



Standard Test Method for Barium in Brines, Seawater, and Brackish Water by Direct- Current Argon Plasma Atomic Emission Spectroscopy¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of dissolved and total recoverable barium in brines, seawater, and brackish waters by direct-current argon plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (DCAP–AES).

1.2 This test method has been tested in the range from 10 mg/L to 20 mg/L. Samples shall be diluted to contain concentrations within the calibration range (see 11.1 and 12.5). Higher concentrations can also be determined by changing to a less sensitive emission line.

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:

D 1129 Terminology Relating to Water²

D 1192 Specification for Equipment for Sampling Water and Steam in Closed Conduits²

D 1193 Specification for Reagent Water²

D 3352 Test Method for Strontium Ion in Brackish Water, Seawater, and Brines³

D 3370 Practices for Sampling Water from Closed Conduits²

3. Terminology

3.1 **Definitions**—For definitions of terms used in this test method refer to Terminology D 1129.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *total recoverable barium*—recoverable forms of barium that are determinable by the digestion method which is included in the procedure.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 This test method is dependent upon excitation of the barium atom by a direct-current argon plasma source. When

the excited barium atom decays to a lower energy state it emits energy of a wavelength characteristic to the barium atom. The intensity of this emitted radiation will increase in direct proportion to the concentration of barium in the sample, when working in the linear response range.

4.2 Since the variable and often high concentration of matrix materials in brines, seawater, and brackish water affect emission differently, it is a difficult task to prepare standards sufficiently similar to the samples. To overcome this problem, the standards are buffered with lithium ion and the samples are diluted and buffered in the same manner. The standards are used to construct a calibration curve and the concentration of the samples are calculated from this curve. Alternatively, the instrument may be calibrated using a blank and a standard or bracketing standards. The sample concentration can then be read out directly from the instrument.

4.3 The 455.4-nm line has been found to be the most satisfactory for analysis.

NOTE 1—The barium lines at 230.4 nm, 233.5 nm, and 553.6 nm have been checked and found to be unsatisfactory for this analysis.

4.4 Dissolved barium is determined by filtering the sample through a 0.45-μm pore size membrane filter (Note 2) at the time of sampling. This definition of “dissolved” barium is arbitrary since very fine crystals of barium sulfate may pass through the membrane filter.

NOTE 2—These filters have been found to be contaminated to various degrees with heavy metals depending on the manufacturer. Care should be exercised in selecting a source for these filters. It has been found to be a good practice to wash the filters with nitric acid and then reagent water before filtering a sample.

4.5 If there are no visible suspended solids in the sample, total recoverable barium may be determined on an acidified unfiltered sample in the same manner as dissolved barium.

4.6 When the sample contains suspended solids total recoverable barium is determined by an acid digestion step to destroy organic and inorganic particulates.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 All waters containing acid soluble barium compounds are known to be toxic. This test method is useful for the determination of barium in brines, seawater, and brackish waters.

5.2 Consumption, inhalation, or absorption of 500 to 600 mg of barium is considered fatal to human beings. Lower

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D-19 on Water and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D19.05 on Inorganic Constituents in Water.

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² Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 11.01.

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 11.02.