

STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

SOURCE TEST METHOD 9A

VISUAL DETERMINATION OF OPACITY FOR A THREE MINUTE STANDARD

1. Principle

The opacity of emissions from stationary sources is determined visually by a qualified observer.

2. Procedure

The observer must be certified in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of 40 CFR Part 60, Appendix A, Method 9, as in effect on July 1, 1990, which are hereby adopted by reference.

The qualified observer shall stand at a distance sufficient to provide a clear view of the emissions with the sun oriented in the 140° sector to his back. Consistent with maintaining the above requirement, the observer shall, as much as possible, make his observations from a position such that his line of vision is approximately perpendicular to the plume direction, and when observing opacity of emissions from rectangular outlets (e.g., roof monitors, open baghouses, noncircular stacks), approximately perpendicular to the longer axis of the outlet. The observer's line of sight should not include more than one plume at a time when multiple stacks are involved, and in any case, the observer should make his observations with his line of sight perpendicular to the longer axis of such a set of multiple stacks (e.g., stub stacks on baghouses).

The observer shall record the name of the plant, emission location, type of facility, observer's name and affiliation, and the date on a field data sheet. The time, estimated distance to the emission location, approximate wind direction, estimated wind speed, description of the sky condition (presence and color of clouds), and plume background are recorded on a field data sheet at the time opacity readings are initiated and completed.

The observer should make note of the ambient relative humidity, ambient temperature, the point in the plume that the observations were made, the estimated depth of the plume at the point of observation, and the color and condition of the plume. It is also helpful if pictures of the plume are taken.

Opacity observations shall be made at the point of greatest opacity in the portion of the plume where condensed water vapor is not present. The observer shall not look continuously at the plume, but instead shall observe the plume momentarily at 15-second intervals.

When condensed water vapor is present within the plume as it emerges from the emission outlet, opacity observations shall be made beyond the point in the plume at which condensed water vapor is no longer visible.

When water vapor in the plume condenses and becomes visible at a distinct distance from the emission outlet, the opacity of emissions should be evaluated at the emission outlet prior to the condensation of water vapor and the formation of the steam plume.

Opacity observations shall be recorded to the nearest 5 percent at 15-second intervals on an observational record sheet. Each momentary observation recorded shall be deemed to represent the average opacity of emissions for a 15-second period.

3. Analysis

The opacity of the plume is determined by individual visual observations. Opacity shall be reported as the range of values observed during a specified time period, not to exceed 60 consecutive minutes. The opacity standard is exceeded if there are more than 12 observations, during any consecutive 60-minute period, for which an opacity greater than the standard is recorded.

4. References

Federal Register, Vol. 36, No. 247, page 24895, Dec. 23, 1971.

"Criteria for Smoke and Opacity Training School 1970-1971" Oregon-Washington Air Quality Committee.

"Guidelines for Evaluation of Visible Emissions" EPA 340/1-75-007.