



Standard Test Method for Volatile Content of Sheet-Fed and Coldset Web Offset Printing Inks¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method describes a procedure for determination of the weight percent volatile content of sheet-fed and coldset web offset printing inks. Test specimens are heated at $110^{\circ} \pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ for 60 min.

NOTE 1—Coldset web offset printing is often (also) referred to as non-heatset web offset printing.

1.2 This test method is also applicable to sheet-fed and coldset web offset printing ink vehicles.

NOTE 2—Vehicle is the liquid portion of the printing ink. Any substance that is dissolved in the liquid portion of the ink is a part of the vehicle.

1.3 This test method is not applicable to ultra-violet (UV) or electron beam cured materials, which must be cured by exposure to UV light or an electron beam as part of the test for volatile content.

1.4 This test method is based on Test Method D2369, in which the allowable ranges are $\pm 0.1\text{g}$ for specimen weight and $\pm 5^{\circ}\text{C}$ for oven temperature. Interlaboratory studies have shown that specimen weight and oven temperature must both be more tightly controlled in order to improve the precision of test results for sheet-fed and coldset web-offset inks. Such inks typically contain a wide range of high-boiling hydrocarbons and often have a volatile content below 25 %.

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

1.6 *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 a specific hazard statement see 7.5.1.*

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D01 on Paint and Related Coatings, Materials, and Applications and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D01.56 on Printing Inks.

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2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D2369 Test Method for Volatile Content of Coatings
D362 Specification for Industrial Grade Toluene (Withdrawn 1989)³

E145 Specification for Gravity-Convection and Forced-Ventilation Ovens

E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

2.2 Other Standards:⁴

EPA Reference Method 24 — Determination of Volatile Matter Content, Water Content, Density, Volume Solids, and Weight Solids of Surface Coatings⁵

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 A specimen size of $0.300 \pm 0.001\text{g}$ is weighed into an aluminum foil dish, dispersed in 3 mL of toluene, and heated in an oven at $110 \pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ for 60 min. The percent volatile is calculated from the loss in weight.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method is the procedure of choice for determining volatile content of sheet-fed and coldset web offset inks. This information is useful to the ink manufacturer and user and to environmental interests as part of the determination of the mass of volatile organic compounds emitted from the ink.

NOTE 3—Since these inks do not contain water or any materials currently classified by US EPA as negligibly photochemically reactive (exempt solvents), volatile organic compound content is the same as volatile content. The volatile organic compounds in these inks are high boiling hydrocarbon oils which are, according to US EPA guidelines, 95 %

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.

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

⁴ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office Superintendent of Documents, 732 N. Capitol St., NW, Mail Stop: SDE, Washington, DC 20401, <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

⁵ Brezinski, J. J., ed., "Determination of Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Content in Paints, Inks, and Related Coating Products," MNL 4, ASTM, 1993.

retained in the printed substrate or oxidized into the ink film. Therefore, the mass of volatile organic compound emitted from the ink would be calculated as only 5 % of the volatile organic compound content of the ink as derived from the results of this test method.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *Aluminum Foil Dishes*, 58 mm in diameter by 18 mm high with a smooth (planar) bottom surface. Precondition the dishes for 30 min. in an oven at $110 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ and store in a desiccator prior to use. Use tongs or rubber gloves or both, to handle the dishes.

5.2 *Desiccator*, equipped with a general purpose desiccant such as anhydrous calcium sulfate.

5.3 *Forced Draft Oven*, Type IIA or Type IIB as specified in Specification **E145**.

NOTE 4—Be sure the shelves are level.

5.4 *Ink Knives or Taper Knives*, suitable for transferring the small specimen from the original sample container to the aluminum dish.

5.5 *Paper Clips*, bent for use as stirrers. Precondition the bent paper clips along with the aluminum foil dishes, as described in **5.1**.

5.6 *Analytical Balance*, capable of weighing to 0.0001 g.

5.7 *Stopwatch*, capable of reading to 1s.

6. Reagents

6.1 *Toluene*, technical grade, in accordance with Specification **D362**.

7. Procedure

7.1 Weigh a preconditioned foil dish that has been equipped with a preconditioned bent paper clip to 0.0001g and record as W_1 . Similarly weigh a duplicate.

7.2 Mix the sample by hand using an ink knife (taper knife) prior to extracting the exact specimens to be used in the test.

7.3 Weigh a $0.300 \text{ g} \pm 0.001 \text{ g}$ specimen directly into each of the weighed dishes. Record the specimen weight to 0.0001g as S .

NOTE 5—Due to the relatively high viscosity and low volatility of sheet-fed and coldset web offset inks, this may best be achieved using ink knives (taper knives). The quickest way to achieve this specimen size and precision is to slightly overweigh and then remove tiny amounts using the tip of a clean ink knife.

7.4 To each dish add 1 mL of toluene and stir, using the bent paper clip, into the ink specimen. Then add a further 2 mL of toluene (for a total of 3 mL) and repeat the stirring to achieve a homogeneous dispersion.

7.5 Heat the aluminum foil dishes containing the dispersed specimens in the forced draft oven (**5.3**) for exactly 60 min. at $110 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$. The bent paper clips should remain in the dishes throughout the test. Position the dishes as near to the center of the oven as possible. Use the stopwatch to time the 60-min oven exposure.

7.5.1 **Warning:** In addition to other precautions, provide adequate ventilation, consistent with accepted laboratory practice, to prevent solvent vapors from accumulating to a dangerous level.

7.6 Remove the dishes from the oven, place immediately in a desiccator, cool to ambient temperature, and weigh to 0.0001g. Record weight as W_2 .

8. Calculation

8.1 For each specimen, calculate the weight percent volatile matter V , in the sheet-fed or coldset web offset ink as follows:

$$V = \frac{(W_1 + S) - W_2}{S} \times 100 \quad (1)$$

where:

W_1 = weight of dish plus paper clip,

W_2 = weight of dish plus paper clip, plus specimen after heating, and

S = specimen weight prior to heating.

Average the duplicate determinations and report the average as the weight percent volatile matter.

9. Precision and Bias

9.1 *Precision*—Two separate interlaboratory studies of this test method were conducted. In the first, operators in 10 laboratories tested in triplicate 5 coldset web offset black inks whose volatile content ranged from 3 to 39 %. In the second, operators in 9 laboratories tested in triplicate 5 sheet-fed offset inks whose volatile content ranged from 7 to 23 %. The test results were analyzed in accordance with Practice **E691**. In the same interlaboratory studies, the full range of temperature and sample sizes permitted by Test Method **D2369** was also studied. The precision, characterized by repeatability (S_r , r) and reproducibility (S_R , R) was much better for the test method describe herein. Repeatability was improved by a factor of 4.2 for the web offset inks and 3.1 for the sheet-fed inks. Reproducibility was improved by a factor of 1.3 for the coldset inks and by a factor of 1.6 for the sheet-fed inks. Based on the statistical analysis of the results, the following criteria should be used for judging the acceptability of results at the 95 % confidence level:

9.1.1 *Repeatability*—Two results, each the mean of duplicate determinations, obtained by the same operator should be considered suspect if they differ by more than 13 % relative for coldset web offset inks and by more than 7 % relative for sheet-fed offset inks.

9.1.2 *Reproducibility*—Two results, each the mean of duplicate determinations, obtained by operators in different laboratories should be considered suspect if they differ by more than 54 % relative for coldset web offset inks and by more than 16 % relative for sheet-fed offset inks.

9.2 *Bias*—Bias cannot be determined as there are no standard materials.

10. Keywords

10.1 coldset web offset inks; coldset web offset ink vehicles; non-heatset web offset inks; non-heatset web offset vehicles;

printing inks; printing ink vehicles; sheet-fed offset inks;
sheet-fed offset ink vehicles; VOC in inks; volatile determina-
tion; volatiles

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