



Standard Guide for Ventilatory Behavioral Toxicology Testing of Freshwater Fish¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E1768; 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 guide covers information on methods to measure and interpret ventilatory behavioral responses of freshwater fish to contaminants.

1.2 Ventilatory responses are often some of the first prelethal symptoms exhibited by animals to environmental stressors (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10).² Continued, abnormal ventilatory behavior (that is, rapid or shallow breathing, erratic breathing) can indicate physiological damage that may be irreversible. Such damage could eventually result in decreased survival, growth, or reproduction of the organism, or all of these.

1.3 Ventilatory responses of some fish species can be measured relatively easily and quickly, providing a useful tool for biomonitoring studies of wastewaters, pure chemicals, surface water, and ground water.

1.4 Appropriate studies of ventilatory responses can yield definitive endpoints such as no observable effect concentration (NOEC) or an EC_{50} , often more rapidly than standard toxicity test methods (11, 12).

1.5 The mode of action of test substances and the type of chemical toxicant can be determined by examining ventilatory behavioral responses in conjunction with other physiological responses (8, 9, 10, 11, 12).

1.6 Fish ventilatory behavior can be assessed in real-time using appropriate computer hardware and software (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). Such systems have proved useful for long-term, on-line monitoring of wastewater effluents, pure chemicals, and surface waters (12, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25). These systems are usually technically complex and will not be discussed in this guide.

1.7 Given the technological constraints of electrical components, it is currently not feasible to monitor bioelectric

signals, such as those elicited in ventilatory behavior, in saline (>2 ppt) or high conductivity (>3000 μ mhos/cm) water using the procedures discussed in this guide. Therefore, this guide is restricted to the testing of freshwater matrices.

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

1.9 *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.* For specific safety precautions, see Section 6.

1.10 This guide is arranged as follows:

	Section Number
Scope	1
Referenced Documents	2
Terminology	3
Summary of Guide	4
Significance and Use	5
Safety Precautions	6
Responses Measured	7
Test System	8
Test Procedure	9
Data Collection and Analysis	10
Interferences	11
Documentation	12
References	13

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:³

E729 Guide for Conducting Acute Toxicity Tests on Test Materials with Fishes, Macroinvertebrates, and Amphibians

E943 Terminology Relating to Biological Effects and Environmental Fate

E1192 Guide for Conducting Acute Toxicity Tests on Aqueous Ambient Samples and Effluents with Fishes, Macroinvertebrates, and Amphibians

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E50 on Environmental Assessment, Risk Management and Corrective Action and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E50.47 on Biological Effects and Environmental Fate.

Current edition approved March 1, 2013. Published March 2013. Originally approved in 1995. Last previous edition approved in 2008 as E1768 – 95(2013). DOI: 10.1520/E1768-95R13.

² The boldface numbers given in parentheses refer to a list of references at the end of the text.

³ 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.