



Standard Guide for Laboratory Monitors¹

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is for use by laboratory monitors who observe interlaboratory testing performed by participating organizations that validate the legitimacy of test methods and also establish a base of data from which precision and bias statements are to be written. Interlaboratory testing is done to determine the validity of a test standard. Such testing requires diligence by adhering to the protocol established for performing the test in order to minimize variability which often exists between laboratories. Because laboratories differ in size, organization, management, personnel, facilities and environment there is always a potential for introducing variability in test results.

Laboratory monitors confirm that the participating facilities adhere to the test protocol as closely as possible, thereby improving the chances of a successful interlaboratory study. The laboratory monitor observes and assesses but does not perform the functions of an auditor or trainer; the laboratory monitor does not provide accreditation of a laboratory. Laboratory monitors should demonstrate expertise in both the content and the intent of the test method. The laboratory monitor is responsible to render a report to the appointing subcommittee. It is incumbent upon the laboratory monitor to maintain objectivity when working with participating laboratories.

Full-scale product fire tests are expensive, especially full-scale tests of bedding and home furnishings. The development of this standard is intended to ensure that the precision and bias developed for E5 standards demonstrates a high level of statistical validity.

Using a laboratory monitor as part of an interlaboratory test program is optional. However, if a monitor is used, all of the laboratories in the project are to be included.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide provides a general outline, for use by a laboratory monitor, to assess the qualifications of a laboratory which has requested to participate in a specific ASTM interlaboratory test.

1.2 The preliminary assessment is based on observations made before initiation of any interlaboratory tests.

1.3 The subcommittee, which appoints the laboratory monitor, specifies the minimum requirements which an organization should meet to qualify as a participant for the interlaboratory test. If a pretest is to be included, see details in Section 13.

1.4 This fire standard can not be used to provide quantitative measures.

1.5 *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 requirements prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

E 176 Terminology of Fire Standards

E 1537 Test Method for Fire Testing of Upholstered Furniture

E 1822 Test Method for Fire Testing of Stacked Chairs

2.2 ISO Standards:

ISO 13943 Fire Safety-Vocabulary³

ISO/IEC 17025:1999(E) General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories³

2.3 Other Standard:

American Association for Laboratory Accreditation General Requirements for Accreditation of Laboratories, January 1997⁴

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 Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1 rue de Varembe, Case postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland.

⁴ American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, 5301 Buckeytown Pike, Frederick, MD 21704.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E05 on Fire Standards and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E05.15 on Furnishings and Contents.

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