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Designation: D 6913 - 04¹

Standard Test Methods for Particle-Size Distribution (Gradation) of Soils Using Sieve Analysis¹

This standard is used when the test procedure D 6913, the method immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or the year of revision, the year of withdrawal is indicated in parentheses and the year of last reapproval, if applicable, is indicated by a superscript number.

¹ This standard is under continuous review and should be reapproved in January 2007.

INTRODUCTION

Although this test method has been used for many years, there are many variations required due to soil types and conditions. This test is more complicated and complex than should be expected. Multiple procedures are being presented along with an overview. Although these procedures are not new, they will have to be updated and explained. Some changes of these are not complete, saving, designated separating sieve and subsequence. This test method outlines the majority of conditions and procedures that are not covered by conventional variations or variations. The intent of content in the Scope section is added to enable the user to study for a specific topic or requirement. Only variations/substitutions with this are presented. Therefore, numbered substitutions will not be contained in some cases, as indicated in the Scope section.

1. Scope

1.1 Sets consist of particles with various shapes and sizes. This test method is used to separate particles into size ranges and to determine quantitatively the mass of particles in each range. These data are combined to determine the particle-size distribution (gradation). This test method uses a separate opening sieve criterion in determining the gradation of soil between the 3 in. (75 mm) and No. 200 (75 μ m) sieves.

1.2 The test methods and procedures are used interchangeably throughout the standard.

1.3 In cases where the gradation of particles larger than 3 in. (75 mm) is to be required, the Method D 5119 may be used.

1.4 It is to be noted that the gradation of particles smaller than the No. 200 (75 μ m) sieve is required. For Method D 1227, any test used.

1.5 Typically, if the maximum particle size is equal to or less than 4.75 mm (No. 4 sieve), then single sieving is applicable. Furthermore, if the maximum particle size is greater than 4.75 mm (No. 4 sieve) and equal to or less than 0.5 mm (No. 30 sieve), then either single sieving or consecutive sieving is applicable. Finally, if the maximum particle size is equal to or greater than 0.5 mm (No. 30 sieve), consecutive sieving is applicable. For special conditions see 10.3.

1.6 Two test methods are provided in this standard. The methods differ in the significant digits recorded and the size of the specimen mass required. The method to be used must be specified by the requesting authority, otherwise Method A shall be performed.

1.7 Method A—The percentage (by mass) passing each sieve size is recorded to the nearest 1%. This method must be used when performing comparative testing. For cases of dispute, Method A is the referent method.

1.8 Method B—The percentage (by mass) passing each sieve size is recorded to the nearest 0.1%. This method is only applicable for single sieve size testing and when the maximum particle size is equal to or less than the No. 41 (375 μ m) sieve.

1.9 This test method does not cover, in any detail, percentage of the sample. It is assumed that the sample is obtained using appropriate methods and is representative.

1.10 Empty Procedures—These procedures involve, as dry, and are not to be used to process the sample to obtain a specimen. The procedure selected will depend on the type of sample, the maximum particle size, and the speed for other testing on the sample. The procedure may be specified by the requesting authority, otherwise the gradation given in Section 10 shall be followed.

1.11 This test method typically requires two or three days to complete, depending on the type and size of the sample and soil type.

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