



# Standard Guide for Assessment of Continued Applicability of Fire Test Reports Used in Building Regulation<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2989; 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 guide contains concepts that provide guidance for assessing the continued applicability of fire response test reports of materials or products used in building regulation.

1.2 This guide provides guidance for sponsors and users of fire test reports on the continued applicability of fire test reports. This guide is intended to identify conditions that may cause a fire test report which was valid when prepared to no longer be an appropriate tool upon which decisions about the materials or products can be based.

1.3 Application of this guide is dependent on the technical changes in the fire test standard that could impact the test results and thus the classification of the material or product. Application of this guide will be better facilitated when fire test standards include explicit documentation of significant historical technical changes.

1.4 This guide does not address fire test reports relating to fire resistance tests.

1.5 The determination of the validity of a fire test report is outside the scope of this guide.

1.6 Fire test reports or certificates on assemblies are outside the scope of this guide.

1.7 Fire test reports or certificates on materials or products listed, labeled and inspected by a certification agency are outside the scope of this guide.

NOTE 1—Certification agencies have their own criteria to assess the continued applicability of fire test reports.

1.8 Some concepts contained in this guide may not be applicable to all fire test reports since they are a function of the type of fire test conducted and of the type of material or product assessed.

1.9 This fire standard cannot be used to provide quantitative measures.

<sup>1</sup> This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E05 on Fire Standards and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E05.31 on Terminology and Services / Functions.

Current edition approved Aug. 1, 2015. Published August 2015. Originally approved in 2015. Last previous edition approved in 2015 as E2989-15. DOI: 10.1520/E2989-15A

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:<sup>2</sup>

E84 Test Method for Surface Burning Characteristics of Building Materials

E176 Terminology of Fire Standards

E2536 Guide for Assessment of Measurement Uncertainty in Fire Tests

### 2.2 Other Standards:<sup>3</sup>

ISO 13943 Fire Safety – Vocabulary

ISO/IEC 17025 General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in this guide and associated with fire issues, refer to the terminology contained in Terminology E176 and ISO 13943. In case of conflict, the terminology in Terminology E176 shall prevail.

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

3.2.1 *certification agency (organization), n*—an accredited agency operating a product or material certification system that incorporates initial product testing, assessment and surveillance of a manufacturer's quality control system.

3.2.2 *labeled, adj*—equipment, materials or products to which has been affixed a label, seal, symbol or other identifying mark of a nationally recognized testing laboratory, inspection agency or other organization concerned with product evaluation that maintains periodic inspection of the production of the above-labeled items and whose labeling indicates either that the equipment, material or product meets identified standards or has been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.

3.2.3 *listed, adj*—equipment, materials, products or services included in a list published by an organization acceptable to the code official and concerned with evaluation of products or services that maintains periodic inspection of production of

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, http://www.ansi.org.

listed equipment or materials or periodic evaluation of services and whose listing states either that the equipment, material product or service meets identified standards or has been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.

3.2.4 *user, n*—an individual or organization attempting to use a fire test report to demonstrate the acceptability of a material or product.

3.2.5 *requester, n*—an individual or organization responsible for determining the continued applicability of a material or product identified in a fire test report.

3.2.5.1 *Discussion*—A requester is often an authority having jurisdiction such as, a code official or a fire official.

## 4. Summary of Guide

4.1 This guide contains guidelines to evaluate the continued applicability of reaction to fire test reports.

4.2 The procedures to be followed for assessing continued applicability of a fire test report may be a function of the type of fire test conducted and of the type of material or product assessed.

4.3 When considering the continued applicability of a fire test report, the questions in 4.3.1 through 4.3.3 should be asked.

4.3.1 Is the edition of the standard referenced in the fire test report and that of the regulatory requirement different?

4.3.2 Is the material or product listed in the fire test report different from the material or product being offered for use now?

4.3.3 Are the differences in 4.3.2 and the technical differences between the two standards in 4.3.1 small enough not to affect the performance and the safety of the material or product in its end-use application?

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 This guide identifies concepts for assessing the continued applicability of fire test reports used in building regulation. It provides guidance to users and requesters of fire test reports, developed in accordance with the fire response test standards, such as those from ASTM, UL, or NFPA, to determine the continued applicability of a fire test report for regulatory use.

5.2 This guide assumes that a fire test report generated by a test laboratory represents the performance of the material or product in accordance with a fire test standard identified in the report at the time a specific material or product was tested.

5.3 This guide is not designed to assist in determining the continued applicability of a material or product that is listed, labeled, or given in an evaluation report.

5.4 This guide is not designed to assist in determining whether a test laboratory conducted the test reference in the fire test report in accordance with a standard test protocol.

5.5 This guide is not designed to assist in determining whether the fire test laboratory issuing a fire test report met the requirements of competence of testing and calibration methods.<sup>4</sup>

5.6 This guide is not designed to assist in determining the applicability of a fire test report with respect to the measurement uncertainty developed in accordance with Guide E2536.

5.7 Do not consider issuance of a new edition with only editorial changes (as notated in ASTM by “epsilon,” “editorially revised,” or “reapproved”) as a new edition containing a technical change.

## 6. Evaluating Changes in the Fire Test Standard

6.1 As a new edition of a regulation or a code is issued, it is typical to update all referenced standards that are current at the time of the update.

6.2 When a requester requires that a material or product meet a certain fire test requirement, the regulation will normally contain the date of the required fire test standard.<sup>5</sup>

6.3 If the fire test report is based on the edition of the fire test standard referenced in the regulation, the material or product identified in the fire test report is applicable.

6.4 If the fire test report is based on a more recent edition of the fire test standard than the one referenced in the regulation, the fire test report is generally deemed to continue to be applicable. Final determination on which standard edition is used for compliance is the judgment of the user or requestor.<sup>6</sup>

6.5 If the fire test report is based on an earlier edition of the fire test standard than the one referenced in the regulation, the continued applicability of the fire test report should be determined as given in 6.5.1, 6.5.2, or 6.5.3.

6.5.1 A fire test report continues to be applicable if there have been no significant technical changes to the fire test standard that could impact the test results, and thus the classification of the material or product, between the version of the standard referenced in regulation and the version referenced in the fire test report.

6.5.2 If in the opinion of the requester, or of an expert acceptable to the requester, the fire test standard referenced in regulation *does not* contain technical changes that could impact the test results and thus the classification of the material or product from the edition identified in the fire test report, then the fire test report is deemed to continue to be applicable.

6.5.3 If in the opinion of the requester, or of an expert acceptable to the requester, the fire test standard referenced in

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<sup>4</sup> Regulatory authorities often mandate that private sector laboratories comply with voluntary laboratory accreditation. Compliance to ISO/IEC 17025 is a common benchmark for this purpose.

<sup>5</sup> A code will reference a fire test standard by its edition, typically the year of its publication.

<sup>6</sup> It is common for a requestor to accept a more recent edition of a fire test standard unless they consider that the new edition decreases fire safety.

regulation *does* identify technical changes that could impact the test results, and thus the classification of the material or product from the edition identified in the fire test report, then the material or product identified in the fire test report will likely require reevaluation.

#### 6.6 Secondary References:

6.6.1 ASTM standards used in regulation are sometimes revised by the addition of references to other ASTM standards.<sup>7</sup> Such referenced standard then become secondary regulatory references.

6.6.2 If the edition of the fire test standard referenced in regulation contains a secondary reference standard that was not present in the edition identified in the fire test report, the fire test report should be deemed to continue to be applicable if the test procedure that was followed to derive the fire test report was consistent with the secondary reference standard.

### 7. Evaluating Changes in Materials or Products

7.1 A material or product subject to a fire test should be representative of the construction that the test was intended to assess.

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<sup>7</sup>For example, ASTM E84 has been revised by the addition of several test specimen mounting guides, developed as separate standards, to streamline mounting methods.

7.2 A fire test report continues to be applicable if the material or product has not changed since the fire test report was issued. That is, if there has been no change to the material or product, the fire test report is deemed to continue to be applicable to the material or product identified in the fire test report, irrespective of the date of the fire test report.

7.3 If there has been a change to the material or product identified in the fire test report, the continued applicability of a fire test report should be determined as given in 7.3.1.

7.3.1 If in the opinion of the material or product manufacturer(s), or of the requester of the fire test report, the change to the material or product can affect its fire performance, the requester should require the opinion of an expert acceptable to the requester of the impact of the change to determine continued applicability of the fire test report to the revised material or product.

### 8. Additional Guidance

8.1 An additional criterion to consider is the placement of material or product in a material classification system. If the fire test result noted in a fire test report is in the middle of a material class boundary, changes to the fire test standard may be judged to not have an effect on the classification of the material or product.

### 9. Keywords

9.1 fire test; fire test laboratory; fire test report

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