



Designation: D7252 – 17

Standard Test Method for Polyurethane Raw Materials: Determination of Monomer and Isomers in Isocyanates¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D7252; 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 test method determines the percent by weight of monomeric isomers and total monomer in crude or modified isocyanates. The test method is applicable to methylene di(phenylisocyanate) (MDI) and polymeric (methylene phenylisocyanate) (PMDI). (See [Note 1](#).)

1.2 *Units*—The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this 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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

NOTE 1—There is no known ISO equivalent to this standard.

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

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

[D883 Terminology Relating to Plastics](#)

[E682 Practice for Liquid Chromatography Terms and Relationships](#)

[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 For definitions of terms used in these test methods see Terminology [D883](#).

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D20](#) on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D20.22](#) on Cellular Materials - Plastics and Elastomers.

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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.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The sample is reacted (derivatized) with methanol to form a mixture of methyl urethanes. The urethanes mixture is then separated by normal phase high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). The separated, derivatized isomers are quantified through the use of an internal standard.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method is used for research or for quality control to characterize isocyanates used in polyurethane products.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *High Performance Liquid Chromatograph*, consisting of:

6.1.1 *Binary (or greater) solvent pump*, capable of maintaining a pulse-free flow rate of 1-3 milliliters per minute

6.1.2 *Sample injector*, automatic or manual, capable of reproducibly injecting a 2 microliter volume

6.1.3 *Column heater*, capable of maintaining a temperature of $30 \pm 0.2^\circ\text{C}$

6.1.4 *UV detector*, capable of measurements at 235 nm.

6.1.5 *Chart recorder or Data system*, capable of peak area integration.

6.2 *HPLC analytical column*, 250 mm by 4.6 mm by 5 μm cyano stationary phase.

NOTE 2—Other chromatographic columns are used provided it is ascertained that similar chromatographic performance is obtained.

6.3 *Magnetic Stirring Hotplate*.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent-grade chemicals are to be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available. Other grades are used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.1.1 *Acetanilide*, 99.9 % purity, to be used as an internal standard.

7.1.2 *Acetonitrile*, dry. Dry this and reagents below over molecular sieve for twenty-four hours.

7.1.3 *Ethanol*, dry. Use of ethanol denatured with methanol (such as SDA-30) is used if more readily available.

7.1.4 *Hexane*, dry.

7.1.5 *Methanol*, dry.

7.1.6 *Eluent solution*, Mix 1:1 by volume of dry methanol and ethanol.

7.1.7 *Internal Standard and derivatization solution*, Dissolve 0.20 g of acetanilide in 1 L of dry methanol.

8. Sampling

8.1 Since organic isocyanates react with atmospheric moisture, take special precautions in sampling. Usual sampling methods, even when conducted rapidly, can cause contamination of the sample with insoluble urea. Therefore, blanket the sample with dry air or nitrogen at all times. (**Warning**—Diisocyanates are eye, skin and respiratory irritants at concentrations above the occupational exposure limit (TLV or PEL). Diisocyanates can cause skin and respiratory sensitization (asthma) in some people. Once sensitized, it is essential to limit further exposure to diisocyanates. Use a combination of engineering controls and personal protective equipment, including respiratory, skin and eye protection, to prevent over-exposure to diisocyanates. Consult the product suppliers' Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for more detailed information about potential health effects and other specific safety and handling instructions for the product)

9. Instrument Preparation

9.1 The instrument settings here are to be used as a guide for laboratory specific instrument-column combinations, which are to be adjusted to provide adequate separation and sensitivity as described in Practice E682.

9.1.1 Pump

Flow = 1.5 mL/min

Eluent A (hexane) = 90 %

Eluent B (1:1 by volume ethanol:methanol) = 10 %

9.1.2 Detector

Wavelength = 235 nm

Output Range = 2.000 au full scale

9.1.3 Additional Settings

Injection volume = 2 µL

Column Temperature = 30°C

Stop Time = 25 minutes

Post Run Time = 10 minutes

9.1.4 Solvent Program

9.1.4.1 After the components of interest have eluted, it is desirable to flush the remainder of the material from the column to avoid interference with subsequent analyses. A solvent program such as the one below is used for analysis and cleanup:

(1) Initial

Eluent A = 90 %

Eluent B = 10 %

Hold for 15 minutes.

(2) Column Flush

Eluent A = 0 %

Eluent B = 100 %

Hold for 10 minutes.

(3) Re-equilibration

Eluent A = 90 %

Eluent B = 10 %

Hold for 2.5 minutes

10. Calibration and Standardization

10.1 The primary standard consists of monomeric material of sufficient purity and containing all isomers of interest. The concentrations of the isomers in the standard are to be in the same ranges as those expected in samples to be analyzed. Because of the difficulty in obtaining primary standards for this test, agreement on the standard material to be used in testing must be obtained between the testing laboratory and the recipient of the final test results. Several strategies in obtaining suitable standard material have been used.

10.1.1 Several isomer blends of suitable purity are available from several isocyanate manufacturers. These blends are combined to produce a primary standard with isomers in the same range as the samples.

10.1.2 Alternatively, monomer of suitable purity consisting of unknown quantities of the isomers of interest is analyzed by gas chromatography with a flame ionization detector. An area percent technique is employed to determine the isomer content. Again, agreement between the testing laboratory and the recipient of the final test results must be obtained for the specific conditions of the gas chromatographic determination.

10.2 Regardless of which of the strategies above is used, the primary standard is prepared and analyzed as described in the following sections.

11. Procedure

11.1 Sample Preparation

11.1.1 Weigh the sample to be analyzed in a 250 mL beaker. Use the formula below to determine the correct weight. Record actual weight to the nearest 0.1 milligram.

$$\text{Weight of sample (milligrams)} = \frac{5000}{\text{Expected wt \% monomer in sample}} \quad (1)$$

11.1.2 Dissolve the sample in 20 mL of dry acetonitrile and add exactly 100 mL of the (Internal Standard and derivatization) solution. Add a stirring bar, cover with watch glass and heat on hotplate/stirrer for fifteen minutes. The hotplate temperature must be set such that the sample solution begins to boil in 7-10 minutes.

11.1.3 Remove the sample solution from heat and allow to cool to room temperature.

11.2 Analysis

11.2.1 Prior to injecting any sample, allow the chromatographic system to equilibrate by pumping the initial eluent through the column for at least 20-30 minutes. When a stable baseline is observed, analyze an aliquot of the derivatized sample solution. After all isomers of interest have eluted, flush the column as specified by the solvent program above.