

Electrical insulating materials — Determination of electrolytic corrosion caused by insulating materials — Test methods

The European Standard EN 60426:2007 has the status of a
British Standard

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National foreword

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A list of organizations represented on GEL/112 can be obtained on request to its secretary.

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**Electrical insulating materials -
Determination of electrolytic corrosion caused by insulating materials -
Test methods
(IEC 60426:2007)**

Matériaux isolants électriques -
Détermination de la corrosion
électrolytique en présence
de matériaux isolants -
Méthodes d'essais
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Elektroisolierstoffe -
Prüfungen zur Bestimmung
der elektrolytischen Korrosionswirkung
von Isoliermaterialien
(IEC 60426:2007)

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CENELEC

European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization
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Foreword

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Annex ZA has been added by CENELEC.

Endorsement notice

The text of the International Standard IEC 60426:2007 was approved by CENELEC as a European Standard without any modification.

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INTRODUCTION

Electrical insulating materials at high atmospheric humidity and under influence of electric stress may cause corrosion of metal parts being in contact with them. Such electrolytic corrosion is dependent upon the composition of the insulating material and the character of the metal; it is influenced by temperature, relative humidity, nature of the voltage and the time of exposure. Direct voltage produces much more rapid and extensive corrosion than alternating voltage. Corrosion is more pronounced at the positive electrode.

Not only copper but also most other metals, except the noble metals such as platinum or gold, are subject to electrolytic corrosion. Electrolytic corrosion, however, is usually determined with insulating materials in contact with copper, brass or aluminium. Copper, however, is a basic metal and most frequently used in electrotechnical, teletechnical and electronic equipment, especially for current conducting parts and therefore it was chosen as a basic test metal. Other metals may be used when needed for special purposes, but the results may differ from those described in this method.

Electrolytic corrosion may cause open-circuit failure in electrical conductors and devices. It may promote low resistance leakage path across or through electrical insulation and the products of corrosion may otherwise interfere with the operation of electrical devices, i.e. may prevent operation of contacts, etc.

Electronic equipment operating under conditions of high humidity and elevated temperature may be particularly subjected to failure from electrolytic corrosion. Therefore, the selection of insulating materials, which do not produce electrolytic corrosion, is important for such applications.

The test method described in this second edition replaces two separate methods of the first edition – visual and tensile strength method. The former tensile strength method of the first edition, using copper wires, has been maintained in an informative annex. It must be emphasized that the advantage of this new method is that the same strip used for visual inspection is next used for the tensile strength test in opposite to the method described in the first edition. Therefore the correlation between tensile strength and visual examination is more obvious.

ELECTRICAL INSULATING MATERIALS –

DETERMINATION OF ELECTROLYTIC CORROSION CAUSED BY INSULATING MATERIALS – TEST METHODS

1 Scope

This standard determines the ability of insulating materials to produce electrolytic corrosion on metals being in contact with them under the influence of electric stress, high humidity and elevated temperature.

The effect of electrolytic corrosion is assessed in one test by using consecutively two methods:

- visual semi-quantitative method consisting in comparing visually the corrosion appearing on the anode and cathode metal strips, with those given in the reference figures.

This method consists of the direct visual assessment of the degree of corrosion of two copper strips, acting as anode and cathode respectively, placed in contact with the tested insulating material under a d.c. potential difference at specified environmental conditions. The degree of corrosion is assessed by visually comparing the corrosion marks on the anode and cathode metal strips with those shown in the reference figures;

- quantitative method, which involves the tensile strength measurement, carried out on the same anode and cathode metal strips after visual inspection.

An additional quantitative test method for determining electrolytic corrosion, which involves tensile strength measurement of copper wire, is described in the informative Annex C.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

IEC 60068-3-4:2001, *Environmental testing – Part 3-4: Supporting documentation and guidance – Damp heat tests*

IEC 60454-2:—, *Pressure-sensitive adhesive tapes for electrical purposes – Part 2: Methods of test*¹

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document the following terms and definitions apply:

3.1

electrolytic corrosion

kind of galvanic corrosion caused by joint action of external source of d.c. potential and some substances included in some organic materials in presence of high humidity and elevated temperature

¹ To be published

3.2

test strip

a) positive

a metal strip connected with positive pole of direct current source which forms the anode in the contact system: metal – insulating material

b) negative

a metal strip connected with negative pole of direct current source which forms the cathode in the contact system: metal – insulating material

3.3

surface of contact

a) of tested material

part of insulating material specimen which is in direct contact with metal strips

b) of metal strip

part of metal strip (positive or negative) which is in direct contact with insulating material specimen

4 General description of the test method

The test consists of applying specified environmental conditions and a d.c. potential difference to two parallel copper strips 3 mm apart, acting as the anode and the cathode respectively. The insulating material under test (test specimen) is placed across these two strips. In order to obtain a good and uniform contact between the metal strips and the material under test, the test specimen is pressed to the strips by a cylindrical loading tube.

5 Test specimens

5.1 General

The preparation of the specimens depends on the type of material and the form in which it is supplied. The shape and dimensions of the test specimen are shown in Figure 1. Procedures for the preparation of the test specimen are reported beneath (5.2 to 5.7).

Dimensions in millimetres

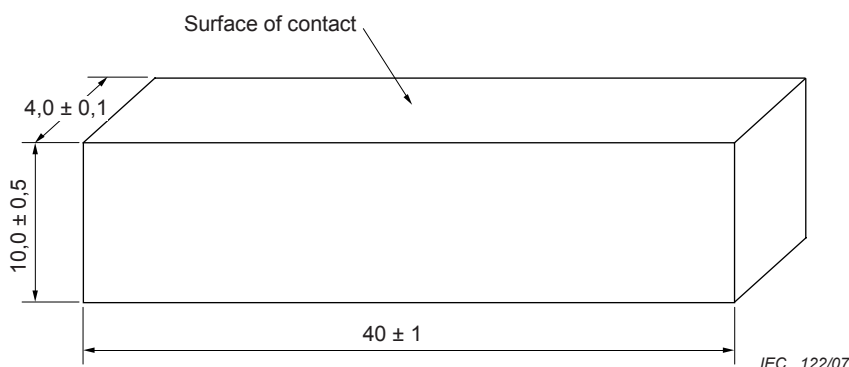


Figure 1 – Test specimen of rigid material, for example textile laminate