



IPC-4921A

# Requirements for Printed Electronics Base Materials (Substrates)

Developed by the Printed Electronics Base Material/Substrates  
Subcommittee (D-62) of the Printed Electronics Committee (D-60)  
of IPC

**Supersedes:**  
IPC-4921 - June 2012

Users of this publication are encouraged to participate in the  
development of future revisions.

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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>SCOPE</b>	1	3.4.4	Storage Conditions	9
1.1	Purpose	1	3.4.5	Chemical Compliance	9
1.2	Classification System	1	3.5	Visual Requirements	9
1.2.1	Designating Materials	1	3.5.1	Marking	9
1.2.2	Adding Details When Designating Materials	1	3.5.2	Wrinkles, Creases, Streaks and Scratches	9
1.3	Surface Treatments	3	3.5.3	Inclusions	9
1.4	Manufacturing Temperature Classification	4	3.5.4	Voids	10
1.5	Quality Conformance	4	3.5.5	Holes, Tears and Delaminations	10
1.6	Procurement Documentation	4	3.6	Dimensional Requirements	10
1.7	Material Characteristics	4	3.6.1	Sheet Width and Length	10
1.7.1	As Agreed Upon Between User and Supplier (AABUS)	4	3.6.2	Roll Width	10
1.8	New Materials	4	3.6.3	Roll Length	10
1.9	Interpretation of "Shall"	5	3.6.4	Thickness	10
1.10	Presentation of Dimensions and Tolerances	5	3.7	Mechanical Requirements	10
<b>2</b>	<b>APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS</b>	5	3.7.1	Bend	10
2.1	IPC	5	3.7.2	Coefficient of Thermal Expansion (CTE)	10
2.2	ASTM International	5	3.7.3	Coefficient of Hygroscopic Expansion (CHE)	10
2.3	UL	7	3.7.4	Dimensional Stability	10
2.4	NCSL International	7	3.7.5	Edge Strength	10
2.5	International Organization for Standardization (ISO)	7	3.7.6	Initiation Tear Strength	10
2.6	American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)	7	3.7.7	Propagation Tear Strength	10
2.7	Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI)	7	3.7.8	Tensile Strength, Elongation and Modulus	11
2.8	British Standards Institution (BSI)	7	3.7.9	Density	11
2.9	International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)	8	3.7.10	Poisson's Ratio	11
2.10	Japanese Standards Association	8	3.8	Surface Requirements	11
<b>3</b>	<b>GENERAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	8	3.8.1	Coefficient of Friction	11
3.1	Terms and Definitions	8	3.8.2	Surface Energy	11
3.1.1	Coefficient of Hygroscopic Expansion (CHE)	8	3.8.3	Surface Hardness	11
3.1.2	Skew	8	3.8.4	Surface Roughness	11
3.1.3	Poisson's Ratio	8	3.9	Optical Requirements	11
3.1.4	Surface Gloss	8	3.9.1	Color	11
3.1.5	Dielectric Constant (Dk)	8	3.9.2	Luminous Transmittance and Haze	11
3.1.6	Thermal Conductivity	8	3.9.3	Refractive Index	11
3.2	Specification Sheets	8	3.9.4	Surface Gloss	11
3.3	Conflict	8	3.10	Chemical Requirements	11
3.4	Material Requirements	8	3.10.1	Chemical Resistance	11
3.4.1	Preferred Side for Printing	9	3.10.2	Oxygen Gas Transmission	11
3.4.2	Sheet Material	9	3.10.3	Water Vapor Transmission	11
3.4.3	Roll Material	9	3.11	Electrical Requirements	11
			3.11.1	Permittivity (Dielectric Constant)	11
			3.11.2	Loss Tangent (Dissipation Factor)	12
			3.11.3	Volume Resistivity (Damp Heat)	12
			3.11.4	Surface Resistance (Damp Heat)	12

3.11.5 Dielectric Strength ..... 12

3.12 Environmental Requirements ..... 12

3.12.1 Fungus Resistance ..... 12

3.12.2 Moisture Absorption ..... 12

3.12.3 Flammability ..... 12

3.12.4 Halogens ..... 12

3.12.5 Relative Thermal Index (RTI) ..... 12

3.12.6 Glass Transition ( $T_g$ ) Temperature ..... 12

3.13 Workmanship Requirements ..... 12

3.14 Special Requirements ..... 12

3.14.1 Outgassing ..... 12

3.14.2 Organic Contamination ..... 12

3.15 Physical Requirements ..... 13

3.15.1 Thermal Conductivity ..... 13

**4 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS ..... 13**

4.1 Responsibility for Inspection ..... 13

4.2 Test Equipment and Inspection Facilities ..... 13

4.3 Preparation of Samples ..... 13

4.4 Standard Laboratory Conditions ..... 13

4.5 Tolerances ..... 13

4.6 Classification of Inspection ..... 13

4.7 Material Inspection ..... 13

4.8 Qualification Inspection ..... 13

4.8.1 Characterization Testing ..... 13

4.8.2 Frequency ..... 14

4.9 Quality Conformance Inspection ..... 14

4.9.1 Inspection of Product for Delivery ..... 15

4.9.2 Sample Unit ..... 15

4.9.3 Group A Inspection ..... 15

4.9.4 Group B Inspection ..... 15

4.10 Statistical Process Control (SPC) ..... 16

4.10.1 Reduction of Quality Conformance Testing ..... 16

**5 PREPARATION FOR DELIVERY ..... 16**

5.1 Packaging ..... 16

**6 NOTES ..... 16**

6.1 Ordering Data ..... 16

6.2 Chemical Resistance ..... 17

**Tables**

Table 1-1 Base Material Family Designation ..... 2

Table 1-2 Base Material Type Designation ..... 2

Table 1-3 Base Structure Designation ..... 3

Table 1-4 Base Reinforcement Type Designation ..... 3

Table 1-5 Nominal Base Material Thickness Designation ..... 3

Table 4-1 Test Method Frequency ..... 14

Table 4-2 Sampling Plan for Group A Inspection for Sheet Goods ..... 15

Table 4-3 Lot Sampling Plan for Group A Inspection for Roll Goods ..... 15

# Requirements for Printed Electronics Base Materials (Substrates)

## 1 SCOPE

This standard establishes the classification system, qualification and quality conformance requirements for printed electronics base materials (substrates).

The standard defines the base material only and should not be used for substrates that have been postprocessed and comprise defined features or structures (e.g., conductive traces).

**1.1 Purpose** The purpose of this standard is to provide and define key characteristics and test methods used for procuring printed electronics base materials (substrates).

**1.2 Classification System** The system described in 1.2.1 through 1.2.2.5 identifies printed electronics base materials (substrates).

**1.2.1 Designating Materials** A materials designation is intended for use by designers on master drawings to designate their base material choice. At the end of this standard is a series of material specification sheets, which are identified by specification sheet numbers. Each specification sheet outlines engineering and performance data for a printed electronics base material type. The designer should select the appropriate base material specification sheet as required to meet the operational specifications of the end product application (e.g., consumer, automotive, aerospace, etc.).

An example base material designation would be IPC-4921/2, for which "/2" refers to the specification sheet detailing Polyester Naphthalate (PEN)/Biaxially Oriented Polyethylene Naphthalate (BOPEN).

If the designer requires further material specification details (e.g., thickness), the designer should highlight those details in cross-sectional views or notes on the master drawing.

If the designer is using a material which is not in one of the approved IPC-4921 specification sheets, the designer **shall** select the material type from 1.2.2.2. Users and suppliers should consider submitting new specification sheets for consideration in this standard (see 1.8).

**1.2.2 Adding Details When Designating Materials** Designers may add details to the procurement documentation for substrate materials.

The additional details designation **shall** follow this format:

Standard designation / Specification Sheet number or Base Material Type / Base Structure / Base Reinforcement Type / Base Material Thickness

Where:

- Standard designation is IPC-4921.
- Specification Sheet number is an approved IPC-4921 specification sheet.
- If no specification sheet exists, the designer **shall** select a Base Material Type designation from 1.2.2.2. If the material type is not included in 1.2.2.2, the designer **shall** create a designator for the material.
- Base Structure is selected from 1.2.2.3.
- Base Reinforcement Type is selected from 1.2.2.4.
- Base Material Thickness is selected from 1.2.2.5.

The following is an example of a detailed designation using an IPC-4921 Specification Sheet as the Base Material Type:

IPC-4921 / 2 / 2 / F / 7 would be PEN/BOPEN in sheet form, nonreinforced, with a thickness range of  $\geq 0.250$  mm to  $< 0.400$  mm.

The following is an example of a detailed designation using a material which is not represented in an IPC-4921 specification sheet: