



Designation: E2864 – 18 (Reapproved 2022)

Standard Test Method for Measurement of Airborne Metal Oxide Nanoparticle Surface Area Concentration in Inhalation Exposure Chambers using Krypton Gas Adsorption¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2864; 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 test method covers determination of surface area of airborne metal oxide nanoparticles in inhalation exposure chambers for inhalation toxicology studies. Surface area may be measured by gas adsorption methods using adsorbates such as nitrogen, krypton, and argon (Brunauer et al. (1),² Anderson (2), Gregg and Sing (3)) or by ion attachment and mobility-based methods (Ku and Maynard (4)). This test method is specific to the measurement of surface area by gas adsorption by krypton gas adsorption. The test method permits the use of any modern commercial krypton adsorption instruments but strictly defines the sample collection, outgassing, and analysis procedures for metal and metal oxide nanoparticles. Use of krypton is required due to the low overall surface area of particle-laden samples and the need to accurately measure the background surface area of the filter used for sample collection. Instrument-reported values of surface area based on the multipoint Brunauer, Emmett and Teller (BET) equation (Brunauer et al. (1), Anderson (2), Gregg and Sing (3)) are used to calculate surface area of airborne nanoparticles collected on a filter.

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard. State all numerical values in terms of SI units unless specific instrumentation software reports surface area using alternate units.

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

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standard-*

ization 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:³

B922 Test Method for Metal Powder Specific Surface Area by Physical Adsorption

C1274 Test Method for Advanced Ceramic Specific Surface Area by Physical Adsorption

E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

E2456 Terminology Relating to Nanotechnology

2.2 ISO Standards:⁴

ISO 9277 Determination of the Specific Surface Area of Solids by Gas Adsorption using the BET Method

ISO 18757 Fine Ceramics (Advanced Ceramics, Advanced Technical Ceramics)—Determination of Specific surface Area of Ceramic Powders by Gas Adsorption using the BET Method

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For additional definitions related to nanotechnology, see Terminology **E2456**.

3.1.1 *nanoparticles, n*—in nanotechnology, a sub-classification of ultrafine particle with lengths in two or three dimensions greater than 0.001 micrometre (1 nanometre) and smaller than about 0.1 micrometre (100 nanometres) and which may or may not exhibit a size-related intensive property.

E2456

3.1.2 *adsorbate, n*—material that has been retained by the process of adsorption.

B922

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E56 on Nanotechnology and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E56.02 on Physical and Chemical Characterization.

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² The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this standard.

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.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

3.1.3 *adsorbent, n*—any solid having the ability to concentrate or collect significant quantities of other substances on its surface. **B922**

3.1.4 *adsorption, n*—a process in which fluid molecules are concentrated or collected on a surface by chemical or physical forces, or both. **B922**

3.1.5 *BET-constant, n*—an indication of the magnitude of the adsorbent/adsorbate interactions in the first adsorbed layer.

3.1.6 *outgassing, n*—the evolution of gas from a material in a vacuum or inert gas flow, at or above ambient temperature. **B922**

3.1.7 *physical adsorption (van der Waals adsorption), n*—the binding of an adsorbate to the surface of a solid by forces whose energy levels approximate those of condensation. **B922**

3.1.8 *surface area, n*—the total area of the surface of a powder or solid including both external and accessible internal surfaces (from voids, cracks, open porosity, and fissures); the area may be calculated by the BET equation from gas adsorption data obtained under specific conditions; it is useful to express this value as the specific surface area, for example, surface area per unit mass of sample (m^2/kg). **B922**

3.1.9 *surface area (BET), n*—the total surface area of a solid calculated by the BET equation, from gas adsorption data obtained under specific conditions.

3.1.10 *surface area, specific, n*—the area, per unit mass of a granular or powdered or formed porous solid, of all external plus internal surfaces that are accessible to a penetrating gas or liquid. **B922**

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 An appropriate filter is pre-weighed to the nearest 1×10^{-8} kg (0.01 mg), outgassed, and the background surface area measured prior to nanoparticle collection in an inhalation exposure chamber. A sufficient amount of nanoparticles (to provide at least the minimum surface area required for reliable results for the instrument used) are collected on the filter, the filter with particles is post-weighed, outgassed, and total surface area measured. The surface area concentration of the airborne nanoparticles in the exposure chamber is estimated by subtracting the background filter surface area from the total surface area of the filter with nanoparticles and normalized by the volume of air sampled, with the final result expressed as m^2/m^3 (LeBouf et al. (5)).

4.2 *Multipoint BET Analyses*—Volume of gas adsorbed at 77 K (liquid nitrogen temperature) is determined as 10^{-6} m^3 (cm^3) corrected to standard temperature and pressure for a minimum of five relative pressures within the linear BET transformation range of the physical adsorption isotherm characteristic of the filter or nanoparticle, or both. The linear range is that which results in a least squares correlation coefficient of 0.999 or greater for the relationship between BET transformation and relative pressure. Typically, the linear range includes relative pressures between 0.05 and 0.30.

4.3 It is important to use an analytical balance to determine the sample mass. The physical adsorption instrument measures

the total amount of gas adsorbed onto the sample under analysis. The sample mass is then used to normalize the measured adsorption results. Any error in the sample mass will affect the final BET surface area.

4.4 Calculations are based on the BET equation, as required by the instrument being used for the determination. The instrument pressure tolerance (pressure range that must be maintained within a sample cell to accept a valid data point) is 6.6 Pa. In this standard, the cross-sectional area for the krypton adsorbate is taken to be 2.02×10^{-19} m^2 (ISO 9277); however, some instrument software may use a different default value. As such, the cross-sectional area of the krypton adsorbate used in calculations should be reported with the BET surface area results.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 A tiered strategy for characterization of nanoparticle properties is necessary to draw meaningful conclusions concerning dose-response relationships observed during inhalation toxicology experiments. This tiered strategy includes characterization of nanoparticles *as produced* (that is, measured as the bulk material sold by the supplier) and *as administered* (that is, measured at the point of delivery to a test subject) (Oberdorster et al. (6)).

5.2 Test Methods **B922** and **C1274** and ISO 9277 and ISO 18757 exist for determination of the *as produced* surface area of bulk metal and metal oxide powders. During the delivery of nanoparticles in inhalation exposure chambers, the material properties may undergo change and therefore have properties that differ from the material *as produced*. This test method describes the determination of the *as administered* surface area of airborne metal oxide nanoparticles in inhalation exposure chambers for inhalation toxicology studies.

6. Interferences

6.1 This test method can be used to determine the internal and external surface of nanoparticles only after the surfaces have been cleaned of any physically adsorbed molecules (for example, water or volatile organic compounds) which prevent physical adsorption of the gas probe molecules used to measure surface area. Therefore, it is necessary to remove these adsorbed contaminants prior to surface area analysis (Anderson (2), Gregg and Sing (3)). Outgassing is performed by evacuating the sample (typically at 10^{-1} Pa) and can be accelerated by using elevated temperatures, provided no irreversible sample changes occur. Outgassing is complete when duplicate surface area analyses produce results within expected instrument repeatability limits.

7. Apparatus

7.1 Commercial instruments employing low temperature (77 K) krypton adsorption are available from several manufacturers for the measurement of specific surface area by physical adsorption. Use of krypton is required due to the low overall surface area of particle-laden samples and the need to accurately measure the background surface area of the filter used for sample collection. Some instruments are automated versions of the classical vacuum apparatus. Others make use of