

News Release

For Immediate Release

2018 New AATCC Laundering Conditions Approved

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C., USA, February 8, 2018— In January 2018, several AATCC research committees approved revised test methods with aligned, **standard laundering conditions**. These conditions will be applied to additional methods over the following months and are not expected to change again for some time. The standard conditions will ensure more repeatable testing within and among labs over time.

- TM88B-2018, Smoothness of Seams in Fabrics after Repeated Home Laundering
- TM88C-2018, Retention of Creases in Fabrics after Repeated Home Laundering
- TM124-2018, Smoothness Appearance of Fabrics after Repeated Home Laundering
- TM135-2018, Dimensional Changes of Fabrics after Home Laundering
- TM143-2018, Appearance of Apparel and Other Textile End Products after Home Laundering
- TM150-2018, Dimensional Changes of Garments after Home Laundering

For those wanting more options, new laboratory procedures provide both standard and alternate conditions. The alternate tables include conditions for high-efficiency washing machines and detergent.

- LP1-2018, Home Laundering: Machine Washing (supersedes Monograph 6)
- LP2-2018, Home Laundering: Hand Washing (supersedes Monograph 5)

LP1 and LP2 are complete laundering protocols that may be used in coordination with appearance evaluation, flammability preparation, durability testing, or other procedures. LP1 replaces M6 but provides considerable additional information.

For 2018 only, the downloadable AATCC 2018 Home Laundering Supplement includes all eight official AATCC laundering standards approved since publication of the 2018 AATCC Technical Manual. These documents are available **ONLY** as downloadable PDFs for 2018. The supplement will be discontinued at the end of 2018 and all standards contained therein will appear in the 2019 AATCC Technical Manual.

Order new laundering standards at <https://members.aatcc.org/store/laundry/2214>.

Laundering Equipment

New washing machines and tumble dryers reported by the manufacturers to meet the parameters in LP1 are listed on the AATCC website. AATCC does not verify the specifications of washing machines or dryers and cannot provide information on obtaining these machines.

See washer and dryer lists at www.aatcc.org/test/washers.

Background

For many years, laundering conditions and washing machine specifications were included in various AATCC Test Methods. They were updated by the test method committees as needed.

In 1984, machine parameters were moved to M6, Standardization of Home Laundry Test Conditions and maintained by AATCC Research Committee RA88, Home Laundering Technology.

From 1984 to 2017, M6 gradually expanded to include parameters for a wide range of home washing machines. There was no clear correlation among these machines. As technology changed, it became difficult for labs to obtain washers meeting the published specifications.

Options

As laundering became more confusing and machines more difficult to find, committees began looking for ways to make test methods and monographs more practical for lab use.

One option was to replace all laundering details in the methods with a reference to M6. This eliminated conflict between test method parameters and monograph parameters, but still left labs with a choice of seven tables and the prospect of more to be added every year or so as home laundering technology advanced. Most of those present at a recent RA88 meeting rejected this approach. Labs adopt standard test methods to make it easier to compare results; constantly-changing conditions only make valid comparisons more difficult.

The proposal eventually adopted was to return all relevant laundering details to the test methods.

Standard Conditions

Each test method now indicates one set of standard laundering parameters and instructions. These are the same parameters that were historically included in the methods and those used to establish precision values. The intention is to keep these standard conditions in place for the foreseeable future.

As for most other test methods, laundering equipment and procedures are now standardized. These parameters may not represent the exact laundering practices of every consumer, but they provide a common baseline for comparison. Imagine if you changed the force of a crockmeter to correspond with the average weight of your consumer in any given year!

Even when lab tests do not perfectly replicate real-life scenarios (they rarely do), a well-designed method provides meaningful relative evaluations of various materials. Every consumer will not experience exactly the 1.4% dimensional change reported in lab testing of a fabric, but most of them probably will experience less change for this material than for one that showed 5.4% dimensional change in lab testing.

Alternate Conditions

Of course, it is not practical for all labs to immediately replace multiple washing machines purchased over several years with those meeting standard conditions.

As noted above, LP1 includes alternate conditions as well as the standard conditions included in the test methods. Labs who choose to use the alternate conditions for established test methods should indicate this as a modification.

The laboratory procedures for laundering also serve another purpose. There are several common evaluations performed before and/or after laundering that until now, had to reference dimensional change or other unrelated test methods for laundering instructions. The withdrawn M6 document was insufficient because it did not include information such as how much detergent or how large a load to use. LP1 includes all the materials and instructions required for home laundering in a washing machine. LP2 covers hand laundering.

For additional information, visit <https://www.aatcc.org/test/washers/>

About AATCC: AATCC is the world's leading not-for-profit association serving textile professionals since 1921. AATCC, headquartered in Research Triangle Park, NC, USA, provides test method development, quality control materials, and professional networking for members in about 50 countries throughout the world.

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