



**American Water Works
Association**

The Authoritative Resource on Safe Water®

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(Revision of ANSI/AWWA B404-03)

AWWA Standard

Liquid Sodium Silicate



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ii

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Contents

All AWWA standards follow the general format indicated subsequently. Some variations from this format may be found in a particular standard.

SEC.	PAGE	SEC.	PAGE
Foreword		4	Requirements
I	Introduction vii	4.1	Materials 2
I.A	Background vii	4.2	Physical Requirements 2
I.B	History vii	4.3	Chemical Requirements 3
I.C	Acceptance vii	4.4	Impurities 3
II	Special Issues viii	4.5	Uses 3
II.A	Discussion viii	5	Verification
II.B	Safety ix	5.1	Sampling 4
III	Use of This Standard ix	5.2	Suspended Matter 4
III.A	Purchaser Options and Alternatives ix	5.3	Test Procedure for Determining Specific Gravity 6
III.B	Modification to Standard x	5.4	Test Procedure for Determining Silica (SiO ₂) 7
IV	Major Revisions x	5.5	Test Procedure for Determining Sodium Oxide 11
V	Comments x	5.6	Calculation of Weight Ratio 11
Standard		5.7	Notice of Nonconformance 11
1	General	6	Delivery
1.1	Scope 1	6.1	Marking 12
1.2	Purpose 1	6.2	Packaging and Shipping 12
1.3	Application 1	6.3	Affidavit of Compliance 13
2	References 2		
3	Definitions 2		

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Foreword

This foreword is for information only and is not a part of ANSI/AWWA B404.

I. Introduction

I.A. *Background.* Sodium silicate solutions have application in the water treatment industry as an ingredient of activated silica coagulant aids, for the control of corrosion, and as a stabilizing agent for iron and manganese.

Sodium silicates are water-soluble glasses, manufactured by fusing soda ash (Na_2CO_3) and specially selected silica sands at high temperatures. These products can be identified by the formula $\text{Na}_2\text{O} \cdot (\text{SiO}_2)_x$, where x can range from 0.5 to 4.0. Sodium silicate solutions (liquid sodium silicates) are usually identified by the weight ratio of their components, which is x in the formula, and their density is frequently reported in degrees Baumé (Bé).*

Commercial liquid sodium silicates include a variety of products ranging in ratio from 1.8 to 3.75, and in density from 35°Bé to approximately 60°Bé (20°C). The most commonly used product for water treatment is a 3.2 weight ratio liquid, usually sold at 40° to 41°Bé, which represents the least expensive source of soluble silica. For use in low pH waters, a lower ratio (more alkaline) silicate is sometimes more useful.

I.B. *History.* The first edition of this standard for liquid sodium silicate was prepared under the direction of the AWWA Water Purification Division. The standard was approved by the Executive Committee of the Water Purification Division and by the Water Works Practice Committee and received the approval of the AWWA Board of Directors on Aug. 5, 1955. The text was approved as tentative on Aug. 5, 1955, and was made standard on Jan. 26, 1958. Subsequent editions were approved by the AWWA Board of Directors on June 15, 1980; June 14, 1987; June 18, 1992; June 21, 1998; and Jan. 19, 2003. This edition was approved on Jan. 27, 2008.

I.C. *Acceptance.* In May 1985, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) entered into a cooperative agreement with a consortium led by NSF International (NSF) to develop voluntary third-party consensus standards and a certification program for direct and indirect drinking water additives. Other members of the original consortium included the American Water Works Association Research Foundation (AwwaRF) and the Conference of State Health and Environmental Managers (COSHEM). The American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the

* The conversion from degrees Baumé to specific gravity is outlined in Sec. 5.3.4 of the standard.

Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) joined later.

In the United States, authority to regulate products for use in, or in contact with, drinking water rests with individual states.* Local agencies may choose to impose requirements more stringent than those required by the state. To evaluate the health effects of products and drinking water additives from such products, state and local agencies may use various references, including a standard developed under the direction of NSF, NSF†/ANSI‡ 60, Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals—Health Effects.

Various certification organizations may be involved in certifying products in accordance with NSF/ANSI 60. Individual states or local agencies have authority to accept or accredit certification organizations within their jurisdiction. Accreditation of certification organizations may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Annex A, “Toxicology Review and Evaluation Procedures,” to NSF/ANSI 60 does not stipulate a maximum allowable level (MAL) of a contaminant for substances not regulated by a USEPA final maximum contaminant level (MCL). The MALs of an unspecified list of “unregulated contaminants” are based on toxicity testing guidelines (noncarcinogens) and risk characterization methodology (carcinogens). Use of Annex A procedures may not always be identical, depending on the certifier.

ANSI/AWWA B404 addresses additives requirements in Sec. 4.4 of the standard. The transfer of contaminants from chemicals to processed water or the residual solids is becoming a problem of great concern. The language in Sec. 4.4.2 is a recommendation only for direct additives used in the treatment of potable water to be certified by an accredited certification organization in accordance with NSF/ANSI 60, Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals—Health Effects. However, users of the standard may opt to make this certification a requirement for the product. Users of this standard should also consult the appropriate state or local agency having jurisdiction in order to

1. Determine additives requirements, including applicable standards.
2. Determine the status of certifications by parties offering to certify products for contact with, or treatment of, drinking water.
3. Determine current information on product certification.

II. Special Issues.

II.A. *Discussion.* Liquid sodium silicate is generally shipped in metal drums, tank trucks, or railroad tank cars. Most grades are fluid enough to be pumped easily. These

* Persons outside the United States should contact the appropriate authority having jurisdiction.

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‡ American National Standards Institute, 25 West 43rd Street, Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10036.