

Plastics - Determination of the ultimate aerobic biodegradability of plastic materials in soil by measuring the oxygen demand in a respirometer or the amount of carbon dioxide evolved (ISO 17556:2012)

EESTI STANDARDI EESSÕNA

NATIONAL FOREWORD

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English Version

Plastics - Determination of the ultimate aerobic biodegradability
of plastic materials in soil by measuring the oxygen demand in a
respirometer or the amount of carbon dioxide evolved (ISO
17556:2012)

Plastiques - Détermination de la biodégradabilité aérobie
ultime des matériaux plastiques dans le sol par mesure de
la demande en oxygène dans un respiromètre ou de la
teneur en dioxyde de carbone libéré (ISO 17556:2012)

Kunststoffe - Bestimmung der vollständigen aeroben
biologischen Abbaubarkeit von Kunststoffmaterialien im
Boden durch Messung des Sauerstoffbedarfs in einem
Respirometer oder der Menge des entstandenen
Kohlendioxids (ISO 17556:2012)

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 20 July 2012.

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Foreword

This document (EN ISO 17556:2012) has been prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 61 "Plastics" in collaboration with Technical Committee CEN/TC 249 "Plastics" the secretariat of which is held by NBN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by February 2013, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by February 2013.

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Endorsement notice

The text of ISO 17556:2012 has been approved by CEN as a EN ISO 17556:2012 without any modification.

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Introduction

A number of plastic materials and products have been designed for applications ending up in or on soil. They have been developed for applications where biodegradation is beneficial from a technical, environmental, social or economic standpoint. Examples can be found in agriculture (e.g. mulching film), horticulture (e.g. twines and clips, flower pots, pins), funeral items (e.g. body bags), recreation (e.g. plastic “clay” pigeons for shooting, hunting cartridges), etc. In many cases, recovery and/or recycling of these plastic items is either difficult or not economically viable. Various types of biodegradable plastics have been developed which have been designed to biodegrade and disappear *in situ* at the end of their useful life. Several International Standards specify test methods for determining the ultimate aerobic or anaerobic biodegradation of plastic materials in aqueous or compost conditions. Considering the use and disposal of biodegradable plastics, it is important to establish a test method to determine the ultimate aerobic biodegradation of such plastic materials in soil.

Plastics — Determination of the ultimate aerobic biodegradability of plastic materials in soil by measuring the oxygen demand in a respirometer or the amount of carbon dioxide evolved

WARNING — Appropriate precautions should be taken when handling soil because it might contain potentially pathogenic organisms. Toxic test compounds and those whose properties are unknown should be handled with care.

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies a method for determining the ultimate aerobic biodegradability of plastic materials in soil by measuring the oxygen demand in a closed respirometer or the amount of carbon dioxide evolved. The method is designed to yield an optimum degree of biodegradation by adjusting the humidity of the test soil.

If a non-adapted soil is used as an inoculum, the test simulates the biodegradation processes which take place in a natural environment; if a pre-exposed soil is used, the method can be used to investigate the potential biodegradability of a test material.

This method applies to the following materials:

- natural and/or synthetic polymers, copolymers or mixtures of these;
- plastic materials which contain additives such as plasticizers or colorants;
- water-soluble polymers.

It does not necessarily apply to materials which, under the test conditions, inhibit the activity of the microorganisms present in the soil. Inhibitory effects can be measured using an inhibition control or by another suitable method. If the test material inhibits the microorganisms in the soil, a lower test material concentration, another type of soil or a pre-exposed soil can be used.

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.

ISO 10381-6, *Soil quality — Sampling — Part 6: Guidance on the collection, handling and storage of soil under aerobic conditions for the assessment of microbiological processes, biomass and diversity in the laboratory*

ISO 10390, *Soil quality — Determination of pH*

ISO 10634, *Water quality — Guidance for the preparation and treatment of poorly water-soluble organic compounds for the subsequent evaluation of their biodegradability in an aqueous medium*

ISO 10694, *Soil quality — Determination of organic and total carbon after dry combustion (elementary analysis)*

ISO 11274, *Soil quality — Determination of the water-retention characteristic — Laboratory methods*