

7. Scope

7.1 This test method covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable nickel and has been used successfully with reagent water, tap water, river water, lake water, ground water, a refinery effluent, and a wastewater.

⁶ EPA Publication No. EPA-570/9-76-003 was originally published in 1976, and amended in 1980. Contact the Environmental Protection Agency, 401 “M” ST., S.W., Washington, DC 20406 for availability.

⁷ *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For Suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Annual Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

7.2 This test method is applicable in the range from 0.1 to 10 mg/L of nickel. The range may be extended upward by dilution of the sample.

8. Summary of Test Method

8.1 Nickel is determined by atomic absorption spectrophotometry. Dissolved nickel is determined by aspirating the filtered sample directly with no pretreatment. Total recoverable nickel is determined by aspirating the sample following hydrochloric-nitric acid digestion and filtration. The same digestion procedure is used for cadmium (Test Methods [D3557](#)), chromium (Test Methods [D1687](#)), cobalt (Test Methods [D3558](#)), copper (Test Methods [D1688](#)), iron (Test Methods [D1068](#)), lead (Test Methods [D3559](#)), manganese (Test Methods [D858](#)), and zinc (Test Methods [D1691](#)).

9. Interferences

9.1 Sodium, potassium, sulfate, and chloride (9000 mg/L each), calcium, magnesium and iron (4000 mg/L each), nitrate (2000 mg/L), and cadmium, lead, copper, zinc, cobalt, and chromium (10 mg/L each) do not interfere.

NOTE 2—Background correction by techniques such as a continuum source, nonabsorbing lines, or chelation-extraction, may be necessary for low levels of nickel for some types of water. Instrument manufacturer's instructions for use of the specific correction technique should be followed.

10. Apparatus

10.1 *Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer*, for use at 232.0 nm.

NOTE 3—The manufacturer's instructions should be followed for all instrumental parameters. Wavelengths other than 232.0 nm may be used if they have been determined to be equally suitable.

10.2 *Nickel Hollow-Cathode Lamp*—Multielement hollow-cathode lamps are available and also have been found satisfactory.

10.3 *Pressure-Reducing Valves*—The supplies of fuel and oxidant shall be maintained at pressures somewhat higher than the controlled operating pressure of the instrument by suitable valves.

11. Reagents and Materials

11.1 *Filter Paper*—Purchase suitable filter paper. Typically the filter papers have a pore size of 0.45- μ m membrane. Material such as fine-textured, acid-washed, ashless paper, or glass fiber paper are acceptable. The user must first ascertain that the filter paper is of sufficient purity to use without adversely affecting the bias and precision of the test method.

11.2 *Hydrochloric Acid* (sp gr 1.19)—Concentrated hydrochloric acid (HCl).

NOTE 4—If a high reagent blank is obtained, distill the HCl or use a spectrograde acid.

NOTE 5—When HCl is distilled, an azeotropic mixture is formed (~ 6 N HCl). Therefore, whenever concentrated HCl is used in the preparation of reagents or in the procedure, use twice the volume of the distilled HCl.

11.3 *Nitric Acid* (sp gr 1.42)—Concentrated nitric acid (HNO₃).

NOTE 6—If a high reagent blank is obtained, distill the HNO₃ or use a spectrograde acid.

11.4 *Nitric Acid* (1 + 499)—Add 1 volume HNO₃ (sp gr 1.42) to 499 volumes of water.

11.5 *Nickel Solution, Stock* (1.0 mL = 1.0 mg Ni)—Commercially purchase or dissolve 4.953 g of nickelous nitrate [Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O] in a mixture of 10 mL of HNO₃ (sp gr 1.42) and 100 mL of water. Dilute to 1 L with water. A purchased nickel stock solution of appropriate known purity is acceptable.

11.6 *Nickel Solution, Standard* (1 mL = 0.1 mg Ni)—Dilute 100.0 mL of the stock nickel solution and 1 mL of HNO₃ to 1 L with water.

11.7 *Oxidant*:

11.7.1 *Air*, which has been passed through a suitable filter to remove oil, water, and other foreign substances is the usual oxidant.

11.8 *Fuel*:

11.8.1 *Acetylene*—Standard, commercially available acetylene is the usual fuel. Acetone, always present in acetylene cylinders, can affect analytical results. The cylinder should be replaced at 50 psig (345 kPa). ~~345 kPa (50 psig). Warning: (Warning—~~ "Purified" grade acetylene containing a special proprietary solvent rather than acetone should not be used with poly(vinyl chloride) tubing as weakening of the walls can cause a potentially hazardous situation. ~~“Purified” grade acetylene containing a special proprietary solvent rather than acetone should not be used with poly(vinyl chloride) tubing as weakening of the walls can cause a potentially hazardous situation.)~~

12. Standardization

12.1 Prepare a blank and at least four standard solutions to bracket the expected nickel concentration range of the samples to be analyzed by diluting the standard nickel solution with HNO₃ (1 + 499) as described in [H-511.6](#). Prepare the standards (100 mL) each time the test is to be performed. ~~performed~~ or as determined by Practice [D4841](#).

**TABLE 1 Precision and Concentration, Direct Aspiration
(Test Method A)**

<i>Reagent Water:</i>			
Concentration (X), mg/L	7.74	0.84	3.93
S_T	0.502	0.102	0.383
S_O	0.261	0.045	0.324
<i>Natural Water:</i>			
Concentration (X), mg/L	7.74	0.84	3.87
S_T	0.629	0.108	0.401
S_O	0.420	0.067	0.192

12.2 For total recoverable nickel add 0.5 mL of HNO_3 (sp gr 1.42) and proceed as directed in 13.2 through 13.4. For dissolved nickel proceed with 13.5.

12.3 Analyze at least four working standards containing concentrations of nickel that bracket the expected sample concentration, prior to analysis of samples, to calibrate the instrument. Atomize the blank and standards and record the instrument readings. Atomize HNO_3 (1 + 499) between each standard.

12.4 ~~Prepare~~ Read directly in concentration if this capability is provided with the instrument or prepare an analytical curve by plotting the absorbance versus the concentration for each standard on linear graph paper. ~~Alternatively, read directly in concentration if this capability is provided with the instrument paper or use a computer.~~

13. Procedure

13.1 Measure 100.0 mL of a well-mixed acidified sample into a 125-mL beaker or flask.

NOTE 7—If only dissolved nickel is to be determined, start with 13.5.

13.2 Add 5 mL of HCl (sp gr 1.19) (11.2) to each sample.

13.3 Heat the samples on a steam bath or hotplate in a well-ventilated fume hood until the volume has been reduced to 15 to 20 mL, making certain that the samples do not boil.

NOTE 8—For samples with high levels of suspended matter or dissolved solids, the amount of reduction in volume is left to the discretion of the analyst.

NOTE 9—Many laboratories have found block digestion systems a useful way to digest samples for trace metals analysis. Systems typically consist of either a metal or graphite block with wells to hold digestion tubes. The block temperature controller must be able to maintain uniformity of temperature (65°C to 85°C) across all positions of the block. For trace metals analysis, the digestion tubes should be constructed of polypropylene and have a volume accuracy of at least 0.5 %. All lots of tubes should come with a certificate of analysis to demonstrate suitability for their intended purpose.

13.4 Cool and filter the samples through a suitable filter, filter (11.1), such as fine-textured, acid-washed, ashless paper, into 100-mL volumetric flasks. Wash the filter paper two or three times with water and bring filtrate to volume.

13.5 Atomize each filtered and acidified sample and determine its absorbance or concentration. Atomize HNO_3 (1 + 499) between samples.

14. Calculation

14.1 Calculate the concentration of nickel in each sample, in milligrams per litre, using 12.4.

15. Precision and Bias⁸

15.1 The precision of this test method was tested by eleven laboratories in reagent water, natural waters, a refinery effluent and in a wastewater. Five laboratories reported data for two operators. The precision of this test method is shown in Table 1; the bias is shown in Table 2.

15.2 It is the user's responsibility to ensure the validity of this test method for waters of untested matrices.

15.3 This section on precision and bias conforms to Practice D2777 – 77 which was in place at the time of collaborative testing. Under the allowances made in 1.4 of Practice D2777 – 06, – 13, these precision and bias data do meet existing requirements of interlaboratory studies of Committee D19 test methods.

16. Quality Control

16.1 In order to be certain that analytical values obtained using these test methods are valid and accurate within the confidence limits of the test, the following QC procedures must be followed when analyzing nickel.

16.2 *Calibration and Calibration Verification:*

⁸ Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:D19-1038. Contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org.

**TABLE 2 Determination of Bias, Direct Aspiration
(Test Method A)**

Amount Added, mg/L	Amount Found, mg/L	Bias, mg/L	Bias, %	Statistically Significant (95 % Confidence Level)
<i>Reagent Water:</i>				
8.0	7.74	-0.26	-3	yes
0.8	0.84	+0.04	+5	yes
4.0	3.93	-0.07	-2	no
<i>Natural Water:</i>				
8.0	7.74	-0.26	-3	yes
0.8	0.84	+0.04	+5	yes
4.0	3.87	-0.13	-3	yes

16.2.1 Analyze at least four working standards containing concentrations of nickel that bracket the expected sample concentration, prior to analysis of samples, to calibrate the instrument. ~~instrument (see 12.3). The calibration correlation coefficient shall be equal to or greater than 0.990. In addition to the initial calibration blank, a calibration blank shall be analyzed at the end of the batch run to ensure contamination was not a problem during the batch analysis.~~

16.2.2 Verify instrument calibration after standardization by analyzing a standard at the concentration of one of the calibration standards. The concentration of a mid-range standard should fall within $\pm 15\%$ of the known concentration. Analyze a calibration blank to verify system cleanliness.

16.2.3 If calibration cannot be verified, recalibrate the instrument.

16.2.4 It is recommended to analyze a continuing calibration blank (CCB) and continuing calibration verification (CCV) at a 10 % frequency. The results should fall within the expected precision of the method or $\pm 15\%$ of the known concentration.

16.3 *Initial Demonstration of Laboratory Capability:*

16.3.1 If a laboratory has not performed the test before, or if there has been a major change in the measurement system, for example, new analyst, new instrument, and so forth, a precision and bias study must be performed to demonstrate laboratory capability.

16.3.2 Analyze seven replicates of a standard solution prepared from an Independent Reference Material containing a midrange concentration of nickel. The matrix and chemistry of the solution should be equivalent to the solution used in the collaborative study. Each replicate must be taken through the complete analytical test method including any sample preservation and pretreatment steps. ~~The replicates may be interspersed with samples.~~

16.3.3 Calculate the mean and standard deviation of the seven values and compare to the acceptable ranges of bias in **Table 2**. This study should be repeated until the recoveries are within the limits given in **Table 1**. If a concentration other than the recommended concentration is used, refer to Practice **D5847** for information on applying the *F* test and *t* test in evaluating the acceptability of the mean and standard deviation.

16.4 *Laboratory Control Sample (LCS):*

16.4.1 To ensure that the test method is in control, prepare and analyze a LCS containing a known concentration of nickel with each batch or ten samples. If large numbers of samples are analyzed in the batch, analyze the LCS after every ten samples. (laboratory-defined or twenty samples). The laboratory control samples for a large batch should cover the analytical range when possible. The LCS must be taken through all of the steps of the analytical method including sample preservation and pretreatment. The result obtained for a mid-range LCS shall fall within $\pm 15\%$ of the known concentration.

16.4.2 If the result is not within these limits, analysis of samples is halted until the problem is corrected, and either all the samples in the batch must be reanalyzed, or the results must be qualified with an indication that they do not fall within the performance criteria of the test method.

16.5 *Method Blank:*

16.5.1 Analyze a reagent water test blank with each laboratory-defined batch. The concentration of nickel found in the blank should be less than 0.5 times the lowest calibration standard. If the concentration of nickel is found above this level, analysis of samples is halted until the contamination is eliminated, and a blank shows no contamination at or above this level, or the results must be qualified with an indication that they do not fall within the performance criteria of the test method.

16.6 *Matrix Spike (MS):*

16.6.1 To check for interferences in the specific matrix being tested, perform a MS on at least one sample from each laboratory-defined batch by spiking an aliquot of the sample with a known concentration of nickel and taking it through the analytical method.

16.6.2 The spike concentration plus the background concentration of nickel must not exceed the high calibration standard. The spike must produce a concentration in the spiked sample that is 2 to 5 times the analyte concentration in the unspiked sample, or 10 to 50 times the detection limit of the test method, whichever is greater.

16.6.3 Calculate the percent recovery of the spike (P) using the following formula:

$$P = 100[A(V_s + V) - BV_s]/CV$$

where:

where:

- A = analyte known concentration (mg/L) in spiked sample,
- B = analyte known concentration (mg/L) in unspiked sample,
- C = known concentration (mg/L) of analyte in spiking solution,
- V_s = volume (mL) of sample used, and
- V = volume (mL) of spiking solution added.

16.6.4 The percent recovery of the spike shall fall within the limits, based on the analyte concentration, listed in Test Method **D5810**, Table 1. If the percent recovery is not within these limits, a matrix interference may be present in the sample selected for spiking. Under these circumstances, one of the following remedies must be employed: the matrix interference must be removed, all samples in the batch must be analyzed by a test method not affected by the matrix interference, or the results must be qualified with an indication that they do not fall within the performance criteria of the test method.

NOTE 10—Acceptable spike recoveries are dependent on the concentration of the component of interest. See Test Method **D5810** for additional information.

16.7 Duplicate:

16.7.1 To check the precision of sample analyses, analyze a sample in duplicate with each laboratory-defined batch. If the concentration of the analyte is less than five times the detection limit for the analyte, a matrix spike duplicate (MSD) should be used.

16.7.2 Calculate the standard deviation of the duplicate values and compare to the precision in the collaborative study using an *F* test. Refer to 6.4.4 of Practice **D5847** for information on applying the *F* test.

16.7.3 If the result exceeds the precision limit, the batch must be reanalyzed or the results must be qualified with an indication that they do not fall within the performance criteria of the test method.

16.8 Independent Reference Material (IRM):

16.8.1 In order to verify the quantitative value produced by the test method, analyze an Independent Reference Material (IRM) submitted as a regular sample (if practical) to the laboratory at least once per quarter. The concentration of the IRM should be in the concentration mid-range for the method chosen. The value obtained must fall within the control limits established by the laboratory.

TEST METHOD B—ATOMIC ABSORPTION, CHELATION-EXTRACTION

17. Scope //standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/3d69a5a5-f0b1-4593-a9f4-1e242231a272/astm-d1886-14

17.1 This test method covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable nickel and has been used successfully with reagent water, tap water, river water, artificial seawater and a synthetic (NaCl) brine.

17.2 This test method is applicable in the range from 10 to 1000µ g/L of nickel. The range may be extended upward by dilution of the sample.

18. Summary of Test Method

18.1 Nickel is determined by atomic absorption spectrophotometry. The element, either dissolved or total recoverable, is chelated with pyrrolidine dithiocarbamic acid and extracted with chloroform. The extract is evaporated to dryness, treated with hot nitric acid to destroy organic matter, dissolved in hydrochloric acid, and diluted to a specified volume with water. The resulting solution is then aspirated into the air-acetylene flame of the spectrophotometer. The digestion procedure summarized in **8.1** is used for total recoverable nickel. The same chelation-extraction procedure is used for cadmium (Test Methods **D3557**), cobalt (Test Methods **D3558**), copper (Test Methods **D1688**), iron (Test Methods **D1068**), lead (Test Methods **D3559**), and zinc (Test Methods **D1691**).

19. Interferences

19.1 See **9.1**.

20. Apparatus

20.1 All apparatus described in Section **10** are required.

21. Reagents and Materials

21.1 *Bromphenol Blue Indicator Solution* (1 g/L)—Dissolve 0.1 g of bromphenol blue in 100 mL of 50 % ethanol or isopropanol.