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Standard Test Method for Odor of Volatile Solvents and Diluents¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 1296; 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.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers a comparative procedure for observing the characteristic and residual odors of volatile organic solvents and diluents to determine their odor acceptability in a solvent system.

1.2 It is not intended that this test method be employed to determine subtle odor differences between materials or to determine odor intensity.

1.3 It is recommended that this test method not be employed to determine the residual odor of a liquid if its time for evaporation to dryness at room temperature exceeds 30 min or as agreed upon.

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 hazard statements, see Section 4.

1.5 For specific hazard information, see the supplier's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

2. Reference Standards

2.1 Samples of the particular products being tested, having odor characteristics satisfactory to purchaser and manufacturer, are required.

3. Significance and Use

3.1 The comparative odor characteristics can be used, combined with other tests, for product identification and assessing compliance with a specification.

3.2 The residual odor characteristics can be used to judge the presence of relatively nonvolatile materials that may be associated with manufacture or contamination during distribution. Since volatile solvents and diluents are used in a wide variety of chemical processes and residual materials may affect the efficiency of such processes, this test method provides a comparative test for manufacturing control and assessing compliance with a specification.

4. Hazards

4.1 Many solvents and diluents, such as some aromatic and aliphatic hydrocarbons, are hazardous or toxic. Take special precautions while determining the odor of these products. Make the tests only as frequently as is necessary for control and base the evaluations on short sniffs, inhaling as little vapor as possible.

4.2 Provide adequate ventilation to maintain solvent or diluent concentration below the personnel exposure limit value established for the general work area as given in the MSDS.

4.3 Other hazards may also be present. These may be, but are not limited to, flammable, combustible, corrosive, or explosive (monomers) hazards.

5. Procedures

5.1 *Characteristic Odor*—Dip 25 by 75-mm strips of rapid qualitative paper, free of foreign odor, to a depth of 50 mm into the specimen and the reference standard, each contained in a beaker or other suitable container. Make an immediate comparison between the odor of the two materials on the filter papers.

5.2 *Residual Odor*—Dip 25 by 75-mm strips of a rapid qualitative paper, free of foreign odor, to a depth of 50 mm into the specimen under test and the reference sample, each contained in a beaker or other suitable container. Permit the papers to dry in air at room temperature and examine them at suitable intervals for differences in odor (see 1.3). The evaporation step may be omitted if only the "characteristic" odor of the material is to be determined.

6. Report

6.1 *Characteristic Odor*—Report the odor as "characteristic" if, upon immediate examination, the odor of the wet filter paper containing the specimen is similar to the odor of the filter paper containing the standard. However, report the odor as "noncharacteristic" if the odor of the specimen, compared with the standard, is unsuitable for its intended solvent use.

6.2 *Residual Odor*—Report the odor as "nonresidual" if no odor is detectable on the sample paper after both the standard and sample papers appear dry. It is assumed that the standard, which is acceptable to both consumer and producer, has no detectable residual odor. Report the odor as "residual" if an

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odor persists on the sample paper after none is detectable on the standard paper.

7. Precision and Bias

7.1 Precision—Since the result of the test is merely a subjective judgment of whether there is comparative similarity with the reference standard specified in the procedure, no statement is made about the precision of assessing either characteristic or residual odor.

7.2 Bias—No statement is made about the bias of either the characteristic or residual odor. Some analysts have little olfactory sensitivity to some materials, while other analysts have extreme sensitivity to either the main or (if any) minor

component. In either case, the accuracy of odor measurements should be considered suspect. In case of differing results between purchaser and supplier, it may be helpful to employ an odor panel consisting of no less than three persons. Consideration should be given to the qualifications of the panelists, such as the following: familiarity with odor determinations, length of time exposed to either the main or suspected minor component, and the environment in which the test is to be conducted.

8. Keywords

8.1 odor; solvent

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