



# Standard Test Method for Effect of Moisture on Asphalt Concrete Paving Mixtures<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers procedures for preparing and testing asphalt concrete specimens for the purpose of measuring the effect of water on the tensile strength of the paving mixture. This test method is applicable to dense mixtures such as those appearing in the Table for Composition of Bituminous Paving Mixtures in Specification **D3515**. This test method can be used to evaluate the effect of moisture with or without antistripping additives including liquids and pulverulent solids such as hydrated lime or portland cement.

1.2 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units in parentheses shall be regarded separately as standard. The values in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system must be used independently of the other, without combining values in any way.

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.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

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

- D979** Practice for Sampling Bituminous Paving Mixtures
- D1074** Test Method for Compressive Strength of Bituminous Mixtures
- D1561** Practice for Preparation of Bituminous Mixture Test Specimens by Means of California Kneading Compactor
- D2041** Test Method for Theoretical Maximum Specific Gravity and Density of Bituminous Paving Mixtures
- D2726** Test Method for Bulk Specific Gravity and Density of Non-Absorptive Compacted Bituminous Mixtures
- D3203** Test Method for Percent Air Voids in Compacted

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

### Dense and Open Bituminous Paving Mixtures

- D3387** Test Method for Compaction and Shear Properties of Bituminous Mixtures by Means of the U.S. Corps of Engineers Gyratory Testing Machine (GTM)
- D3496** Practice for Preparation of Bituminous Mixture Specimens for Dynamic Modulus Testing (Withdrawn 2010)<sup>3</sup>
- D3515** Specification for Hot-Mixed, Hot-Laid Bituminous Paving Mixtures (Withdrawn 2009)<sup>3</sup>
- D3549** Test Method for Thickness or Height of Compacted Bituminous Paving Mixture Specimens
- D3665** Practice for Random Sampling of Construction Materials
- D4013** Practice for Preparation of Test Specimens of Bituminous Mixtures by Means of Gyratory Shear Compactor (Withdrawn 2013)<sup>3</sup>
- D4123** Test Method for Indirect Tension Test for Resilient Modulus of Bituminous Mixtures (Withdrawn 2003)<sup>3</sup>
- D6926** Practice for Preparation of Bituminous Specimens Using Marshall Apparatus

## 3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 *Potential for Moisture Damage*—The degree of susceptibility to moisture damage is determined by preparing a set of laboratory-compacted specimens conforming to the job-mix formula without an additive. The specimens are compacted to a void content corresponding to void levels expected in the field, usually in the 6 to 8 % range. The set is divided into two subsets of approximately equal void content. One subset is maintained dry while the other subset is partially saturated with water and moisture conditioned. The tensile strength of each subset is determined by the tensile splitting test. The potential for moisture damage is indicated by the ratio of the tensile strength of the wet subset to that of the dry subset.

3.2 *Additive Effect*—The effect of an antistripping additive is determined on a set of specimens containing an additive prepared and tested as described in 3.1. The effect of an additive dosage may be estimated by repeating the tests on sets with different additive dosages.

3.3 *Plant-Produced Mixtures*—The potential for moisture damage or the effectiveness of an additive in a plant-produced

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

mixture is determined on specimens that are laboratory compacted to expected field-level void content, divided into wet and dry subsets, and evaluated as described in 3.2.

#### 4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method can be used to test asphalt concrete mixtures in conjunction with mixture design testing to determine the potential for moisture damage, to determine whether or not an antistripping additive is effective, and to determine what dosage of an additive is needed to maximize the effectiveness. This test method can also be used to test mixtures produced in plants to determine the effectiveness of additives under the conditions imposed in the field.

#### 5. Apparatus

5.1 To prepare and compact the specimens use apparatus from any one of the following: Test Methods **D1074**, and **D3387**, Practice **D3496**, or Practices **D1561**, **D4013**, and **D6926**.

5.2 *Vacuum Pump or Water Aspirator* in accordance with Test Method **D2041**.

5.3 *Manometer or Vacuum Gage* in accordance with Test Method **D2041**.

5.4 *Container*, preferably Type F, of Test Method **D2041**.

5.5 *Balance* in accordance with Test Method **D2726**.

5.6 *Water Baths* Three:

5.6.1 One waterbath in accordance with Test Method **D2726**.

5.6.2 One bath capable of maintaining a temperature of  $60 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $140 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ) for 24 h, and

5.6.3 One bath capable of maintaining a temperature of  $25 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $77 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ).

5.7 *Mechanical or Hydraulic Testing Machine* capable of maintaining the required strain rate and measuring load with equal or better precision.

5.8 *Loading Strips* in accordance with Test Method **D4123**.

#### 6. Preparation of Laboratory Test Specimens

6.1 Make at least six specimens for each test, three to be tested dry and three to be tested after partial saturation and moisture conditioning.

6.2 Use specimens 100 mm (4 in.) in diameter and 62.5 mm (2.5 in.) high, in general, but specimens of other dimensions may be used if desired. When using aggregate larger than 25 mm (1 in.), use specimens at least 150 mm (6 in.) in diameter.

NOTE 1—The user is cautioned that the specimen diameter has been determined to influence both the tensile strength and the tensile strength ratio. The tensile strength and the tensile strength ratio values may be different for 150-mm specimens compared to 100-mm specimens.

6.3 Prepare mixtures in batches large enough to make at least 3 specimens or, as an alternative, prepare a batch just large enough for 1 specimen. If theoretical maximum specific gravity is to be determined, use a batch large enough or prepare a separate batch to provide a specimen for this purpose.

6.4 When a liquid antistripping additive is used, heat a sufficient quantity of asphalt cement for one batch to  $150 \pm 6^\circ\text{C}$  ( $300 \pm 10^\circ\text{F}$ ) in a closed 1 L (1-qt) can in an oven. Add the required quantity of additive and immediately mix, for approximately 2 min, with a mechanical stirrer approximately 25 mm (1 in.) from the bottom of the container. Maintain the treated asphalt cement at  $150 \pm 6^\circ\text{C}$  ( $300 \pm 10^\circ\text{F}$ ) in the closed can until it is used. Discard the treated asphalt cement if not used the same day it is prepared, or if allowed to cool so that it requires reheating.

6.5 When using a pulverulent solid antistripping additive, use the addition procedure simulating the procedure expected in the field. Follow the procedure specified in either 6.5.1, 6.5.2, or 6.5.3.

6.5.1 When dry powder is added to dry aggregate, dry, batch, and heat the mineral aggregate to  $150 \pm 6^\circ\text{C}$  ( $300 \pm 10^\circ\text{F}$ ). Add the required quantity of additive to the aggregate, and thoroughly mix the entire mass until a uniform distribution of additive is achieved. Take care to minimize the loss of additive to the atmosphere in the form of dust. After mixing, maintain the treated aggregate at the required mixing temperature until it is used.

6.5.2 When dry powder is added to damp aggregate, batch the damp mineral aggregate, and adjust the moisture content of the combined aggregate to the expected field moisture level. Add the required quantity of additive to the damp aggregate, and thoroughly mix the entire mass until a uniform distribution of additive is achieved. Take care to minimize the loss of additive to the atmosphere in the form of dust. After mixing, dry the treated aggregate, heat to the required mixing temperature, and maintain at that temperature until it is used.

6.5.3 When powder slurry is used, add the required quantity of additive to water using the powder to water ratio expected in the field. Take care to minimize the loss of additive to the atmosphere in the form of dust. To prevent settling, continuously mix the resulting slurry until it is used. Batch the damp mineral aggregate, adjust the moisture content as required in 6.5.2, add the required quantity of slurry, and thoroughly mix the entire mass until a uniform distribution of slurry is achieved. After mixing, dry the treated aggregate, heat to the required mixing temperature, and maintain at that temperature until used.

6.6 Proportion, mix, and compact specimens in accordance with one of the following: Test Methods **D1074**, **D3387**, Practice **D3496**, Practices **D1561**, **D4013**, or **D6926**, and 6.6.1 and 6.6.2.

6.6.1 After mixing, stabilize the mixture temperature of each specimen at the required compaction temperature, in a closed container, in an oven for 1 to 2 h. If preparing a multi-specimen batch, split the batch into single-specimen quantities before placing into the oven.

6.6.2 Compact the specimens to  $7 \pm 1\%$  air voids, or a void level expected in the field at the time of construction. This void level can be obtained by adjusting the following: the static load in double-plunger compaction; the number of blows in a marshall hammer compaction; the foot pressure, number of

tamps, leveling load, or some combination in kneading compaction; or the number of revolutions in gyratory compaction. Determine the exact procedure by trial for each mixture.

6.6.3 Cool specimens in the mold to room temperature as rapidly as possible in a stream of moving air, extract from molds, then follow the procedure outlined in Section 8 within 24 h.

## 7. Preparation of Field Specimens

7.1 Select a truck to be sampled in accordance with Practice D3665.

7.2 Secure a sample from the truck at the plant in accordance with Practice D979.

7.3 Stabilize the mixture temperature to approximately the temperature found in the field when rolling begins. Maintain this temperature in a closed container, in an oven if necessary, for approximately the time lapse between mixing and the start of actual rolling.

7.4 Compact the specimens in accordance with 6.6.2, and cool and extract from the molds in accordance with 6.6.3.

7.5 If specimens are not to be compacted in the field laboratory, place the samples in a sealed container, transport to the laboratory, and reheat to the temperature required in 7.3. Proceed with the steps in 7.4.

NOTE 2—Specimens made from plant-produced mixtures in accordance with Section 7 may yield different results from specimens made from laboratory-produced mixtures of the same job mix made in accordance with Section 6.

## 8. Procedure

NOTE 3—A data sheet that is convenient for use with this procedure appears in Appendix X1.

8.1 Determine the theoretical maximum specific gravity in accordance with Test Method D2041.

8.2 Determine the specimen height in accordance with Test Method D3549.

8.3 Determine the bulk specific gravity in accordance with Test Method D2726, and express the volume of the specimen in cubic centimeters. The term (*B-C*) in Test Method D2726 is the volume of the specimen in cubic centimeters.

8.4 Calculate the percent air voids in accordance with Test Method D3203, and express the volume of air in cubic centimeters. The volume of air is the volume of the specimen in 8.3 multiplied by the percent air voids.

8.5 Sort the specimens into two subsets so that the average air voids of the two subsets are approximately equal. Store the subset to be tested dry at room temperature.

8.6 Partially saturate the subset to be moisture conditioned with distilled water at room temperature using a vacuum chamber. If it is difficult to reach the minimum degree of saturation required in 8.6.3, the water used to saturate may be heated up to 60°C (140°F).

8.6.1 Partially saturate, to the degree specified in 8.6.3, by applying a partial vacuum such as 70 kPa or 525 mm Hg (20 in. Hg) for a short time such as five min.

NOTE 4—Experiments with partial vacuum at room temperature indi-

cate that the degree of saturation is very sensitive to the magnitude of the vacuum and practically independent of the duration. The level of vacuum needed appears to be different for different mixtures.

8.6.2 Determine the volume of the partially saturated specimen in accordance with Test Method D2726. Determine the volume of the absorbed water by subtracting the air-dry mass of the specimen in 8.3 from the saturated surface-dry mass of the partially saturated specimen.

8.6.3 Determine the degree of saturation by dividing the volume of the absorbed water in 8.6.2 by the volume of air voids in 8.4 and express the result as a percentage. If the volume of water is between 55 and 80 % of the volume of air, proceed to 8.7. If the volume of water is less than 55 %, repeat the procedure beginning with 8.6.1 using a slightly higher partial vacuum. If the volume of water is more than 80 %, the specimen has been damaged and is discarded.

NOTE 5—If the average air voids of the saturated subset is less than 6.5 %, a degree of saturation of at least 70 % is recommended.

8.7 Moisture condition the partially saturated specimens by soaking in distilled water at  $60 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $140 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ) for 24 h.

NOTE 6—If a freeze-thaw conditioning cycle is desired, the following procedure is suggested instead of the procedure in 8.7. Wrap each of the partially saturated specimens tightly with two layers of plastic film using masking tape to hold the wrapping if necessary. Place each wrapped specimen into a leak-proof plastic bag containing approximately 3 mL of distilled water, and seal the bag with a tie or tape. Place the wrapped and bagged specimens into an air bath freezer at  $-18 \pm 2.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $-0.4 \pm 3.6^\circ\text{F}$ ). After at least 15 h in the freezer, remove the specimens and immerse them in a water bath at  $60 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $140 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ) for 24 h. After 3 min of immersion, after specimen surface thaw occurs, remove the bag and wrapping from the specimens.

8.8 Adjust the temperature of the moisture-conditioned subset by soaking in a water bath for 1 h at  $25 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$  ( $77 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ).

8.9 Measure the height of the moisture-conditioned subset by Test Method D3549, and determine volume by Test Method D2726.

8.9.1 Determine the water absorption and the degree of saturation in accordance with 8.6.2 and 8.6.3. A degree of saturation exceeding 80 % is acceptable.

8.9.2 Determine the swell of the partially saturated specimens by dividing the change in specimen volumes in 8.6.2 and 8.3 by the specimen volume in 8.3. Determine the swell of moisture-conditioned specimens by dividing the change in the specimen volume in 8.9 and 8.3 by the specimen volume in 8.3.

8.10 Adjust the temperature of the dry subset by soaking in a water bath for 20 min at  $25 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $77 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ).

8.11 Determine the tensile strength at  $25 \pm 1.0^\circ\text{C}$  ( $77 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$ ) of both subsets.

8.11.1 Place a specimen into the loading apparatus and position the loading strips so that they are parallel and centered on the vertical diametral plane. Apply a diametral load at 50 mm/min (2 in./min) until the maximum load is reached, and record the maximum load.

8.11.2 Continue loading until the specimen fractures. Break the specimen open and visually estimate and record the approximate degree of moisture damage, if any.

8.11.3 Inspect all surfaces, including the failed faces, for evidence of cracked or broken aggregate, that may influence test results, and record observations.

## 9. Calculation

9.1 Calculate the tensile strength as follows:

$$S_t = 2000 P / \pi t D \text{ (kPa)} \quad (1)$$

or

$$S_t = 2P / \pi t D \text{ (psi)}$$

where:

- $S_t$  = tensile strength, kPa (psi)
- $P$  = maximum load, N (lbf)
- $t$  = specimen height immediately before tensile test, mm (in.), and
- $D$  = specimen diameter, mm (in.).

9.2 Calculate the tensile strength ratio as follows:

$$TSR = (S_{tm} / S_{td}) 100 \quad (2)$$

where:

- $TSR$  = tensile strength ratio, %
- $S_{tm}$  = average tensile strength of the moisture-conditioned subset, kPa (psi), and
- $S_{td}$  = average tensile strength of the dry subset, kPa (psi).

## 10. Report

10.1 Report the following information:

- 10.1.1 Number of specimens in each subset,
- 10.1.2 Average air voids of each subset,
- 10.1.3 Average degree of saturation after partial saturation and after moisture conditioning,
- 10.1.4 Average swell after partial saturation and after moisture conditioning,
- 10.1.5 Tensile strength of each specimen in each subset,

10.1.6 Tensile strength ratio,

10.1.7 Results of visually-estimated moisture damage observed when the specimen fractures, and

10.1.8 Results of observations of fractured or crushed aggregate.

NOTE 7—If the conditioning procedure described in Note 6 is used, that fact should be included in the report.

## 11. Precision and Bias

11.1 *Precision*—The standard deviations for use with this test method have been determined using laboratory-mixed specimens conditioned in accordance with 8.7. Neither plant-mixed material nor the conditioning in Note 6 has been studied. Nineteen laboratories participated in the precision study by testing five asphalt concrete mixtures, two of which contained a liquid antistripping additive.

11.1.1 *Within-Laboratory Precision*—The single-operator standard deviation of tensile strength for either dry or moisture-conditioned specimens has been found to be 55 kPa (8 psi). The d2s limit for the maximum allowable difference in tensile strength between duplicate specimens of the same mixture tested by the same operator is 159 kPa (23 psi).

11.1.2 *Between-Laboratory Precision*—The multilaboratory standard deviation of the tensile-strength ratio has been found to be 8 %. The d2s limit for the maximum allowable difference in tensile-strength ratio between results of tests performed on samples of the same mixture by two different laboratories is 23 %.

11.2 *Bias*—This test method has an undetermined bias because the value of a tensile-strength ratio can be defined only in terms of the test method.

## 12. Keywords

12.1 antistripping additives; asphalt concrete paving mixtures; moisture; tensile strength; water

## APPENDIX

### (Nonmandatory Information)

#### X1. MOISTURE DAMAGE LABORATORY DATA SHEET



Project									
Additive					Dosage				
Compaction Method					Effort				
		Date Tested			By				
Sample I.D.									
Diameter, mm (in.)	<i>D</i>								
Thickness, mm (in.)	<i>t</i>								
Dry mass in air	<i>A</i>								
SSD mass	<i>B</i>								
Mass in water	<i>C</i>								
Volume ( <i>B-C</i> )	<i>E</i>								
Bulk Sp. Gr. ( <i>A/E</i> )	<i>F</i>								
Max Sp. Gr.	<i>G</i>								
% AirVoid (100( <i>G-F</i> )/ <i>G</i> )	<i>H</i>								
Volume AirVoid, HE/100	<i>I</i>								
Load, N (lbf)	<i>P</i>								
Saturated min. @ kPa or mm Hg (in. Hg)									
SSD Mass	<i>B'</i>								
Mass in water	<i>C'</i>								
Volume ( <i>B'-C'</i> )	<i>E'</i>								
Vol Abs. water ( <i>B'-A</i> )	<i>J</i>								
% Saturation (100 $J'/I$ )									
% Swell (100( $E'-E$ )/ $E$ )									
Conditioned 24 h in 140°F water									
Thickness, mm (in.)	$t''$								
SSD Mass	$B''$								
Mass in water	$C''$								
Volume ( $B''-C''$ )	$E''$								
Vol Abs. Water ( $B''-A$ )	$J''$								
% Saturation, (100 $J''/I$ )									
% Swell, 100( $E''-E$ )/ $E$									
Load, N (lbf)	$P''$								
Dry Strength, 2000 $P/\pi tD$ ( $2P/\pi tD$ )	$S_{td}$								
Wet Strength, 2000 $P'/\pi t'D$ ( $2P'/\pi t'D$ )	$S_{tm}$								
TSR, 100 $S_{tm}/S_{td}$									
Visual Moisture Damage									
Crack/Break Aggregate									

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