
Goal: Determine the electric potential at the center of a non-uniformly charged spherical surface of radius a , with $\rho_s(\theta) = \rho_{s,o} \sin(2\theta)$, with $\rho_{s,o}$ a constant and the angle $0 \leq \theta \leq \pi$.

Steps:

1. Choose the coordinate system.

Solution: Spherical coordinate system.

2. Find the differential surface element in the coordinate system chosen above. Then find the differential charge dQ on the spherical surface.

Solution: Differential surface element is

$$ds' = (R')^2 \sin \theta' d\theta' d\phi'$$

Hence, differential charge dQ is (evaluated on the sphere surface)

$$dQ = \rho_{s,o} a^2 \sin \theta' \sin(2\theta') d\theta' d\phi'$$

3. Find an expression for $|\mathbf{R} - \mathbf{R}'|$.

Solution: Observation point R is at the origin. $\mathbf{R}' = R' \mathbf{a}_{R'} = \alpha \mathbf{a}_R$. Then

$$|\mathbf{R} - \mathbf{R}'| = |\alpha| \mathbf{a}_{R'} = a$$

4. Integrate.

Solution:

$$dV = \frac{\rho_{s,o} a^2 \sin \theta' \sin(2\theta') d\theta' d\phi'}{4\pi\epsilon_o \alpha} = \frac{\rho_{s,o} a}{4\pi\epsilon_o} \sin \theta' \sin 2\theta' d\theta' d\phi'$$

Then

$$V = \frac{\rho_{s,o} a}{4\pi\epsilon_o} \int_0^{2\pi} d\phi' \int_0^\pi d\theta' \sin \theta' \sin 2\theta' = 0$$

Answer:

$$V = \frac{\rho_{s,o} a}{4\pi\epsilon_o} \int_0^{2\pi} d\phi' \int_0^\pi d\theta' \sin \theta' \sin 2\theta' = 0$$