largely, though not completely, by complexing with mercuric sulfate ($HgSO_4$) before the refluxing procedure. Although 1 g $HgSO_4$ is specified for 50 mL sample, a lesser amount may be used where sample chloride concentration is known to be less than 2000 mg/L, as long as a 10:1 weight ratio of $HgSO_4$:Cl^- is maintained. Do not use the test for samples containing more than 2000 mg Cl^-/L. Techniques designed to measure COD in saline waters are available.[1,2]

Halide interferences may be removed by precipitation with silver ion and filtration before digestion. This approach may introduce substantial errors due to the occlusion and carrydown of COD matter from heterogenous samples.

Ammonia and its derivatives, in the waste or generated from nitrogen-containing organic matter, are not oxidized. However, elemental chlorine reacts with these compounds. Hence, corrections for chloride interferences are difficult.

Nitrite (NO_2^-) exerts a COD of 1.1 mg O_2/mg NO_2^--N. Because concentrations of NO_2^- in waters rarely exceed 1 or 2 mg NO_2^--N/L, the interference is considered insignificant and usually is ignored. To eliminate a significant interference due to NO_2^-, add 10 mg sulfamic acid for each mg NO_2^--N present in the sample volume used; add the same amount of sulfamic acid to the reflux vessel containing the distilled water blank.

Reduced inorganic species such as ferrous iron, sulfide, manganous manganese, etc., are oxidized quantitatively under the test conditions. For samples containing significant levels of these species, stoichiometric oxidation can be assumed from known initial concentration of the interfering species and corrections can be made to the COD value obtained.

The silver, hexavalent chromium, and mercury salts used in the COD determinations create hazardous wastes. The greatest problem is in the use of mercury. If the chloride contribution to COD is negligible, $HgSO_4$ can be omitted. Smaller sample sizes (see Table 5220:I) reduce the waste. Recovery of the waste material may be feasible if allowed by regulatory authority.[3]

3. Sampling and Storage

Preferably collect samples in glass bottles. Test unstable samples without delay. If delay before analysis is unavoidable, preserve sample by acidification to pH ≤ 2 using conc H_2SO_4. Blend (homogenize) all samples containing suspended solids before analysis. If COD is to be related to BOD, TOC, etc., ensure that all tests receive identical pretreatment. Make preliminary dilutions for wastes containing a high COD to reduce the error inherent in measuring small sample volumes.

4. References

1. BURNS, E.R. & C. MARSHALL. 1965. Correction for chloride interference in the chemical oxygen demand test. *J. Water Pollut. Control Fed.* 37:1716.
2. BAUMANN, F.I. 1974. Dichromate reflux chemical oxygen demand: A proposed method for chloride correction in highly saline waters. *Anal. Chem.* 46:1336.
3. HOLM, T.R. 1996. Treatment of Spent Chemical Oxygen Demand Solutions for Safe Disposal. Illinois State Water Survey, Champaign.

5220 B.   Open Reflux Method

1. General Discussion

a. Principle: Most types of organic matter are oxidized by a boiling mixture of chromic and sulfuric acids. A sample is refluxed in strongly acid solution with a known excess of potassium dichromate ($K_2Cr_2O_7$). After digestion, the remaining unreduced $K_2Cr_2O_7$ is titrated with ferrous ammonium sulfate to determine the amount of $K_2Cr_2O_7$ consumed and the oxidizable matter is calculated in terms of oxygen equivalent. Keep ratios of reagent weights, volumes, and strengths constant when sample volumes other than 50 mL are used. The standard 2-h reflux time may be reduced if it has been shown that a shorter period yields the same results. Some samples with very low COD or with highly heterogeneous solids content may need to be analyzed in replicate to yield the most reliable data. Results are further enhanced by reacting a maximum quantity of dichromate, provided that some residual dichromate remains.

b. Quality control (QC): The QC practices considered to be an integral part of each method are summarized in Table 5020:I.

2. Apparatus

a. Reflux apparatus, consisting of 500- or 250-mL Erlenmeyer flasks with ground-glass 24/40 neck and 300-mm jacket Liebig, West, or equivalent condenser with 24/40 ground-glass joint, and a hot plate having sufficient power to produce at least 1.4 W/cm^2 of heating surface, or equivalent.

b. Blender.

c. Pipets, Class A and wide-bore.

3. Reagents

a. Standard potassium dichromate solution, 0.04167M: Dissolve 12.259 g $K_2Cr_2O_7$, primary standard grade, previously dried at 150°C for 2 h, in distilled water and dilute to 1000 mL. This reagent undergoes a six-electron reduction reaction; the equivalent concentration is 6 × 0.04167M or 0.2500N.

b. Sulfuric acid reagent: Add Ag_2SO_4, reagent or technical grade, crystals or powder, to conc H_2SO_4 at the rate of 5.5 g Ag_2SO_4/kg H_2SO_4. Let stand 1 to 2 d to dissolve. Mix.

c. Ferroin indicator solution: Dissolve 1.485 g 1,10-phenanthroline monohydrate and 695 mg $FeSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O$ in distilled water and dilute to 100 mL. This indicator solution may be purchased already prepared.*

d. Standard ferrous ammonium sulfate (FAS) titrant, approximately 0.25M: Dissolve 98 g $Fe(NH_4)_2(SO_4)_2 \cdot 6H_2O$ in dis-

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* GFS Chemicals, Inc., Columbus, OH, or equivalent.

tilled water. Add 20 mL conc H_2SO_4, cool, and dilute to 1000 mL. Standardize this solution daily against standard $K_2Cr_2O_7$ solution as follows:

Dilute 25.00 mL standard $K_2Cr_2O_7$ to about 100 mL. Add 30 mL conc H_2SO_4 and cool. Titrate with FAS titrant using 0.10 to 0.15 mL (2 to 3 drops) ferroin indicator.

Molarity of FAS solution =

$$\frac{\text{Volume } 0.04167M \text{ } K_2Cr_2O_7 \text{ solution titrated, mL}}{\text{Volume FAS used in titration, mL}} \times 0.2500$$

e. Mercuric sulfate ($HgSO_4$), crystals or powder.

f. Sulfamic acid: Required only if the interference of nitrites is to be eliminated (see 5220A.2).

g. Potassium hydrogen phthalate (KHP) standard, $HOOCC_6H_4COOK$: Lightly crush and then dry KHP to constant weight at 110°C. Dissolve 425 mg in distilled water and dilute to 1000 mL. KHP has a theoretical COD[1] of 1.176 mg O_2/mg and this solution has a theoretical COD of 500 μg O_2/ mL. This solution is stable when refrigerated, but not indefinitely. Be alert to development of visible biological growth. If practical, prepare and transfer solution under sterile conditions. Weekly preparation usually is satisfactory.

4. Procedure

a. Treatment of samples with COD of >50 mg O_2/L: Blend sample if necessary and pipet 50.00 mL into a 500-mL refluxing flask. For samples with a COD of >900 mg O_2/L, use a smaller portion diluted to 50.00 mL. Add 1 g $HgSO_4$, several glass beads, and very slowly add 5.0 mL sulfuric acid reagent, with mixing to dissolve $HgSO_4$. Cool while mixing to avoid possible loss of volatile materials. Add 25.00 mL 0.04167M $K_2Cr_2O_7$ solution and mix. Attach flask to condenser and turn on cooling water. Add remaining sulfuric acid reagent (70 mL) through open end of condenser. Continue swirling and mixing while adding sulfuric acid reagent. **CAUTION: Mix reflux mixture thoroughly before applying heat to prevent local heating of flask bottom and a possible blowout of flask contents.**

Cover open end of condenser with a small beaker to prevent foreign material from entering refluxing mixture and reflux for 2 h. Cool and wash down condenser with distilled water. Disconnect reflux condenser and dilute mixture to about twice its volume with distilled water. Cool to room temperature and titrate excess $K_2Cr_2O_7$ with FAS, using 0.10 to 0.15 mL (2 to 3 drops) ferroin indicator. Although the quantity of ferroin indicator is not critical, use the same volume for all titrations. Take as the endpoint of the titration the first sharp color change from blue-green to reddish brown that persists for 1 min or longer. Duplicate determinations should agree within 5% of their average. Samples with suspended solids or components that are slow to oxidize may require additional determinations. The blue-green may reappear. In the same manner, reflux and titrate a blank containing the reagents and a volume of distilled water equal to that of sample.

b. Alternate procedure for low-COD samples: Follow procedure of ¶ *a* above, with two exceptions: (*i*) use standard 0.004167M $K_2Cr_2O_7$, and (*ii*) titrate with standardized 0.025M FAS. Exercise

extreme care with this procedure because even a trace of organic matter on the glassware or from the atmosphere may cause gross errors. If a further increase in sensitivity is required, concentrate a larger volume of sample before digesting under reflux as follows: Add all reagents to a sample larger than 50 mL and reduce total volume to 150 mL by boiling in the refluxing flask open to the atmosphere without the condenser attached. Compute amount of $HgSO_4$ to be added (before concentration) on the basis of a weight ratio of 10:1, $HgSO_4$:Cl^-, using the amount of Cl^- present in the original volume of sample. Carry a blank reagent through the same procedure. This technique has the advantage of concentrating the sample without significant losses of easily digested volatile materials. Hard-to-digest volatile materials such as volatile acids are lost, but an improvement is gained over ordinary evaporative concentration methods. Duplicate determinations are not expected to be as precise as in ¶ *a* above.

c. Determination of standard solution: Evaluate the technique and quality of reagents by conducting the test on a standard potassium hydrogen phthalate solution.

5. Calculation

$$\text{COD as mg } O_2/L = \frac{(B - A) \times M \times 8000}{\text{mL sample}}$$

where:

B = mL FAS used for sample,
A = mL FAS used for blank,
M = molarity of FAS, and
8000 = milliequivalent weight of oxygen $\times$ 1000 mL/L.

6. Precision and Bias

A set of synthetic samples containing potassium hydrogen phthalate and NaCl was tested by 74 laboratories. At a COD of 200 mg O_2/L in the absence of chloride, the standard deviation was $\pm$13 mg/L (coefficient of variation, 6.5%). At COD of 160 mg O_2/L and 100 mg Cl^-/L, the standard deviation was $\pm$14 mg/L (coefficient of variation, 10.8%).

7. Reference

1. PITWELL, L.R. 1983. Standard COD. *Chem. Brit.* 19:907.

8. Bibliography

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