



Designation: D8459 – 23

Standard Test Methods for Detecting Water Soluble Sulfates in Construction Soils¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D8459; 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 These methods determine the water soluble sulfate content of cohesive soils used in construction by using the colorimetric technique. Two methods are presented in this standard. Method A is for use in the field and Method B is for use in the laboratory. The colorimetric technique involves measuring the scattering of a light beam through a solution that contains suspended particulate matter. Measurements of sulfate concentrations in construction soils can be used to guide professionals in the selection of appropriate stabilization methods and to assist in assessment of potential deterioration in concrete structures.

NOTE 1—These test methods are partially based on the research conducted by Texas A & M University.

1.2 The field method, Method A, is used as a screening test for the presence of sulfates and their concentration. The laboratory method, Method B, provides better resolution than the field method.

1.3 Ion chromatography is also an acceptable alternative method that can be used to evaluate results, however, it is outside the scope of this standard.

1.4 *Units*—The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.5 All observed and calculated values shall conform to the guidelines for significant digits and rounding established in Practice D6026, unless superseded by this test method.

1.5.1 The procedures used to specify how data are collected/recorded and calculated in the standard are regarded as the industry standard. In addition, they are representative of the significant digits that generally should be retained. The procedures used do not consider material variation, purpose for obtaining the data, special purpose studies, or any considerations for the user's objectives; and it is common practice to

increase or reduce significant digits of reported data to be commensurate with these considerations. It is beyond the scope of these test methods to consider significant digits used in analysis methods for engineering data.

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, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.7 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D653 Terminology Relating to Soil, Rock, and Contained Fluids

D1193 Specification for Reagent Water

D2487 Practice for Classification of Soils for Engineering Purposes (Unified Soil Classification System)

D2488 Practice for Description and Identification of Soils (Visual-Manual Procedures)

D3740 Practice for Minimum Requirements for Agencies Engaged in Testing and/or Inspection of Soil and Rock as Used in Engineering Design and Construction

D4220/D4220M Practices for Preserving and Transporting Soil Samples (Withdrawn 2023)³

D4753 Guide for Evaluating, Selecting, and Specifying Balances and Standard Masses for Use in Soil, Rock, and Construction Materials Testing

D6026 Practice for Using Significant Digits and Data Records in Geotechnical Data

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D18 on Soil and Rock and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D18.06 on Physical-Chemical Interactions of Soil and Rock.

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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.