



Designation: D3527 – 23

Standard Test Method for Life Performance of Automotive Wheel Bearing Grease¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3527; 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.

INTRODUCTION

This standard is based on a test rig that was originally designed in the 1960s. Since the standard was first published, there have been several attempts to revise the equipment and test procedure to improve the precision of the test. Since the first publication, there have been many advances in the quality of the hardware and automated control systems have superseded manual and analogue controls.

Several generations of test rig are still in commercial use, each potentially having their own issues relating to certification and contributing to the overall poor precision of this test. The Subcommittee responsible for this standard is aware of these issues, but has been unable to obtain sufficient interest to conduct an ILS program required to evaluate possible revisions and establish updated precision and bias data for comparison to the current test.

A 2017 ballot to withdraw this standard was unsuccessful and the standard will be re-approved to meet the needs of users and its inclusion in other industry and military standards, even though the hub design is obsolete. Work is underway to develop a replacement test that will better represent contemporary bearing designs and offer a selection of test conditions.

1. Scope*

1.1 This test method covers a laboratory procedure for evaluating the high-temperature life performance of wheel bearing greases when tested under prescribed conditions.

NOTE 1—Changes to this test method in the 1985 revision increased test severity. Results will not be comparable with data from earlier procedures.

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.2.1 *Exception*—Apparatus dimensions in inches are to be regarded as the standard.

1.3 *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, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.* For specific warning statements, see 8.1 – 8.4.

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recom-*

mendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *AFBMA Standard:*
AFBMA Standard 19, 1974 (ANSI B. 3.19-1975)²

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 *lubricant, n*—any material interposed between two surfaces that reduces the friction or wear between them.

3.1.2 *lubricating grease, n*—a semi-fluid to solid product of a dispersion of a thickener in a liquid lubricant.

3.1.2.1 *Discussion*—The dispersion of the thickener forms a two-phase system and immobilizes the liquid lubricant by surface tension and other physical forces. Other ingredients are commonly included to impart special properties.

3.1.3 *thickener, n*—*in lubricating grease*, a substance composed of finely-divided particles dispersed in a liquid lubricant to form the product's structure.

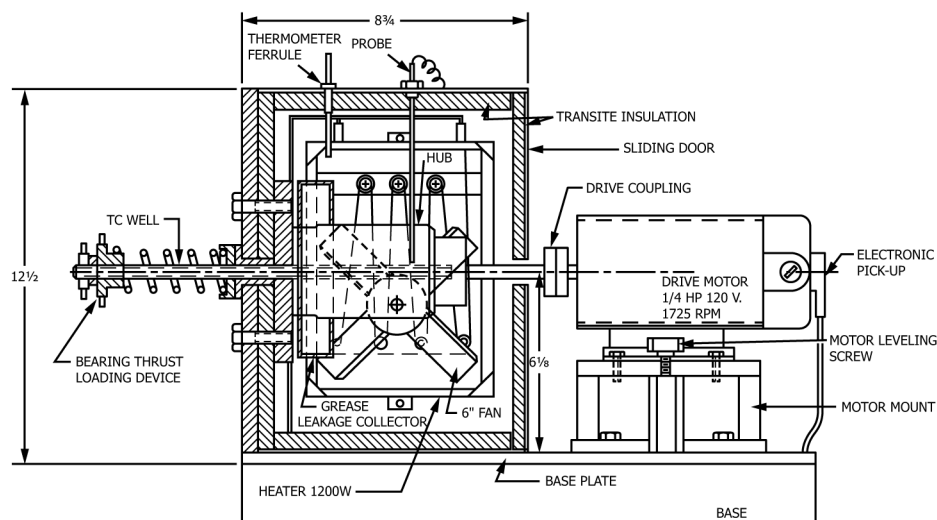
3.1.3.1 *Discussion*—The solid thickener can be fibers (such as various metallic soaps) or plates or spheres (such as certain non-soap thickeners) which are insoluble or, at the most, only very slightly soluble in the liquid lubricant. The general

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² Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

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



NOTE 1—Caution should be taken when modifying older units since some may still contain asbestos insulation leading to a possible inhalation hazard.

FIG. 1 Wheel Bearing Lubricant Tester (Elevation View)

requirements are that the solid particles be extremely small, uniformly dispersed, and capable of forming a relatively stable, gel-like structure with the liquid lubricant.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *automotive wheel bearing grease, n*—a lubricating grease specifically formulated to lubricate automotive wheel bearings at relatively high grease temperatures and bearing speeds.

3.2.2 *grease life, n*—of wheel bearing grease, amount of time operated under prescribed conditions of load, speed, and temperature until preset torque limit is exceeded.

3.2.2.1 *Discussion*—The *off-time*, which is part of the 20 h and 4 h off-cycle, is not recorded and is not included as part of grease life.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The test grease is distributed in the bearings of a modified, automobile front wheel hub-spindle-bearings assembly. While the bearings are thrust-loaded to approximately 111 N, the hub is rotated at 1000 r/min and the spindle temperature maintained at 160 °C for 20 h, 4 h off operating cycle. The test is terminated when grease deterioration causes the drive motor torque to exceed a calculated motor cut off value. Grease life is expressed as the accumulated on-cycle hours.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method differentiates among wheel bearing greases having distinctly different high-temperature characteristics. It is not the equivalent of longtime service tests, nor is it intended to distinguish between the products having similar high-temperature performance properties.

5.2 This test method has proven to be helpful in screening greases with respect to life performance for automotive wheel bearing applications.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Test Assembly* (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

6.1.1 *Custom-made Wheel Hub-Spindle-Bearing Assembly* (Fig. 3).

6.1.2 *Oven*, electrically heated by a 1200 watt heater, thermostatically controlled to maintain spindle temperature at 160 °C ± 1.5 °C.

6.1.3 *Spindle Drive Motor*, ¼ hp, 120 volts dc with 1725 r/min speed control the hub; motor torque is indicated by a meter equipped with an adjustable, automatic cut-off.

6.1.4 *Fan Drive Motor*, ⅓ hp, 120 v dc, 1550 r/min.

6.2 Motor speed, oven temperature, spindle temperature, time cycles and torque are controlled or monitored, or both, by accessory equipment. (Must have the capability to measure amps out to three decimal places or report as milliamps.)

6.3 *Balance* having a minimum capacity of 100 g and minimum sensitivity of 0.1 g.

7. Test Bearings

7.1 Use LM67048-LM67010 and LM11949-LM11910 (AF-BMA Standard 19) inboard and outboard bearings, respectively.

8. Reagents and Materials

8.1 *n-Heptane*—reagent grade minimum purity (**Warning**—Flammable. Harmful if inhaled.)

8.2 *Isopropyl Alcohol*—reagent grade minimum purity (**Warning**—Flammable.)

8.3 *Penmul L460* (previously called Penetone ECS)³—(**Warning**—Combustible. Vapors can be harmful.)

³ The sole source of supply of Penmul L460 (previously called Penetone ECS) known to the committee at this time is Penetone Corp., 74 Hudson Ave., Tenafly, NJ 07670. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee,¹ which you may attend.