



Designation: **E2397–11 E2397/E2397M – 15**

Standard Practice for Determination of Dead Loads and Live Loads Associated with Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation **E2397/E2397M**; 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 covers a standardized procedure for predicting the system weight of a vegetative (green) roof system.

1.2 The practice addresses the loads associated with vegetative (green) roof systems. Components that are typically encountered in vegetative (green) roof systems include: membranes, non-absorptive plastic sheet components, metallic layers, fabrics, geocomposite drain layers, synthetic reinforcing layers, cover/recover boards, insulation materials, growth media, granular drainage media, and plant materials.

1.3 This practice also addresses the weight of the vegetative (green) roof system under two conditions: (1) weight under drained conditions after new water additions by rainfall or irrigation have ceased (this includes the weight of retained water and captured water), and (2) weight when rainfall or irrigation is actively occurring and the drain layer is completely filled with water. The first condition is considered the dead load of the vegetative (green) roof system. The difference in weight between the first and second conditions, approximated by the weight of transient water in the drain layer, is considered a live load.

1.4 This practice does not address point or line loads associated with architectural elements that are not essential components of a particular vegetative (green) roof system. These architectural elements may include pavement, walls, and masonry, and so forth.

1.5 This practice does not address live loads associated with construction activities.

1.6 This practice does not address loads associated with snow or wind.

1.7 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in non-conformance with the standard.

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 to determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

E11 Specification for Woven Wire Test Sieve Cloth and Test Sieves

E631 Terminology of Building Constructions

E2114 Terminology for Sustainability Relative to the Performance of Buildings

E2396 Test Method for Saturated Water Permeability of Granular Drainage Media [Falling-Head Method] for Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems

E2398 Test Method for Water Capture and Media Retention of Geocomposite Drain Layers for Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems

E2399 Test Method for Maximum Media Density for Dead Load Analysis of Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems

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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. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 For terms related to building construction, refer to Terminology E631.

3.1.2 For terms related to sustainability relative to the performance of buildings, refer to Terminology E2114.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *captured water, n*—the quantity of water that is retained in the drain layer of a vegetative (green) roof system after new water additions have ceased and that cannot escape the roof except through evaporation or plant transpiration.

3.2.1.1 Discussion—

Water capture is a design technique for enhancing the water holding properties of a vegetative (green) roof system. Water may be captured using a number of techniques, including reservoirs built into a geocomposite drain layer, trays, and restricting drainage in order to hold water within the drain layer. In some vegetative (green) roof systems a granular course at the bottom of the vegetative (green) roof system provides both drainage and water capture functions. In this case the captured water applies only to the thickness of the granular course for which drainage is restricted. A method for determining the captured water associated with geocomposites based on the unit water capture volume is provided in Test Method E2398. The quantity of captured water will depend on whether or not the upper surface of the geocomposite drain layer is in-filled with granular media.

3.2.2 *geocomposite drain layer, n*—a synthetic sheet, mat, or panel that is specifically designed to convey water horizontally toward the roof deck drains, gutters, or scuppers.

3.2.2.1 Discussion—

Geocomposite drain layers include absorptive drain mats whose principle function is drainage, but which will also contribute to water retention (see *retained water*). Some geocomposite drain layers may incorporate reservoirs on their upper surfaces that will capture water (see *captured water*).

3.2.3 *maximum media density, n*—the density of a mixed media material determined after it has been subjected to a specific amount of compaction and hydrated by immersion to simulate prolonged exposure to both foot traffic and rainfall.

3.2.3.1 Discussion—

The maximum media density applies to media in a drained condition. The measurement of the maximum media density is provided in Test Method E2399.

3.2.4 *maximum media water retention*—the quantity of water held in a media layer at the maximum media density, measured in volume percent.

3.2.4.1 Discussion—

A procedure for measuring the maximum media water retention is provided in Test Method E2399.

3.2.5 *module, n*—modular vegetative (green) roof systems combine many functional elements of vegetative (green) roof systems in a pre-manufactured module.

3.2.5.1 Discussion—

Independent modules are designed to be placed adjacent to one another and linked in order to tile larger surfaces.

3.2.6 *retained water, n*—water which is held for a period of hours or days but would eventually drain out given enough time in the absence of evaporation or plant transpiration.

3.2.6.1 Discussion—

Retained water is the quantity of water that is held for a prolonged period against gravity drainage in a vegetative (green) roof system, or in one of its components, after new additions by rainfall or artificial irrigation have ceased. Neglecting the effects of capillary rise, evaporation, and plant transpiration all of this water would eventually produce runoff. However, in practice most of this water will not become runoff but will be lost to evaporation and the plant-mediated processes of transpiration. This procedure describes standardized methods for estimating the quantity of water retained in a vegetative (green) roof system.

3.2.7 *roof system, n*—see *roofing system*.

3.2.8 *roofing system, n*—assembly of interacting components designed to weatherproof, and sometimes to insulate, the roof surface of a building. **E631**

3.2.8.1 Discussion—

This term includes all components above the roof deck that are not part of the overlying vegetative (green) roof system. In practice this usually means the waterproofing membrane and all materials below the waterproofing membrane, down to the structural deck. It may include structural materials such as cover/recover board, insulation, protective layers, fire-suppressing materials, and waterproofing materials. The weight of these components (assumed dry) must be obtained from the manufacturer of the roofing system.

3.2.9 *transient water, n*—the quantity of water that is required to completely fill the drain layer of a vegetative (green) roof system, less the quantity of captured water.

3.2.9.1 Discussion—

Transient water fills the open space, including pore spaces. This water can only be held for a period of minutes and drains immediately when rainfall additions end. This moisture contributes to the live load of the vegetative (green) roof system.

4. Summary of Practice

4.1 This practice describes a systematic procedure for estimating the dead load and transient water live load of vegetative (green) roof systems using information about the vegetative (green) roof components that are available from laboratory analysis.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This practice addresses performance characteristics for vegetative (green) roof systems with respect to the dead load and transient water load of the entire vegetative (green) roof system.

5.2 Determining these performance characteristics of vegetative (green) roof systems provides information to facilitate the assessment of related engineering aspects of the facility. Such aspects may include structural design requirements, mechanical engineering and thermal design requirements, and fire and life safety requirements.

5.3 Determining these performance characteristics of vegetative (green) roof systems provides information to facilitate assessment of the performance of one vegetative (green) roof system relative to another.

6. Apparatus

6.1 Apparatus:

6.1.1 Scale, accurate to 0.005 oz (0.14 g); [0.14 g];

6.1.2 Metal mesh with sieve opening size of U.S. #30 (0.6 mm); [0.6 mm], or larger, suspended from a drain stand;

6.1.3 Pan; and

6.1.4 Water bath.

6.2 Units of measure: lb/ft² (kg/m²); [kg/m²].

7. Procedure

7.1 *Weight of All Non-Absorptive Sheet Component*—These materials include plastic or rubber membranes, closed-cell foam layers, and the rigid or semi-rigid plastic cores of geocomposite drain layers. Also included is insulation provided as part of protected membrane roofing (PMR) installation. Absorptive drainage mats and fabrics, including fabrics integrated with geocomposite drain layers, are excluded (see 7.2 and 7.3). As needed, remove fabrics bonded to geocomposite drain layers for separate measurement according to 7.2. Weigh a 4-in. by 4-in. (10-cm by 10-cm) [10-cm by 10-cm] piece. Multiply this weight by 9 (100) by 9 [100] to convert to unit weight in lb/ft² (kg/m²); [kg/m²], and record.

7.2 *Weight of All Fabrics*—4-in. by 4-in. (10-cm by 10-cm) [10-cm by 10-cm] sample in the dry condition. Multiply this weight by 9 (100) by 9 [100] to convert to unit weight in lb/ft² (kg/m²); [kg/m²], and record. This is the dry unit weight of the fabric. Immerse the sample in a water bath for 15 min. Withdraw from the bath and drain for 15 min by laying the fabric flat on a suspended U.S. #30 (0.6 mm) [0.6 mm] wire cloth or sieve. Weigh the sample, convert to unit weight in lb/ft²; [kg/m²], and record. This is the unit weight of the fabric. The difference between the two measurements is the unit weight of the retained water associated with the fabric, *Wr*.

7.3 *Weight of Absorptive Drain Mats Used as Drain Layer Components*—These materials include open-cell foam layers, porous mats fabricated from particles of plastic or rubber, and mats manufactured from coir or other organic fibers. Weigh the pan using the scale. Weigh a 4-in. by 4-in. (10-cm by 10-cm) [10-cm by 10-cm] sample in the dry condition. Multiply this weight by 9 (100) by 9 [100] to convert to unit weight in lb/ft² (kg/m²); [kg/m²], and record as the dry unit weight of the sample. Immerse