



Standard Test Method for Determination of Relative X-ray Diffraction Intensities of Faujasite-Type Zeolite-Containing Materials¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3906; 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 relative X-ray diffraction intensities of zeolites having the faujasite crystal structure, including synthetic *Y* and *X* zeolites, their modifications such as the various cation exchange forms, and the dealuminized, decationated, and ultrastable forms of *Y*. These zeolites have cubic symmetry with a unit cell parameter usually within the limits of 24.2 and 25.0 Å (2.42 and 2.50 nm).

1.2 The samples include zeolite preparations in the various forms, and catalysts and adsorbents containing these zeolites.

1.3 The term “intensity of an X-ray powder diffraction (XRD) peak” is the “integral intensity,” either the area of counts under the peak or the product of the peak height and the peak width.

1.4 This test method provides a number that is the ratio of intensity of portions of the XRD pattern of the sample to intensity of the corresponding portion of the pattern of a reference zeolite, NaY. (Laboratories may use a modified *Y* or *X*, for example, REY as a secondary standard.) The intensity ratio, expressed as a percentage, is then labeled “% XRD intensity/NaY.”

1.5 Under certain conditions such a ratio is the percent zeolite in the sample. These conditions include:

1.5.1 The zeolite in the sample is the same as the reference zeolite.

1.5.2 The absorption for the X-rays used is the same for the zeolite and the nonzeolite portions of the sample.

1.6 *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

[E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods](#)

[E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics](#)

[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The XRD patterns of the zeolite containing sample and the reference sample (NaY), are obtained under the same conditions. If the XRD pattern of the zeolite is sufficiently strong, a comparison of intensities of eight peaks is used to give % XRD intensity/NaY. For lower zeolite content intensities of the (533) peak (23.5° with Cu K α radiation) are compared to provide “% XRD intensity/NaY (533).”

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Zeolites *Y* and *X*, particularly for catalyst and adsorbent applications, are a major article of manufacture and commerce. Catalysts and adsorbents comprising these zeolites in various forms plus binder and other components have likewise become important. *Y*-based catalysts are used for fluid catalytic cracking (FCC) and hydrocracking of petroleum, while *X*-based adsorbents are used for desiccation, sulfur compound removal, and air separation.

4.2 This X-ray procedure is designed to monitor these *Y* and *X* zeolites and catalysts and adsorbents, providing a number more or less closely related to percent zeolite in the sample. This number has proven useful in technology, research, and specifications.

4.3 Drastic changes in intensity of individual peaks in the XRD patterns of *Y* and *X* can result from changes of distribution of electron density within the unit cell of the zeolite. The electron density distribution is dependent upon the extent of filling of pores in the zeolite with guest molecules, and on the nature of the guest molecules. In this XRD method, the guest

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D32 on Catalysts and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D32.05 on Zeolites.

Current edition approved Dec. 1, 2013. Published December 2013. Originally approved in 1980. Last previous edition approved in 2008 as D3906 – 03 (2008). DOI: 10.1520/D3906-03R13.

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.