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# Standard Test Method for Water Capture and Media Retention of Geocomposite Drain Layers for Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation **E2398**; **E2398/E2398M**; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the water and media retention of synthetic drains layers used in vegetative (green) roof systems.

1.2 This test method is applicable to geocomposite drain layers that retain water and media in cup-like receptacles on their upper surface. Examples include shaped plastic membranes and closed-cell plastic foam boardsboards.

1.3 This test method does not apply to products manufactured from water-absorptive materials.

1.4 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.

1.5 *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:*<sup>2</sup>

**E631 Terminology of Building Constructions**

**E2114 Terminology for Sustainability Relative to the Performance of Buildings**

**E2397 Practice for Determination of Dead Loads and Live Loads Associated with Vegetative (Green) Roof Systems**

## 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 drainage 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.

3.2.2 *coupon, n*—a portion of a material or laboratory sample from which multiple specimens can be taken for testing.

3.2.3 *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.

<sup>1</sup> This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **D08** on Roofing and Waterproofing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **D08.24** on Sustainability.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

3.2.3.1 *Discussion*—

Geocomposite drainage layers include absorptive drainage mats whose principle function is drainage, but which will also

contribute to water retention (see *retained water*). Some geocomposite drainage layers may incorporate receptacles on their upper surfaces that will capture water (see *captured water*).

3.2.4 *retained water, n*—the quantity of water that will be retained 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.

#### 3.2.4.1 Discussion—

Most of this water will not become runoff but will be used to the plant-mediated processes of evapo-transpiration.

3.2.5 *unit media retention volume, n*—the volume,  $\text{ft}^3/\text{ft}^2$  ( $\text{cm}^3/\text{cm}^2$ ), that is required to fill a geocomposite drain layer to the upper most asperities of the geocomposite drain layer.

3.2.6 *unit water capture volume, n*—the maximum volume of water,  $\text{ft}^3/\text{ft}^2$  ( $\text{cm}^3/\text{cm}^2$ ), that a geocomposite drain layer can hold at a specified inclination.

#### 3.2.6.1 Discussion—

For vegetative (green) roofs systems where the geocomposite drain layer will be filled with granular drainage medium, the actual volume is assumed to be 25 % of the measured volume. This assumption will allow a direct comparison between geocomposite sheet drains without, regard to the granular drainage media used. In computing the actual water capture of a geocomposite sheet drain employed in a specific vegetative (green) roof assembly, the porosity of the granular drainage medium used must be considered (Practice E2397).

## 4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 This procedure provides a method for measuring the volume of granular media or water, or both, that geocomposite drain layers can hold. The test involves filling the geocomposite drain layers with sand and water to establish the respective volumes. Since water capture will be influenced by the inclination of the geocomposite drain layer, the tests are conducted at several inclinations.

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 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.

5.1.1 Accurate information about the water and media holding capacity of geocomposite drain layers is essential to predict dead load for vegetative (green) roof systems.

5.2 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 one another.

5.2.1 Water capture is also useful in assessing irrigation requirements for vegetative (green) roof designs.

5.2.2 Information about the unit media retention volume is required to predict the quantity of material that will be required to construct a vegetative (green) roof with a specified total thickness.

## 6. Apparatus

6.1 *Apparatus*—contains the following:

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

6.1.2 Scoop,

6.1.3 Water dropper,

6.1.4 4-in. (10-cm) [10-cm] wide strip of aluminum or copper sheet metal,

6.1.5 Latex or silicone caulk, and

6.1.6 Ruler.

## 7. Conditioning

7.1 Cut out a rectangular coupon of the geocomposite drain layer to be tested.

7.2 The coupon should contain only complete, intact receptacles. The coupon should contain a minimum of four receptacles and be at least 6 in. (15-cm) [15 cm] square.

## 8. Procedure

8.1 Weigh the coupon in a dry condition, and record.