



Designation: F 1534 – 00

## Standard Test Method for Determining Changes in Fire-Test-Response Characteristics of Cushioning Materials After Water Leaching<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F 1534; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

### 1. Scope

1.1 This fire-test-response test method covers a procedure for leaching cushioning materials with water and determining changes in two specific fire-test-response characteristics: (1) the surface flammability, per Test Method D 3675 and (2) the specific optical density of smoke generated, per Test Method E 662.

1.2 *This standard is used to measure and describe the response of materials, products, or assemblies to heat and flame under controlled conditions, but does not by itself incorporate all factors required for fire hazard or fire risk assessment of the materials, products, or assemblies under actual fire conditions.*

1.3 In view of the wide variation in potential service conditions, it is likely that results of this leaching test will not give a direct correlation with service performance for all applications. However, the test method yields comparative data on which to base judgments as to expected service of cushioning materials and is useful in research and development work.

1.4 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

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 determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* For specific precautionary statements, see Section 7.

### 2. Referenced Documents

#### 2.1 ASTM Standards:

- D 3675 Test Method for Surface Flammability of Flexible Cellular Materials Using a Radiant Heat Energy Source<sup>2</sup>
- E 176 Terminology of Fire Standards<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F33 on Detention and Correctional Facilities and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F33.05 on Furnishings and Equipment.

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<sup>2</sup> *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 08.02.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 04.07.

E 662 Test Method for Specific Optical Density of Smoke Generated by Solid Materials<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in this test method and associated with fire issues refer to Terminology E 176.

#### 3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *cushioning, n*—the material used to isolate or reduce the effect of externally applied shock or vibration forces, or both.

3.2.2 *fire performance, n*—response of a material, product, or assembly in a specific fire, other than a fire test involving controlled conditions (different from fire-test-response characteristic, q.v.).

3.2.2.1 *Discussion*—The ASTM Policy on Fire Standards distinguishes between the response of materials, products, or assemblies to heat and flame “under controlled conditions,” which is fire-test-response characteristic, and “under actual fire conditions,” which is fire performance. Fire performance depends on the occasion or environment and may not be measurable. In view of the limited availability of fire-performance data, the response to one or more fire tests, appropriately recognized as representing end-use conditions, is generally used as a predictor of the fire performance of a material, product, or assembly.

3.2.3 *fire-test-response characteristic, n*—a response characteristic of a material, product, or assembly, to a prescribed source of heat, or flame, under controlled fire conditions; such response characteristics may include but are not limited to ease of ignition, flame spread, heat release, mass loss, smoke generation, fire endurance, and toxic potency of smoke.

3.2.3.1 *Discussion*—A fire-test-response characteristic can be influenced by variables of exposure such as ignition intensity, ventilation, geometry of item or enclosure, humidity, or oxygen concentration. It is not an intrinsic property such as specific heat, thermal conductivity, or heat of combustion, where the value is independent of test variables. A fire-test-response characteristic may be described in one of several terms. Smoke generation, for example, may be described as smoke opacity, change of opacity with time, or smoke weight. No quantitative correlation need exist between values of a

response characteristic for two or more materials, products, or assemblies, as measured by two or more approaches, or tested under two or more sets of conditions for a given method.

3.2.4 *leaching, n*—the removal in solution of the more soluble materials by percolating or moving water.

3.2.5 *softened water, n*—water that has been treated with substances to remove or sequester the calcium or magnesium ions.

3.2.5.1 *Discussion*—Among the substances used for water softening are various sodium phosphates and zeolites (natural hydrated silicate of aluminum and either sodium or potassium or both). Water of specific resistance of 1 M $\Omega$  or higher is suitable.

#### 4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 In this test method samples of cushioning materials are subjected to leaching by immersing specimens in flowing softened water for a period of 6 h and then dried. Two fire-test-response characteristics of the cushioning materials, namely the surface flammability, per Test Method D 3675, and the specific optical density of smoke, per Test Method E 662, are measured on specimens of the materials which have undergone the water treatment. The results are then compared with results obtained from untreated specimens of the same materials, to determine the percentage change in each fire-test-response characteristic.

#### 5. Significance and Use

5.1 The fire performance of a material or product is affected by a combination of its fire-test-response characteristics. Two of the most commonly determined fire-test-response characteristics of cushioning materials are the surface flammability, per Test Method D 3675, and the specific optical density of smoke, per Test Method E 662.

5.2 Cushioning materials used in upholstery applications are potentially exposed to leaching of the active ingredients due to (1) water solubility of the treating agents or (2) exposure to high humidity.

5.3 In view of the importance that the fire performance of the cushioning materials used in upholstery applications remain constant throughout their intended service life, this test method provides a means to test for the potential change in two fire-test-response characteristics due to leaching.

#### 6. Apparatus

6.1 *Water Tank*—Use a water container or tank of a shape and size sufficient for the specimens to be fully submersible therein, to ensure full water contact with all surfaces. Determine the volume of the water container in litres by filling it with water and measuring the volume of the water. Confirm that the container is large enough that the ratio of the specimen(s) to water shall be no less than 1 to 20 by volume, by comparison with the volume of the specimens to be used, as determined in 8.4.

NOTE 1—The maximum volume of each specimen to be tested in Test Method D 3675 is 1.73 L. The maximum volume of each specimen to be tested in Test Method E 662 is 0.30 L.

##### 6.2 *Softened water:*

6.2.1 Use an established water softening procedure that ensures the presence of negligible amounts of alkaline or alkaline earth ions (principally sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium).<sup>4</sup>

NOTE 2—It is advisable to have the facility running water tested before acquiring a new water softening system. The use of a water indicator system in which a light turns on when the water contains excessive ions is recommended.

NOTE 3—The presence of alkaline or alkaline earth metal ions has been shown to possibly affect the flammability performance.

6.2.2 Provide a means of supplying a continuous flow of softened water to the bottom of the container at a rate of at least between two and three water changes per hour. Set the temperature of the flowing softened water to 20  $\pm$  5°C (68  $\pm$  9°F).

6.3 Provide a means at the top of the water container for disposing of the overflow.

6.4 Ensure that the apparatus has a means of suspending the specimens in such a manner that they are not in contact with each other during the leaching process. Ensure too that contact of the specimens with the container is minimized.

6.5 There are two alternative methods for specimen placement during leaching:

6.5.1 Place specimens in tank within a wire mesh cage, or

6.5.2 Suspend specimens from a rod within the tank by means of small clips and weigh them at the bottom.

#### 7. Safety Precautions

7.1 The test methods associated with assessing the fire-test-response characteristics of the cushioning materials are fire test methods, which are inherently hazardous.

7.2 In each of the fire test methods, the test procedures involve high temperatures and combustion processes. Hazards therefore exist for burns, ignition of extraneous objects or clothing, and inhalation of combustion products. The operator must take appropriate precautions during the insertion and removal of the test specimens, for example by using protective gloves. The operator must ensure not to touch either the ignition source, or the radiant heating source or any associated fixtures while hot, except with the use of appropriate protective gear.

#### 8. Test Specimens

8.1 Ensure that a sufficient number of test specimens is available to determine the fire-test-response characteristics of the cushioning materials per Test Method D 3675 and Test Method E 662 both before and after leaching.

8.2 Provide test specimens of the size required by Test Methods D 3675 and E 662.

<sup>4</sup> The following system is suitable for the water softening procedure: (a) a 12.7 L (0.45 ft<sup>3</sup>) carbon portable exchange tank (No. D-45 P tank with Culligan M media), (b) a 12.7 L (0.45 ft<sup>3</sup>) working mix bed portable exchange tank (No. 00-2477-25), (c) a 5 range water indicator light (No. D0-4035-21), (d) a 12.7 L (0.45 ft<sup>3</sup>) polishing mix bed portable exchange tank (No. 00-2477-25), and (e) another 5 range water indicator light (No. D0-4035-21); water quality should be maintained at 2 M $\Omega$ /cm or greater. (Manufacturer: Culligan International, 1 Culligan Parkway, Northbrook, IL 60062, 708-205-6000.) Alternative systems are also available.