



Standard Practice for Calculation and Adjustment of the Langelier Saturation Index for Reverse Osmosis¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3739; 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 practice covers the calculation and adjustment of the Langelier saturation index for the concentrate stream of a reverse osmosis device. This index is used to determine the need for calcium carbonate scale control in the operation and design of reverse osmosis installations. This practice is applicable for concentrate streams containing xx 10 to 10 000 mg/L of total dissolved solids. For concentrate containing over 10 000 mg/L see Practice [D4582](#).

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

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:²

- [D511 Test Methods for Calcium and Magnesium In Water](#)
- [D1067 Test Methods for Acidity or Alkalinity of Water](#)
- [D1129 Terminology Relating to Water](#)
- [D1293 Test Methods for pH of Water](#)
- [D1888 Methods Of Test for Particulate and Dissolved Matter in Water](#) (Withdrawn 1989)³
- [D4194 Test Methods for Operating Characteristics of Reverse Osmosis and Nanofiltration Devices](#)
- [D4195 Guide for Water Analysis for Reverse Osmosis and Nanofiltration Application](#)

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D19](#) on Water and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D19.08](#) on Membranes and Ion Exchange Materials.

Current edition approved May 1, 2010. Published May 2010. Originally approved in 1978. Last previous edition approved in 2006 as D3739 – 06. DOI: 10.1520/D3739-06R10.

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 The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

[D4582 Practice for Calculation and Adjustment of the Stiff and Davis Stability Index for Reverse Osmosis](#)
[D6161 Terminology Used for Microfiltration, Ultrafiltration, Nanofiltration and Reverse Osmosis Membrane Processes](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in this practice, refer to Terminology [D1129](#) and Terminology [D6161](#).

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 For descriptions of terms relating to reverse osmosis, refer to Test Methods [D4194](#).

3.2.2 *Langelier Saturation Index*—an index calculated from total dissolved solids, calcium concentration, total alkalinity, pH, and solution temperature that shows the tendency of a water solution to precipitate or dissolve calcium carbonate.

4. Summary of Practice

4.1 This practice consists of calculating the Langelier Saturation Index for a reverse osmosis concentrate stream from the total dissolved solids, calcium ion content, total alkalinity, pH, and temperature of the feed solution, and the recovery of the reverse osmosis system.

4.2 This practice also presents techniques to lower the Langelier Saturation Index by decreasing the recovery, by decreasing the calcium content of the feedwater, or by changing the ratio of total alkalinity to free carbon dioxide in the feedwater.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 In the design and operation of reverse osmosis installations, it is important to predict the calcium carbonate scaling properties of the concentrate stream. Because of the increase in total dissolved solids in the concentrate stream and the difference in passages for calcium ion, bicarbonate ion, and free CO₂, the calcium carbonate scaling properties of the concentrate stream will generally be quite different from those of the feed solution. This practice permits the calculation of the Langelier Saturation Index for the concentrate stream from the feed water analyses and the reverse osmosis operating parameters.

5.2 A positive Langelier Saturation Index indicates the tendency to form a calcium carbonate scale, which can be