



Standard Guide for Testing Water-Borne Architectural Coatings¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers the selection and use of procedures for testing water-borne coatings to be used on exterior, interior or both types of surfaces (Note 1). The properties that can be examined or, in some cases, the relevant test procedures are listed in Table 1 and Table 2.

NOTE 1—The term “architectural coating” as used here combines the definition in Terminology D 16 with that in the *FSCT Paint/Coatings Dictionary*, as follows: “Organic coatings intended for on-site application to interior or exterior surfaces of residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial buildings, in contrast to industrial coatings. They are protective and decorative finishes applied at ambient temperatures. Often called Trade Sales Coatings” (see 2.3).

NOTE 2—Architectural coatings that are designed to give better performance than most conventional coatings because they are tougher and more stain and abrasion resistant are covered by Guide D 3730.

1.2 The types of organic coatings covered by this guide are as follows:

- (1) Type 1 Interior Latex Flat Wall Paints,
- (2) Type 2 Exterior Latex House Paints,
- (3) Type 3 Water-Borne Floor Paints, and
- (4) Type 4 Interior Latex Semigloss and Gloss Paints.

1.2.1 Each is intended for application by brushing, rolling, spraying or other means to the material appropriate for its type, which may include plaster, masonry, wallboard, wood, steel, previously painted surfaces, and other architectural substrates.

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

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 16 Terminology for Paint and Related Coatings, Materi-

als and Applications³

D 185 Test Methods for Coarse Particles in Pigments, Pastes, and Paints⁴

D 215 Practice for the Chemical Analysis of White Linseed Oil Paints³

D 344 Test Methods for Relative Hiding Power of Paints by the Visual Evaluation of Brushouts³

D 358 Specification for Wood to be Used as Panels in Weathering Tests of Coatings⁵

D 522 Test Methods for Mandrel Bend Test of Attached Organic Coatings³

D 523 Test Method for Specular Gloss³

D 562 Test Method for Consistency of Paints Using the Stormer Viscometer³

D 658 Test Method for Abrasion Resistance of Organic Coatings by Air Blast Abrasive³

D 660 Test Method for Evaluating Degree of Checking of Exterior Paints³

D 661 Test Method for Evaluating Degree of Cracking of Exterior Paints³

D 662 Test Method for Evaluating Degree of Erosion of Exterior Paints³

D 772 Test Method for Evaluating Degree of Flaking (Scaling) of Exterior Paints³

D 869 Test Method for Evaluating Degree of Settling of Paint⁵

D 968 Test Methods for Abrasion Resistance of Organic Coatings by Falling Abrasive³

D 1006 Practice for Conducting Exterior Exposure Tests of Paints on Wood³

D 1014 Test Method for Conducting Exterior Exposure Tests of Paints on Steel³

D 1210 Test Method for Fineness of Dispersion of Pigment-Vehicle Systems by Hegman-Type Gage³

D 1296 Test Method for Odor of Volatile Solvents and Diluents⁶

D 1308 Test Method for Effect of Household Chemicals on Clear and Pigmented Organic Finishes⁵

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² Available from the Federation of Societies for Coatings Technology, 492 Norristown Rd., Blue Bell, PA 19422.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.01.

⁴ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.03.

⁵ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.02.

⁶ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.04.

D 1475 Test Method for Density of Liquid Coatings, Inks, and Related Products³
 D 1554 Terminology Relating to Wood-Base Fiber and Particle Panel Materials⁷
 D 1640 Test Methods for Drying, Curing, or Film Formation of Organic Coatings at Room Temperature³
 D 1729 Practice for Visual Evaluation of Color Differences of Opaque Materials³
 D 1736 Test Method for Efflorescence of Interior Wall Paints⁵
 D 1849 Test Method for Package Stability of Paint⁵
 D 2064 Test Method for Print Resistance of Architectural Paints⁵
 D 2196 Test Methods for Rheological Properties of Non-Newtonian Materials by Rotational (Brookfield) Viscometer³
 D 2197 Test Method for Adhesion of Organic Coatings by Scrape Adhesion³
 D 2243 Test Method for Freeze-Thaw Resistance of Water-Borne Coatings⁵
 D 2244 Test Method for Calculation of Color Differences from Instrumentally Measured Color Coordinates³
 D 2369 Test Method for Volatile Content of Coatings³
 D 2370 Test Method for Tensile Properties of Organic Coatings³
 D 2486 Test Method for Scrub Resistance of Interior Latex Flat Wall Paints⁵
 D 2574 Test Method for Resistance of Emulsion Paints in the Container to Attack by Microorganisms³
 D 2805 Test Method for Hiding Power of Paints by Reflectometry³
 D 3168 Practice for Qualitative Identification of Polymers in Emulsion Paints³
 D 3258 Test Method for Porosity of Paint Films⁵
 D 3359 Test Methods for Measuring Adhesion by Tape Test³
 D 3450 Test Method for Washability Properties of Interior Architectural Coatings⁵
 D 3456 Practice for Determining by Exterior Exposure Tests Susceptibility of Paint Films to Microbiological Attack³
 D 3719 Test Method for Quantifying Dirt Collection on Coated Exterior Panels⁵
 D 3723 Test Method for Pigment Content of Water Emulsion Paints by Low-Temperature Ashing³
 D 3730 Guide for Testing High-Performance Interior Architectural Wall Coatings⁵
 D 3792 Test Method for Water Content of Water-Reducible Paints by Direct Injection into a Gas Chromatograph³
 D 3793 Test Method for Low-Temperature Coalescence of Latex Paint Films⁵

⁷ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 04.10.

D 3925 Practice for Sampling Liquid Paints and Related Pigmented Coatings³
 D 3928 Method for Evaluation of Gloss or Sheen Uniformity⁵
 D 3960 Practice for Determining Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Content of Paints and Related Coatings³
 D 4017 Test Method for Water in Paints and Paint Materials by Karl Fischer Method³
 D 4060 Test Method for Abrasion Resistance of Organic Coatings by the Taber Abraser³
 D 4062 Test Method for Levelling of Paints by Draw-Down Method⁵
 D 4213 Test Method for Scrub Resistance of Paints by Abrasion Weight Loss⁵
 D 4214 Test Methods for Evaluating the Degree of Chalking of Exterior Paint Films³
 D 4287 Test Method for High-Shear Viscosity Using the ICI Cone/Plate Viscometer³
 D 4400 Test Methods for Sag Resistance of Paints Using a Multinotch Applicator⁵
 D 4585 Practice for Testing Water Resistance of Coatings Using Controlled Condensation³
 D 4707 Test Method for Measuring of Paint Spatter Resistance During Roller Application⁵
 D 4828 Test Method for Practical Washability of Organic Coatings⁵
 D 4946 Test Method for Blocking Resistance of Architectural Paints⁵
 D 4958 Test Method for Comparison of the Brush Drag of Latex Paints⁵
 E 70 Test Method for pH of Aqueous Solutions with the Glass Electrode⁸
 E 105 Practice for Probability Sampling of Materials⁹
 E 1347 Test Method for Color and Color Difference Measurement of Object-Color Specimens by Tristimulus (Filter) Colorimetry³
 2.2 *U.S. Federal Test Method Standard No. 141*:¹⁰
 2112 Application by Roller
 2131 Application of Sprayed Films
 2141 Application of Brushed Films
 3011 Condition in Container
 4541 Working Properties and Appearance of Dried Film
 6301 Wet Adhesion (Tape Test)

3. Terminology

3.1 For definitions of terms in this guide refer to Terminology D 16 and D 1554.

⁸ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 15.05.

⁹ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.

¹⁰ Available from Standardization Documents Order Desk, Bldg. 4, Section D, 700 Robins Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094, Attn: NPODS.

TABLE 1 List of Standards in Sectional Order

Property (or related test)	Section	ASTM Standard	Federal Test Method Standard 141
Sampling	6.2	D 3925	1022
Liquid Coating Properties			
Condition in container	7.1		3011
Coarse particles and foreign matter	7.2	D 185	
Density or weight per gallon	7.3	D 1475	
Fineness of dispersion	7.4	D 1210	
Odor	7.5	D 1296	4401
Colorant acceptance	7.6		
pH	7.7	E 70	
Package stability	7.8		
Heat stability	7.8.1	D 1849	
Freeze-thaw stability	7.8.2	D 2243	
Settling	7.8.3	D 869	
Microorganism resistance	7.8.4	D 2574	
Coating Application and Film Formation			
Application properties	8.1		4541
Brush application	8.1.1		2141
Brush drag	8.1.1.1	D 4958	
Roller application	8.1.2		2112
Roller spatter	8.1.2.1	D 4707	
Spray application	8.1.3		2131
Touch-up uniformity	8.2	D 3928	
Low-temperature coalescence	8.3	D 3793	
Rheological properties	8.4		
Consistency (Low-shear viscosity)	8.4.1	D 562	
Rheological properties of non-Newtonian materials	8.4.2	D 2196, D4287	
Sag resistance	8.4.3	D 4400	4494
Levelling properties	8.4.4	D 4062	
Drying properties	8.5	D 1640	4061
Appearance of Dry Film			
Color difference	9.1	...	
Color appearance	9.1.1		
Color differences by visual comparison	9.1.2	D 1729	
Color differences using instrumental measurements	9.1.3	D 2244	
Directional reflectance	9.2	E 1347	
Gloss	9.3	...	
Gloss, 60°	9.3.1	D 523	
Sheen (85° gloss)	9.3.2	D 523	
Hiding power	9.4	D 344, D 2805	
Properties of Dry Film			
Interior and Exterior Coatings	10.1		
Abrasion resistance	10.1.1	D 658, D 968, D 4060	6192
Adhesion	10.1.2	D 2197, D 3359	
Wet adhesion	10.1.3		6301
Flexibility	10.1.4	D 522, D 2370	6221 ^A
Resistance to household chemicals	10.1.5	D 1308	
Efflorescence from the film	10.1.6	D 1736	
Efflorescence from the substrate	10.1.7		
Interior Finishes	10.2		
Block resistance	10.2.1	D 4946	
Print resistance	10.2.2	D 2064	
Film porosity	10.2.3	D 3258	
Washability and cleansability	10.2.4		
Washability	10.2.4.1	D 2486, D 4213	
Cleansability	10.2.4.2	D 3450, D 4828	6141 ^B
Exterior Coatings	10.3		
Adhesion to chalky surfaces	10.3.1		6301
Dirt pick-up	10.3.2	D 3719	
Fume resistance	10.3.3	...	
Fume resistance test	10.3.3.1		
Blister resistance	10.3.4	D 4585	
Exposure resistance	10.3.5	D 1006, D 1014	
Chalking	10.3.5.2	D 4214	
Checking	10.3.5.3	D 660	
Cracking	10.3.5.4	D 661	
Erosion	10.3.5.5	D 662	
Flaking	10.3.5.6	D 772	
Fade resistance	10.3.5.7	D 2244	
Stain resistance	10.3.6		
Coating Analysis			
Chemical analysis	11.1	D 215	
Volatile content	11.2	D 2369	
Volatile organic content	11.3	D 3960	

TABLE 1 *Continued*

Property (or related test)	Section	ASTM Standard	Federal Test Method Standard 141
Water content	11.4	D 3792, D 4017	
Pigment content	11.5	D 3723	
Pigment analysis	11.6	D 215	7261
Nonvolatile vehicle identification	11.7	D 3168	

^A Equivalent only to Method B of Test Method D 522.

^B Except for scrub medium..

4. Conditions Affecting Water-Reducible Coatings

4.1 Interior and Exterior Coatings:

4.1.1 *Substrate Type*—The substrate to be painted can affect not only the application properties of a coating, such as gloss and uniformity, but is also a factor in determining the type of coating to use. For instance, a primer-sealer may be required for porous substrates, such as new drywall, bare plaster, new wood or porous masonry. Other factors are the type and quality of metal, wood or wood composite (plywood, particle board or hardboard), the type, quality and alkalinity of concrete, plaster and joint cement systems, and the type and condition of any previous coatings.

4.1.2 *Substrate Conditions*—Conditions such as porosity and hardness determine the kind of coating that can be applied. The condition of previously painted substrates, such as degree of chalk, presence of grease, dirt, mold, and water-soluble or oily contaminants, film adhesion and porosity, all influence the performance of coatings. Smoothness of the substrate affects the spreading rate, final appearance, and texture.

4.1.3 Preparation of previously painted substrates including cleaning, solvent cleaning, and sanding.

4.1.4 Type and quality of primer or undercoat and time of drying before topcoating.

4.1.5 The application properties, even of interior water-reducible coatings, are affected by temperature and humidity at the time of application and during drying. As these materials contain water, surfaces do not have to be completely dry before application. However, low temperature during drying may cause poor film formation.

4.2 Exterior Finishes:

4.2.1 *Substrate Weathering*—Weathering of wood before painting will probably adversely affect the performance of exterior coatings. Some weathering of masonry surfaces may have beneficial effects on the performance.

4.2.2 *Substrate Aspects of the Building*—If construction defects or defects due to age are such that excessive moisture from the inside or the outside makes its way through the substrate or if the substrate is in direct contact with damp ground, blistering, flaking or peeling may result.

4.2.3 Environmental conditions after application, both general for the area and specific, such as under eaves, behind shrubbery, northside and southside exposure.

5. Selection of Tests

5.1 Because the conditions to which a coating is subjected vary with (a) the surface type: wall, floor, ceiling, and (b) the service environment: exterior or interior, specialized types of water-borne coatings have been developed for the different locations. The recommended test methods presented in Table 1

and Table 2 cover practically all of the properties of water-reducible coatings but all of them are not required with each type. Coatings intended for exterior use only or both exterior and interior use require certain properties not relevant to those for interior use only. Selection of the methods to be followed must be governed by experience and the requirements in each individual case, together with agreement between the purchaser and the seller.

5.2 The purchaser should first determine the properties a coating should have and then select only those test methods that measure or evaluate those properties. After selecting the desired tests, the purchaser should then decide which properties are the most important and establish the requirements or specifications accordingly. Since coating properties frequently tend to oppose each other, such as low sheen versus good cleansability, some properties may need to be less emphasized if others are to be accentuated. This balance of properties must be considered when selecting the tests and establishing the requirements. The significance of the tests and the normal range of values are presented in the different sections, in most cases.

5.3 This guide does not indicate relative importance of the various tests nor does it recommend specific test values because properties very important to one purchaser may be less so to another.

6. Sampling

6.1 Prior to sampling, the condition of the container should be established since damage to it may cause evaporation, skinning, or other undesirable effects on the coating.

6.2 Sample in accordance with Practice D 3925. Determine the density in pounds per gallon (kilograms/litre) in accordance with Test Method D 1475. Continue sampling and determining density until successive results agree within 0.1 lb (45 g) or as agreed upon between the purchaser and seller. Then take samples for testing.

6.3 Specify the amount required for a representative sample, the package sizes, and an identification code. A1-U.S. gal (or 4-L) sample is usually sufficient for the recommended tests, but for guidance in selecting a sampling plan consult Practice E 105.

7. Liquid Coating Properties

7.1 *Condition in Container*—Thickening, pigment settling, and liquid separation are undesirable and objectionable if material that has been stored cannot be readily reconditioned and made suitable for application with a reasonable amount of stirring. The referenced method covers procedures for determining changes in properties after storage and lists characteristics that are undesirable and objectionable in a stored paint.

Determine condition in the container in accordance with Method 3011 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141. (See also 7.10 Package Stability.)

7.2 Coarse Particles and Foreign Matter—Liquid coatings must be free of coarse particles and foreign matter to be able to form uniform films of good appearance, a typical maximum being 0.5 weight % of the total material. The referenced method with a 325-mesh (45- μm) screen gives the percent of these particles. Determine content of coarse particles and foreign matter in accordance with Test Method D 185.

7.2.1 Another test method used in industry to determine whether coarse particles are present in the dry film of a low-gloss finish is to scrape the surface of the film with a spatula or metal edge of a ruler. Any particles larger than 325 mesh can be clearly seen after the surface has been scraped.

7.3 Density or Weight per Gallon—The density measured in pounds per gallon (kilograms per litre = g/ml) is used to ensure product uniformity from batch to batch, provides a check against the theoretical weight calculated from the formula, and is useful for determining the similarity of two samples. The referenced method gives a procedure for measuring the density of the coating at a specified temperature. Most paints have densities of about 10 to 12 lb/gal (1.2 to 1.4 kg/L). Determine density in accordance with Test Method D 1475, using a calibrated weight per gallon cup.

7.4 Fineness of Dispersion—Generally, the more finely a pigment is dispersed the more efficiently it is being utilized. One method for measuring the degree of dispersion (commonly referred to as “fineness of grind”) is to draw the liquid coating down a calibrated tapered groove varying in depth from 4 to 0 mils (100 to 0 μm) (0 to 8 Hegman units). The depth at which continuous groupings of particles or agglomerates, or both, protrude through the surface of the wet film is taken as the fineness of dispersion value. Higher readings in Hegman units or lower readings in mils or micrometres indicate finer dispersion. Most interior semigloss and gloss latex coatings have a fineness of about 1.5 to 0.3 mils (5 to 7.5 Hegman or 40 to 7 μm) while lower gloss finishes do not generally require a dispersion finer than 3 to 2.5 mils (2 to 3 Hegman). Some interior flat latex paints have finenesses as low as 3.5 mils (1 Hegman or 90 μm). Determine fineness of dispersion in accordance with Test Method D 1210.

7.4.1 The referenced method was designed primarily for coatings with good fineness of dispersion, such as high gloss finishes. Some interior flat paints contain pigments so coarse that it is impractical to measure the fineness with a grindage because the agglomerates are carried along by the scraper.

NOTE 3—The fast drying of latex paints makes it difficult to make measurements of this type.

7.5 Odor—One of the advantages of latex paints is that they contain little if any organic solvent. Thus interior latex paints do not have odors characteristic of solvent-borne coatings. However, other ingredients, such as ammonia, may be used that might also be objectionable in confined spaces. Hence, interior latex paints should be tested for odor acceptability. Although there is no specific ASTM test method for evaluating odor of water-borne coatings, the industry does attempt to measure this property. Determine whether the paint has an

unpleasant or irritating odor as agreed upon between the purchaser and seller, taking adequate precautions to ensure the safety of the operator. Test Method D 1296 may be suitable as the basis for a test.

7.6 Colorant Acceptance—Tintability of white bases with colorants of standardized tinting strength is a trade requirement. If tinting colors are not adequately compatible with tint bases, lighter, darker, or nonuniform shades of colors are produced. Suitable test methods should be agreed upon between the purchaser and the seller.

7.7 pH—Latex paints with low (acidic) pH may corrode metal containers. To avoid this problem, the pH is normally stabilized within the range from about 5 to 10, depending upon the type of latex used and the general formulation. The pH does not determine the quality of a latex paint and should be used only to ensure product uniformity. However, a change in pH during storage may indicate poor stability and an unacceptable change in the properties of a latex paint. Determine pH in accordance with Test Method E 70.

7.8 Package Stability—Since paints are normally not used immediately after manufacture, they must remain stable in the can for some time. At normal temperatures most water-borne coatings can be stored for over a year with little change in properties. However, exposure in uninsulated warehouses or during shipping to high temperatures in the summer or to low temperatures in the winter may cause unacceptable changes in these products. Other unsatisfactory conditions that may occur during storage are excessive settling and microbiological attack.

7.8.1 Heat Stability—Exposure in service to high temperatures can be used to test for the stability of a packaged coating that frequently encounters such conditions in service, or as an accelerated test to predict stability when stored at temperatures above freezing. Although indications of long term package stability can usually be obtained in several days or weeks at an elevated temperature, such as 125°F (50°C) or 140°F (60°C), occasionally the results of the accelerated test do not agree with those at prolonged normal storage conditions. In the referenced method the changes in consistency and certain other properties of the accelerated aged material are compared to those occurring in a control kept at normal temperatures for a longer period. When testing for heat stability, as such, changes in viscosity, flow, gloss, pH, foam resistance, color uniformity, and wet adhesion are usually checked. Determine heat stability in accordance with Test Method D 1849.

7.8.2 Freeze-Thaw Stability—Water-borne coatings may be subjected to freezing conditions during shipping and storage. Suitably stabilized products can resist several cycles of freezing and thawing without showing deleterious changes such as coagulation, graininess (seeding), or excessive viscosity increase. Many latex paints that increase in viscosity can still be considered usable, if other properties that may be affected by a higher viscosity, such as levelling and brushability, are satisfactory. Determine freeze-thaw stability in accordance with Test Method D 2243.

7.8.3 Settling—Modern coatings are generally resistant to hard settling, but do at times show separation and soft settling.

The referenced method covers the degree of pigment suspension in and ease of remixing of a shelf-aged specimen to a homogeneous condition suitable for the intended use. Determine settling in accordance with Test Method D 869.

7.8.4 Microorganism Resistance—Microorganisms in a water-borne coating can cause gassing, putrefactive or fermentative odors, and loss of viscosity. Determine if the paint contains living bacteria and if it is resistant to attack by bacteria in accordance with Test Method D 2574.

8. Coating Application and Film Formation

8.1 Application Properties—Application or working properties of a paint are generally compared to a standard or described by requirements in the product specification. Determine working properties in accordance with Method 4541 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141.

8.1.1 Brush Application—Brushed films should be smooth and free of seeds and on vertical surfaces should show no sagging, color streaking, nor excessive brush marks. Brush drag should not be excessive although some degree of drag may be desirable for adequate film thickness application. Wall finishes are tested on vertical surfaces and floor coatings on horizontal surfaces, although evaluation of the latter on vertical surfaces may be necessary to determine performance on stair risers, railings, posts, etc. The referenced method covers a means for the determination of the brushing properties of a coating. Even though the test is subjective, someone experienced in the art can produce quite consistent results. Determine brushing properties in accordance with Method 2141 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141.

8.1.1.1 Brush Drag—As the brush drag (resistance encountered when applying a coating by brush) increases, any natural tendency of the painter to overspread the paint is reduced. All other factors being constant, increased brush drag results in greater film thickness with consequent improvements in hiding and film durability. Conversely, increasing brush drag too much can cause difficulties in spreading the paint easily and uniformly, leading to excessive sagging, prolonged drying time and, in highly pigmented latex paints, possibly to “mud-cracking” due to excessive thickness. The referenced method covers the determination of relative brush drag of a series of coatings applied by brush by the same operator. It has been established that the subjective ratings thus obtained correlate well with high shear viscosities obtained instrumentally using Test Method D 4287 (see 8.4.2), provided that the paints differ in viscosity by at least 0.3 poise (0.03 Pa·s). Determine brush drag ratings in accordance with Test Method D 4958.

8.1.2 Roller Application—Both wall and floor coatings are frequently applied by roller. This type of application tends to produce some stipple pattern. The referenced method covers the evaluation of a material’s characteristics when applied by roller. Since foaming often occurs when water-borne coatings are roller applied, the amount of foam produced, and the number of craters that remain after the bubbles have broken should be determined during the test. Determine roller coating properties in accordance with Method 2112 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141.

8.1.2.1 Some coatings spatter more than others when applied by roller. The degree to which a paint spatters when roller

applied can be determined by the density of the spatter. In the referenced method a specially designed notched spool is rolled through a film of the test material that has been applied to a plastic panel. Any spatter generated falls upon a catch paper and after drying is rated against photographic standards. This procedure eliminates the influence of the roller cover, thus determining the spattering characteristics of the paint alone. Determine spatter resistance in accordance with Test Method D 4707.

8.1.3 Spray Application—Architectural coatings are sometimes applied by spray. Both air and airless spray are used on commercial work. Determine spray application properties in accordance with Method 2131 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141. Manual application is very subjective and should be performed only by an individual skilled in the art of using spray equipment.

8.2 Touch-Up Uniformity—Coatings applied to large, flat surfaces may exhibit localized areas of noticeably different appearance due to variation in film thickness, different methods of application, or localized damage in service. With a coating of suitable touch-up properties, additional material of the same batch or lot can be applied only to these localized areas to provide uniformity of color, gloss, and levelling over the entire surface. Determine touch-up properties in accordance with Test Method D 3928.

8.3 Low-Temperature Coalescence—If a latex paint is applied at too low a temperature it will not form a coherent film. The referenced test method determines how well the latex particles fuse together or coalesce to form a continuous film at low temperatures. Determine low-temperature coalescence of a series of coatings or reformulations in accordance with Test Method D 3793.

NOTE 4—Because of the poor reproducibility of this method with numerical values, it cannot be used to compare such results from different laboratories. Interlaboratory agreement is improved significantly when rankings are used.

8.4 Rheological Properties:

8.4.1 Consistency (Low-Shear Viscosity)—Consistency is important, relating to application and flow, and should fall within a stated range for satisfactory reproduction of a specific formula. While consistency is an important property it does not determine the quality of a coating and should be used mainly to ensure product uniformity. In the referenced method, consistency is defined as the load in grams to produce a specified rate of shear. The load value is frequently converted to Krebs Units (KU) and the Stormer consistency reported on that basis. Although the consistency of most latex paints is about 150 to 300 g/100 revolutions, a much wider range is possible because of the great variation that may occur in the rheological properties of these paints. Two paints of the same consistency may have quite different rheological properties during application. Determine consistency in accordance with Test Method D 562.

8.4.2 Rheological Properties of Non-Newtonian Materials—Rheological properties are related to application and flow characteristics of the liquid coating. The referenced methods cover the determination of rheological properties and are particularly suited for coatings that display thixotropic

characteristics. However, they measure viscosity under different shear rates. In Test Method D 4287 there is only one rate but it is similar to that occurring during brush application so that the measured viscosity is related to brush drag, spreading rate and film build. Test Method D 2196 includes procedures for measuring viscosity at several shear rates to determine the amount of shear thinning and the viscosity change at low shear rates. The results can be used to evaluate sag resistance and levelling ability. Determine rheological properties in accordance with Test Methods D 2196 or D 4287 or both.

8.4.3 Sag Resistance—Some coatings sag and form curtains before the film sets. Resistance to this type of flow is an important property particularly for semigloss and gloss finishes because of the unsightly film appearance. Determine sag resistance in accordance with Test Method D 4400.

8.4.4 Levelling Properties—Levelling is an important property when smooth, uniform surfaces are to be produced, because it affects hiding and appearance. Brush marks and imperfections are much more conspicuous in semigloss and gloss finishes than they are in low gloss materials. In the referenced method a series of ridges is produced using a levelling rod and after drying they are compared to levelness standards. Determine levelling in accordance with Test Method D 4062.

8.5 Drying Properties—The drying time of a coating is important in determining when a freshly painted room, floor or stair can be put back in use. Slow drying may result in dirt or insect pickup causing a poor appearance or, if on an exterior surface, rain or dew may cause a nonuniform appearance. The drying time of a coating is determined by its composition and by atmospheric conditions during drying. Most latex paints dry to touch in 1 to 2 h when the water has evaporated from the film. Low gloss finishes can usually be recoated from within a few hours to 18 h. Because of the glycols present in semigloss and gloss latex coatings it is prudent not to recoat before at least 18 h drying. Curing to obtain the ultimate properties may take only a few days for some latex paints while others may require 1 to 2 weeks, depending upon the composition. Any one of the several methods for determining the various stages of film formation in the drying or curing of organic coatings may be used. For example, if two coats are specified the determination of “dry-to-recoat” time is important. Determine appropriate drying time(s) in accordance with Test Method D 1640.

9. Appearance of Dry Film

9.1 Color Difference:

9.1.1 The appearance of color is greatly influenced by several factors. A color next to a yellow wall looks different than the same color next to a blue wall. The visual appearance of a colored object illuminated by incandescent light, fluorescent light, and natural light differs because the spectral composition of the incident lights vary. Gloss also affects color appearance. Low and high gloss coatings frequently look different in color, even though instrumentally their colors may be identical.

9.1.2 Color Differences by Visual Comparison—Visual comparison of colors is fast and often acceptable although numerical values are not obtained. The referenced method

covers the spectral, photometric, and geometric characteristics of light source, illuminating and viewing conditions, sizes of specimens, and general procedures to be used in the visual evaluation of color differences of opaque materials relative to their standards. Determine color difference in accordance with Practice D 1729.

9.1.3 Color Differences Using Instrumental Measurements—The difference in color between a product and its standard can be measured by instrument. Generally the tolerance is agreed upon by the purchaser and seller and may also be required if a product specification is involved. Color measuring instruments provide numerical values that can be compared to subsequent measurements. The referenced method covers the calculation of instrumental determinations of small color differences observable in daylight illumination between nonfluorescent, nonmetameric, opaque surfaces such as coated specimens. If metamerism is suspected, visual evaluation (9.1) should be used to verify the results. Calculate in accordance with Test Method D 2244 the color differences that have been measured instrumentally.

9.2 Directional Reflectance—This property is a measure of the appearance of lightness of a coating. It is usually assigned a value in specifications for white and pastel shades, a typical range being 76 to 92 % for white finishes. In the referenced method the directions of illumination and viewing are specified so as to eliminate the effect of gloss. Determine daylight directional reflectance in accordance with Test Method E 1347.

9.3 Gloss—This property is a measure of the capability of a coating surface to reflect light in a mirror-like (specular) manner, that is, light strikes the surface and is reflected at the equal but opposite angle. In the referenced method the numerical gloss units are the ratio of light reflected by a specimen to that reflected by the primary black glass that is assigned a gloss value of 100. The gloss of some coatings varies greatly with the angle of incidence so that a complete description of their gloss would require measurements over a wide range of angle. In practice, the gloss of architectural finishes is adequately characterized by measurements at 60° or 85°, or both, from a line perpendicular (normal) to the surface. The 85° angle is a very low “grazing” angle (5°) of illuminating and viewing the surface and the gloss at this angle is called “sheen”. Attempts to standardize the levels of gloss associated with the several descriptive terms have not been very successful since the gloss scale is continuous with no distinct boundaries. Hence, there is some overlap at the ends of some classifications in common usage.

9.3.1 Gloss, 60°—Semigloss finishes are particularly sensitive to poor enamel hold-out of primers and undercoats. Low or uneven gloss readings are indicative of this defect. Low gloss finishes range from 0 to 20 while exterior latex house paints may vary from 5 to 60. A range from 20 to 40 is typical of water-borne floor finishes after drying for a few days. Interior semiglosses vary from 35 to 70 but measurements taken shortly after drying should be repeated after one week because the gloss can drop considerably in the first few days of drying. Determine the 60° gloss in accordance with Test Method D 523.

9.3.2 Sheen (85° Gloss)—Although low-gloss paints with

good uniformity of appearance at low angles of viewing often have little sheen while those with good cleansability usually have moderate sheen, this is not always the case so that sheen should not be used as a measure of other paint properties. The referenced method, using the 85° geometry, is useful in characterizing the low-angle appearance of low-gloss coatings. Nominally flat wall paints have a sheen of 1 to 10 whereas velvets or eggshells range from 15 to 35. Determine the sheen (85° gloss) in accordance with Test Method D 523.

9.4 Hiding Power—Hiding power is a measure of the ability of a coating to obscure the substrate and is usually expressed as the spreading rate for a specified level of opacity. It is, however, dependent on uniformity of film thickness, which in practical applications is influenced by flow, levelling and application properties of the coating. Test Method D 2805 is precise and gives an absolute rather than a comparative result. Paint is applied with an applicator bar to minimize the effects of flow and levelling, film thickness is rigorously measured, and film opacity is determined instrumentally. Test Method D 344 is a practical test in which paint is applied with a brush, wet-film thickness is approximately controlled by spreading rate, and hiding power is evaluated visually by comparison with a standard paint, but results are affected by flow and levelling of the materials. Determine hiding power in accordance with Test Methods D 344 or D 2805.

10. Properties of the Dry Film

10.1 Interior and Exterior Coatings:

10.1.1 Abrasion Resistance—Abrasion resistance is a measure of the ability of a dried film to withstand wear from foot traffic and marring from objects rolled or pulled across the surface. In the referenced methods, dry abrasive is applied to a coated panel using the force of gravity or a jet blast for free-flowing abrasive or a weighted wheel for abrasive embedded in a resilient rubber matrix. Determine dry abrasion resistance in accordance with Test Methods D 658, D 968 or D 4060. (See 10.2.4.1 for wet abrasion resistance.)

NOTE 5—Because of the poor reproducibility of abrasion test methods, testing should be restricted to only one laboratory when numerical abrasion resistance values are to be used. Interlaboratory agreement is improved significantly when rankings are used in place of numerical values.

10.1.2 Adhesion—Adhesion, the ability of a film to resist removal from the substrate, is an important property of a coating. Determine adhesion in accordance with Test Method D 2197 or D 3359 or both.

10.1.3 Wet Adhesion—It is essential that a finish adhere tightly to a given substrate or primer under the wet conditions of washing or scrubbing. There is no adequate test method published by ASTM. Determine the wet adhesion of exterior latex paints in accordance with Method 6301 of Federal Test Method Standard No. 141.

10.1.4 Flexibility—Elongation is a measure of the flexibility of a coating film. Most semigloss and full gloss water-borne coatings can be bent over a 1/8-in. (3.2-mm) mandrel without affecting the film. However, interior flat and eggshell finishes usually pass at 1/4-in. (6.4-mm). For exterior coatings Test

Method D 2370 is a much more discriminating method.¹¹ Determine flexibility in accordance with Test Methods D 522 or elongation with D 2370.

10.1.5 Resistance to Household Chemicals—An important property of some finishes is their ability to resist spotting, softening or removal when subjected to household chemicals or strong cleaners. Determine resistance to these chemicals in accordance with Test Method D 1308.

10.1.6 Efflorescence from the Film—Salt formation is produced by specific conditions of temperature and humidity if a paint contains sufficient solid water-soluble material to cause a noticeable deposit on the film. However, because of the improvements in latex and latex paint formulations few interior latex paints effloresce. The referenced method measures efflorescence that comes from the paint itself, not from the substrate. Determine efflorescence resistance in accordance with Test Method D 1736.

10.1.7 Efflorescence from the Substrate—Cementitious substances may contain sufficient solid water-soluble materials to cause a surface deposit through leaching and evaporation. Currently there is no adequate test method published by ASTM.

10.2 Interior Finishes:

10.2.1 Block Resistance—This property is important for interior semigloss and gloss finishes since it governs the resistance of surfaces of dried coatings to sticking together when stacked or placed in contact with each other. An interior finish often comes in contact with itself, especially on doors, windows and drawers where it sometimes sticks to itself (blocks) depending on the hardness of the coating, the pressure, temperature, humidity, and time that the surfaces are in contact. The referenced method covers an accelerated blocking resistance procedure developed especially for architectural coatings. Determine blocking resistance in accordance with Test Method D 4946.

10.2.2 Print Resistance—The ability of a coating to resist printing is important because its appearance is adversely affected if the surface texture is modified by contact with another surface, particularly one with a pattern. Interior gloss and semigloss systems on window sills and other horizontal surfaces often have flower pots placed on them that may tend to leave a permanent impression from the pressure. This tendency for a paint film to “print” is often a function of the hardness of the coating, the pressure, temperature, humidity, and time that the two surfaces are in contact. Test for print resistance in accordance with Test Method D 2064.

10.2.3 Film Porosity—The more porous a paint film is, the worse its cleansability and enamel holdout. In the referenced method a special, colored penetrating medium is applied to the coating and the change in reflectance indicates the degree of porosity. Determine film porosity in accordance with Test Method D 3258.

10.2.4 Washability and Cleansability—The capability of satisfactorily removing marks without damaging the film is essential for good performance of interior finishes. A coating

¹¹ Ashton, H. E., “Flexibility and its Retention in Clear Coatings Exposed to Weathering,” *Journal of Coatings Technology*, Vol 51, No. 653, June 1979, p. 41.

may be washable, that is, unaffected by the detergent solution, but may not have good cleansability. Frequently the difference between the two terms, “cleansability” and “washability” is not clearly understood so that there is confusion as to what is really being tested; for example, the title of Test Method D 3450. Cleansability is evaluated by applying one or more stains and soils and determining how readily they are removed. Washability is evaluated by determining the resistance of the film to wet erosion either by visual assessment or measured film loss. In general, the precision of both types of test is poor because several properties, such as hardness, water and detergent resistance, cohesion and adhesion, are involved and the endpoint, except for the wet abrasion method, is rather indefinite.

10.2.4.1 Washability (Also referred to as Scrubbing or Wet Abrasion Resistance)—The scrubbing method, Test Method D 2486, developed for interior latex flat wall paints can be applied to coatings of almost any type. In it the coating is applied to a black plastic panel that, during scrubbing with a nylon brush and abrasive cleaning agent, is raised by a narrow shim to concentrate the test area. The number of back-and-forth strokes (cycles) required to remove the film over the shim is determined. Interior latex flat paints can vary in scrub resistance from less than 100 to more than 1000 cycles. The wet-abrasion method, Test Method D 4213, is similar except that a sponge is used in place of the bristle brush while the shim is not used. This method also provides for the use of a nonabrasive medium with paints having very low abrasion resistance. The weight or volume loss per 100 cycles to erode the film almost to exposure of the black substrate is the measure of scrub resistance. Evaluate washability, as just described, in accordance with Test Methods D 2486 or D 4213.

10.2.4.2 Cleansability—The older referenced method, Test Method D 3450, is similar to the wet-abrasion method, Test Method D 4213, except that the sponge is used with either the nonabrasive or abrasive cleaning agent to remove a carbon black-oil stain. The ability to remove the stain is expressed as the ratio (in percent relative) of the reflectance of the cleaned area to that of the area before application of the stain. In Test Method D 4828, referred to as a “practical” test, numerous staining and soiling agents found in service and commercial abrasive or nonabrasive cleaners as well as the standardized cleaning agents can be used. In the revised edition the films may be cleansed manually or mechanically but only the latter is suitable for interlaboratory testing. Evaluate ease of removability in accordance with Test Methods D 3450 or D 4828.

10.3 Exterior Coatings:

10.3.1 Adhesion to Chalky Surfaces—Latex paints generally have little ability to penetrate powder substrates. Consequently, adhesion to previous coatings that have chalked is poor unless the latex paint has been modified to penetrate and bind the chalk layer to the old coating. However, certain latices do exist that are designed to adhere well to chalky surfaces so do not require modification. There are no directly applicable ASTM or Federal Test Method Standard No. 141 test methods for adhesion to chalky surfaces, although work is still going on. The industry generally uses a pressure-sensitive tape to test for this property. The tape is pressed firmly onto the dried latex film (fresh dry films do not adhere as well as aged dry films)

and then removed rapidly by pulling back upon itself. Method 6301 of Standard 141 describes a similar method but includes water exposure.

10.3.2 Dirt Pickup—Low-gloss exterior latex paints generally have good resistance to dirt pickup. Gloss or semigloss latex paints may be more subject to this type of disfigurement. Exterior exposure, particularly under an overhang (soffit), should indicate in a relatively short time (about 1 year) a paint’s tendency to this defect. Determine degree of dirt collection in accordance with Test Method D 3719.

10.3.3 Fume Resistance—Some paints exhibit a change in appearance (usually color) when subjected to air containing certain sulfur compounds, notably hydrogen sulfide and sulfur dioxide. This type of atmosphere may be present near industrial or other polluted areas and can cause a paint to yellow or darken in as little time as overnight. There are no ASTM or Federal test methods for evaluating this color change, but one procedure used by the industry is as follows:

10.3.3.1 Apply a sufficient number of coats of the paint to two glass plates to hide the surface completely, allow to dry for 6 h and expose one in a moist atmosphere of hydrogen sulfide for 18 h. Compare the color with the unexposed plate. The color difference should not exceed that between plates that have been coated with a paint made with titanium dioxide pigment, lead-free zinc oxide, raw or refined linseed oil, and sufficient cobalt added for drying, and similarly treated.

10.3.4 Blister Resistance—Blister resistance is the ability of a dry film on wood to resist the formation of blisters caused by water from the wood substrate. In practice water can come from either the interior of a home or from the structural defects that permit entry of exterior water behind the wood. Moisture blister resistance can be qualitatively evaluated in a laboratory test. Determine resistance to moisture blistering in accordance with Practice D 4585.

NOTE 6—Latex paints are frequently promoted on the basis of their ability to allow moisture to escape without causing blisters, so they should be tested for this property.

10.3.5 Exposure Resistance—If the coating is intended for exterior use, evaluation of the resistance to weathering may be required. In conducting exterior exposures follow Practice D 1006 for wood substrates or Test Method D 1014 for steel.

10.3.5.1 In establishing exterior performance on wood, use the panels described in Specification D 358 or as agreed upon between the purchaser and the seller.

10.3.5.2 Degree of Chalking—Determine the rating using Test Method D 4214.

10.3.5.3 Degree of Checking—Determine the rating using Test Method D 660.

10.3.5.4 Degree of Cracking—Determine the rating using Test Method D 661.

10.3.5.5 Degree of Erosion—Determine the rating using Test Method D 662.

10.3.5.6 Degree of Flaking—Determine the rating using Test Method D 772.

10.3.5.7 Mildew Resistance—Many exterior paints are subject to microbiological discoloration on the surface with time. This is especially true in warm, moist climates. Determine mildew resistance in accordance with Practice D 3456.

10.3.5.8 Fade Resistance—Exterior latex paints usually have good color retention because of their good resistance to chalking. However, the use of improper latex, pigment volume concentration, or pigments can lead to fading. There are no ASTM nor Federal test methods specifically designed for evaluating fade resistance, but the change in color on exposure can be measured in accordance with Test Method D 2244 (see 9.2).

10.3.6 Stain Resistance—There is neither an ASTM nor a Federal test method available for evaluating stain resistance of exterior latex paints. There are, of course, different kinds of stain such as the water-soluble extractives in wood substrates, the formation of lead or mercury sulfides, and rundown from metal surfaces of oxides that disfigure the surface. Different kinds of test methods are required for water-soluble and insoluble stains.

11. Coating Analysis

11.1 Chemical Analysis—If a specification requires certain raw materials or certain components in a given amount then analysis is needed to determine whether the specified components are present and in what amounts. Analysis is primarily a measure of uniformity and does not necessarily establish quality that can also be greatly affected by manufacturing techniques. No single schematic analysis is comprehensive enough to cover the wide variety of paint compositions. Most ASTM analytical methods apply to solvent-borne coatings. However, some of them can be adapted to analysis of the water-reducible type. Select test procedures from Practice D 215 and ASTM methods that are pertinent to the components of water-borne coatings.

11.2 Volatile Content—The percent of volatile matter is a measure of the amount of a liquid coating lost as it dries. This quantity is not necessarily indicative of the quality of the coating. It is useful, however, for determining the similarity of two batches. The referenced method covers the determination of the volatile content by weight of solvent- and water-reducible coatings. The quantity determined subtracted from 100 % gives the nonvolatile content of the coating. Determine the volatile content in accordance with Test Method D 2369.

11.3 Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Content—Several local jurisdictions have adopted air pollution controls that severely limit the amount of VOC permitted in architectural

coatings, including interior latex gloss and semigloss paints. Since these paints may contain solvent such as coalescent and co-solvent wet-edge aids, it is essential that these products not exceed the established VOC limits. Determine VOC content in accordance with Practice D 3960.

11.4 Water Content—The amount of water may be required in the calculation of the VOC of coatings. The referenced methods cover the determination of the total water content of water-borne coatings, one using gas-liquid chromatography and the other the Karl Fischer reaction. Determine water content in accordance with Test Methods D 3792 or D 4017.

11.5 Pigment Content—Pigment provides the hiding and color and influences many other properties of a coating. The referenced method describes the procedure for the lowtemperature ashing of water-borne coatings. Some of these coatings may contain ingredients that lose water of hydration or decompose at the test temperature. Consequently, caution must be exercised in applying the method to materials containing unknown pigment compositions. If difficulties or disagreements are encountered with this procedure, the pigment should be separated from the binder using a centrifuge. Determine the pigment content in accordance with Test Method D 3723.

11.6 Pigment Analysis—The analysis of pigment may be required if the product is covered by a specification or upon agreement between the purchaser and seller. Analyze the pigment in accordance with selected test procedures from Practice D 215 and appropriate ASTM methods.

11.7 Identification of Nonvolatile Vehicle—The type of binder used in a coating has a great influence on its properties. The referenced method covers the qualitative characterization or identification of the extracted vehicle by infrared spectroscopy and pyrolysis of the paint followed by gas-liquid chromatography. It is useful in detecting batch to batch uniformity and the presence of major adulterants. Identify the nonvolatile vehicle in accordance with Practice D 3168.

12. Field Testing

12.1 Although many of the recommended test methods attempt to simulate conditions under which water-reducible coatings are applied and used, it is not possible to duplicate accurately all possible conditions. Testing materials under field conditions is recommended for the final evaluation of suitability.

TABLE 2 Alphabetical List of Properties

Property (or related test)	Section	ASTM Standard	Federal Test Method Standard 141
Abrasion Resistance	10.1.1	D 658, D 968, D 4060	6192
Adhesion	10.1.2	D 2197, D 3359	
Adhesion to chalky surfaces	10.3.1		6301
Analysis, chemical	11.1	D 215	
Application properties	8.1		4541
Blister resistance	10.3.4	D 4585	
Block resistance	10.2.1	D 4946	
Brush application	8.1.1		2141
Brush drag	8.1.1.1	D 4958	
Chalking	10.3.5.2	D 4214	
Checking	10.3.5.3	D 660	
Cleansability	10.2.4.2	D 3450, D 4828	6141 ^A
Coarse particles and foreign matter	7.2	D 185	

TABLE 2 *Continued*

Property (or related test)	Section	ASTM Standard	Federal Test Method Standard 141
Colorant acceptance	7.6		
Color appearance	9.1.1	. . .	
Color differences by visual comparison	9.1.2	D 1729	
Color differences using instrumental measurements	9.1.3	D 2244	
Condition in container	7.1		3011
Consistency (Low-shear viscosity)	8.4.1	D 562	
Cracking	10.3.5.4	D 661	
Density or weight per gal	7.3	D 1475	
Dirt pick-up	10.3.2	D 3719	
Drying properties	8.5	D 1640	4061
Efflorescence from the film	10.1.6	D 1736	
Efflorescence from the film substrate	10.1.7		
Erosion	10.3.5.5	D 662	
Exposure resistance	10.3.5	D 1006, D1014	
Fade resistance	10.3.5.7	D 2244	
Film porosity	10.2.3	D 3258	
Fineness of dispersion	7.4	D 1210	
Flaking	10.3.5.6	D 772	
Flexibility	10.1.4	D 522, D 2370	6221 ^B
Freeze-thaw stability	7.8.2	D 2243	
Fume resistance	10.3.3	...	
Gloss	9.3		
Gloss, 60°	9.3.1	D 523	
Heat stability	7.8.1	D 1849	
Hiding power	9.5	D 344, D 2805	
Levelling properties	8.4.4	D 4062	
Low-temperature coalescence	8.3	D 3793	
Microorganism resistance	7.8.4	D 2574	
Nonvolatile vehicle identification	11.7	D 3168	
Odor	7.5	D 1296	4401
Package Stability	7.8	...	
pH	7.7	E 70	
Pigment analysis	11.6	D 215	7261
Pigment content	11.5	D 3723	
Reflectance, directional	9.2	E 1347	
Resistance to household chemicals	10.1.5	D 1308	
Rheological properties of non-Newtonian materials	8.4.2	D 2196, D 4287	
Roller application	8.1.2		2112
Roller spatter	8.1.2.1	D 4707	
Sag resistance	8.4.3	D 4400	4494
Sampling	6.2	D 3925	1022
Settling	7.8.3	D 869	
Sheen (85° gloss)	9.3.2	D 523	
Spray application	8.1.3		2131
Stain resistance	10.3.6		
Touch-up uniformity	8.2	D 3928	
Volatile content	11.2	D 2369	
Volatile organic content (VOC)	11.3	D 3960	
Washability	10.2.4.1	D 2486, D 4213	
Water content	11.4	D 3792, D 4017	
Wet adhesion	10.1.3		6301

^AExcept for scrub medium.

^BEquivalent only to Method B of D 522.

13. Keywords

13.1 architectural coatings; coating tests; water-borne coatings

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