



Standard Test Method for Electrical Resistivity of Anode and Cathode Carbon Material at Room Temperature¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D6120; 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 (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the electrical resistivity at room temperature of solid cylindrical specimens cored from commercial sized carbon anodes and cathodes. This test method also applies to samples from carbon blocks prepared in a laboratory.

1.2 *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 limitation prior to use.* For specific safety information, see 8.2.3.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

C611 Test Method for Electrical Resistivity of Manufactured Carbon and Graphite Articles at Room Temperature
D5502 Test Method for Apparent Density by Physical Measurements of Manufactured Anode and Cathode Carbon Used by the Aluminum Industry

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *electrical resistivity, n*—the electrical resistance offered by a material to the flow of current, times the cross-sectional area of current flow and per unit length of current path, the reciprocal of conductivity. It is also known as resistivity, or specific resistance.³

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D02 on Petroleum Products and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D02.05 on Properties of Fuels, Petroleum Coke and Carbon Material.

Current edition approved May 1, 2007. Published June 2007. Originally approved in 1997. Last previous edition approved in 2002 as D6120 – 97 (2002). DOI: 10.1520/D6120-97R07.

² 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.

³ Parker, Sybil P., Ed in Chief, *Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms*, McGraw Hill Book Co., Fourth Ed., 1989, p 615.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 An electrical current is passed through a carbon cylinder and the voltage drop or electrical resistance is measured between two points along its length. The resistivity is calculated based on the voltage drop or electrical resistance, distance between the two points, and the cross-sectional area of the cylinder.

4.2 This test method are used to determine electrical resistivity for various carbon materials typically found in the aluminum industry. Electrical resistivity of other carbon artifacts such as graphite and specialty carbons is more appropriately determined by Test Method C611.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The electrical resistivity of anode and cathode carbon material is important for efficient aluminum cell operation. It is a quality parameter that determines the suitability of an anode/cathode for operation in an aluminum cell.

5.2 The electrical resistivity may be selected as a requirement in a customer specification.

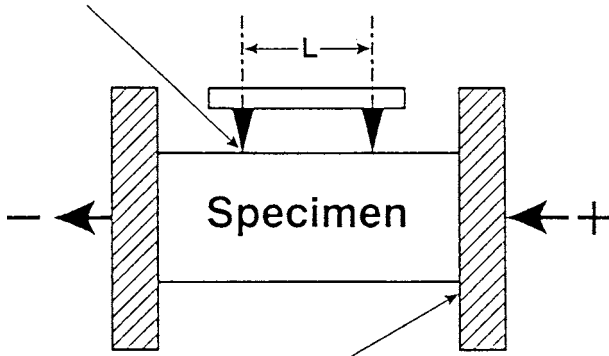
6. Apparatus

6.1 *Specimen Holder* (Fig. 1), a device for holding a specimen of 50 mm diameter and a minimum of 120 mm in length between two flat copper plates. One of the plates is swivel mounted to ensure good contact in case the ends of the specimen are not perfectly parallel. The plates shall be as large as the ends of the specimen and electrically insulated from each other.

6.1.1 *Voltage Drop Contact Points*—The contact points shall be conical or knife edge in shape and securely fastened to rigid insulating material with a minimum spacing of 50 mm and a maximum spacing of 80 % of the length of the specimen. The distance (L) in millimetres (mm) between the center of the conical points or knife edges is used when calculating the electrical resistivity.

6.2 *Apparatus for Indirect Resistance Measurement* (permits measurement of voltage and current needed for calculating electrical resistivity):

Voltage Drop Contact Points



Copper Contact Plates

FIG. 1 Schematic of Specimen Holder

6.2.1 *dc Power Supply*—The power supply shall be capable of supplying a minimum DC current of 10 amps at an electrical potential of up to 5 V. The line and load regulation shall be less than 0.1 % and background noise less than or equal to 0.1 %.

6.2.2 *dc Voltage Measuring Instrument*, high-impedance device capable of measuring a minimum of 5 V to 0.01 mV.

6.2.3 *dc Current Measuring Device*, a device capable of measuring a current of 10 to 0.01 A.

6.3 Apparatus for Direct Resistance Measurement:

6.3.1 *Electrical Resistance Measuring Device*—A device capable of measuring electrical resistance directly to 0.01 milliohms such as a Kelvin bridge or a Micro-ohmmeter. These devices utilize 4-wire connections (current and voltage) and should not be confused with a volt-ohm-meter. The usual range measured is from approximately 0.1 to 10 milliohms.

6.4 *Micrometer (or equivalent)*, capable of measuring the dimensions of a specimen to 0.01 mm.

6.5 *Desiccator*, large enough to hold several test specimens (7.4), filled to capacity with a desiccant such as anhydrous calcium sulfate or equivalent.

6.6 *Core Drill*, equipped with a diamond abrasive and capable of producing a 50-mm core sample.

6.7 *Refractory Saw*, with a diamond blade.

7. Preparation of Test Specimen

NOTE 1—Specimens prepared for determination of density using Test Method D5502 are acceptable without further preparation.

7.1 Drill a core of 50-mm (± 1.0 -mm) diameter in the form of a right circular cylinder and use no lubricant having a boiling point above 100°C.

7.2 Cut a specimen from this core with a minimum length of 120 mm.

7.3 Ascertain by visual inspection that all edges and faces of the specimen are free of chips or gouges. Ensure that the specimen is free of residue from the coring and sawing operations.

7.4 Dry the specimen for a minimum of 2 h at 100°C; then allow it to cool to $22 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$ in a desiccator. Store the specimen in a desiccator until immediately prior to testing.

8. Procedure

8.1 Test at $22 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$

8.2 Indirect Resistance Measurement:

8.2.1 Mount the test specimen in the holder and tighten contact plates firmly to the ends of the specimen.

8.2.2 Apply voltage and adjust current to about 6 amps ± 3 A.

8.2.3 Center the contact points longitudinally on top of this specimen and measure the voltage drop. Move the contact points around the circumference of the cylinder a distance equivalent to an arc length of the circumference subtended by a 45° angle. Make sure contacts are still longitudinally centered and take a voltage reading. Continue moving in the same direction around the circumference until a total of eight equally spaced voltage readings are recorded. (**Warning**—Passing a current through a test specimen for an extended period of time can increase the temperature and consequently lower the resistance of the specimen.)

8.3 Direct Resistance Measurement:

8.3.1 Mount the test specimen in the holder and tighten contact plates firmly to the ends of the specimen.

8.3.2 Center the contact points longitudinally on top of the specimen and measure the resistance. Move the contact points around the circumference of the cylinder a distance equivalent to an arc length of the circumference subtended by 45° angle. Make sure contacts are still longitudinally centered and take a resistance reading. Continue moving in the same direction around the circumference until a total of eight equally spaced resistance readings are recorded.

NOTE 2—The current in the specimen when using a direct reading electrical resistance measuring device (such as a Micro-ohmmeter) is lower than when using an indirect resistance measurement device (about 0.1 A versus 3 to 9 A).

8.4 Measuring Specimen Diameter:

8.4.1 Make two sets of four diameter measurements in millimetres using a micrometer or similar instrument. For the first set record the diameter at both ends and at two equidistant intermediate points along the same plane cutting through the axis. Rotate the plane 90° and record an equivalent set of four readings (Fig. 2).

8.4.2 Determine the quadratic mean diameter using Eq 1.

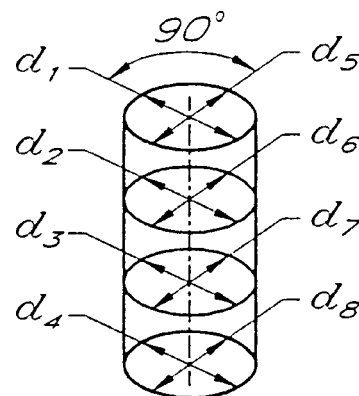


FIG. 2 Measurement of Specimen Diameter

$$d = \sqrt{\frac{8}{\frac{1}{d_1^2} + \frac{1}{d_2^2} + \dots + \frac{1}{d_8^2}}} \quad (1)$$

where:

d = quadratic mean diameter, mm, and
 d_1, d_2, \dots, d_8 = individual diameter measurements, mm.

9. Calculation of Resistivity

9.1 Average the eight voltage readings from 8.2.3 or the eight resistance readings from 8.3.2.

9.2 Calculate the cross-sectional area using Eq 2:

$$A = \frac{\pi \times d^2}{4} \quad (2)$$

where:

A = cross-sectional area, mm²,
 π = 3.1416, and
 d = quadratic mean diameter, mm (8.4.2).

9.3 If the indirect resistance measurement method (8.2) was used, calculate electrical resistivity using Eq 3:

$$ER = \frac{V \times A}{I \times L} \quad (3)$$

where:

ER = electrical resistivity, $\mu \Omega \cdot m$,
 V = average voltage drop, mV (9.1),
 A = cross-sectional area, mm² (9.2),
 L = distance between contact points, mm (6.1.1), and
 I = magnitude of electrical current, A (8.2.2).

9.4 If the direct resistance measurement method (8.3) was used, calculate electrical resistivity using Eq 4:

$$ER = \frac{A}{L} \times R \quad (4)$$

where:

ER = electrical resistivity, $\mu \Omega \cdot m$,
 A = cross-sectional area, mm² (9.2),
 L = distance between contact points, mm (6.1.1), and
 R = average electrical resistance, milliohms (9.1).

10. Report

10.1 Report the following information:

10.1.1 Electrical resistivity to 0.1 microohm-meter.

11. Precision and Bias

11.1 The criteria in 11.1.1 and 11.1.2 shall be used for judging the acceptability of results (95 % probability) obtained using a current between 0.1 and 9 amps and in the electrical resistivity range from 12 to 80 $\mu \Omega \cdot m$. Based upon a round robin testing program⁴ using duplicate measurement of 12 samples at 8 laboratories, the following equations represent the expected behavior for these tests.

11.1.1 *Repeatability*—The difference between successive results obtained by the same operator with the same apparatus under constant operating conditions on identical test material would, in the long run, exceed the following values only in one case in twenty.

$$\text{Repeatability} = 0.1780 \times \sqrt{x} \quad (5)$$

where x = average of the successive results in $\mu \Omega \cdot m$.

11.1.2 *Reproducibility*—The difference between single and independent results obtained by different operators working in different laboratories on identical test material would, in the long run, exceed the following values only in one case in twenty

$$\text{Reproducibility} = 0.6535 \times \sqrt{x} \quad (6)$$

where x = average of the two results in $\mu \Omega \cdot m$.

11.2 *Bias*—Bias of this test method for measuring electrical resistivity has not been determined because, currently, all methods are based on electrical resistance measured within the parameters given in this test method.

12. Keywords

12.1 anode; cathode; cathode carbon; conductivity; electrical resistivity; resistivity

⁴ Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report D02-1414.

ASTM International takes no position respecting the validity of any patent rights asserted in connection with any item mentioned in this standard. Users of this standard are expressly advised that determination of the validity of any such patent rights, and the risk of infringement of such rights, are entirely their own responsibility.

This standard is subject to revision at any time by the responsible technical committee and must be reviewed every five years and if not revised, either reapproved or withdrawn. Your comments are invited either for revision of this standard or for additional standards and should be addressed to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee, which you may attend. If you feel that your comments have not received a fair hearing you should make your views known to the ASTM Committee on Standards, at the address shown below.

This standard is copyrighted by ASTM International, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, PO Box C700, West Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959, United States. Individual reprints (single or multiple copies) of this standard may be obtained by contacting ASTM at the above address or at 610-832-9585 (phone), 610-832-9555 (fax), or service@astm.org (e-mail); or through the ASTM website (www.astm.org).