



Standard Recommended Practice

On-Line Monitoring of Cooling Waters

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Foreword

This NACE standard describes a variety of devices used for on-line monitoring of fouling, corrosion, and other parameters in recirculating cooling tower water systems. Methods are presented for collecting test data to determine fouling and corrosion rates that can be used for, but are not limited to, (1) predicting the expected service life of heat-exchange equipment, (2) optimizing the cooling system operation, (3) detecting operating problems and upset conditions, (4) monitoring corrective actions taken when such conditions occur, (5) assisting in problem solving, and (6) evaluating alternate chemical treatment programs. This standard is intended for the use of operators of open recirculating cooling water systems and those organizations that supply treatment materials and consulting services to them.

This standard was originally prepared in 1989 by NACE Task Group T-3T-1, a component of Unit Committee T-3T on On-Line Monitoring Technology, and revised in 1995 by T-3T-4. It was revised in 2002 by NACE Task Group (TG) 241 on On-Line Monitoring of Cooling Waters and Cooling Water Test Units. TG 241 is administered by Specific Technology Group (STG) 11 on Water Treatment. This standard is issued by NACE International under the auspices of STG 11.

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Contents

1. General.....	1
2. Apparatus—Fouling/Deposit Monitors	1
3. Apparatus—Corrosion Monitors.....	6
4. Apparatus—Integrated On-Line Monitors	7
5. Application Criteria	8
6. Data Collection, Handling, and Interpretation.....	8
References.....	11
Bibliography	12
Appendix A: Heat Transfer.....	14
Figure 1—Schematic Diagram of Annular Geometry, Indirect Electric Heating	2
Figure 2—Schematic Diagram of Typical Tubular Monitor	3
Figure 3—Typical Biofouling Monitor	5
Figure 4—Typical Two-Tube Test Unit	6
Figure 5—Schematic Diagram of an Integrated On-Line Monitor.....	9
Figure A1—Schematic Diagram of a Temperature Profile of (a) a Clean and (b) a Deposit-Fouled Tube.....	15
Table A1: Nomenclature	14

Section 1: General

1.1 The purpose of this standard is to describe technologies applicable to the on-line monitoring of cooling water systems. The standard focuses on those technologies that provide data on a short-term basis (minutes to hours) and provide output in a form that may be used by the operator to deal with changing conditions in real time.

1.2 For the purpose of this standard, an on-line monitor for a cooling water system is defined as a device, or combination of devices, that measures corrosion rates and determines changes in heat transfer coefficients (fouling factors) by measuring pertinent parameters under steady-state conditions that simulate critical conditions in an operating heat exchanger in a reliable and objective manner and with acceptable precision and accuracy. (Nomenclature and abbreviations used in this standard are defined in Appendix A.)

1.3 References to Existing Publications:

1.3.1 NACE Standard TM0286¹ covers extended test periods (30 to 90 days), manual data gathering, and data reduction.

1.3.2 NACE Publication 3D170² covers three techniques for monitoring the corrosion rates of metals—(1) electrical resistance method, (2) linear polarization resistance method (LPR), and (3) galvanic method. Of the three, the LPR method, which determines instantaneous corrosion rates, has found considerable acceptance compared with other methods in monitoring cor-

rosion rates of metals exposed to cooling waters. Further explanation of this technology may be found in ASTM⁽¹⁾ G 96.³

1.3.3 NACE Publication 3T199⁴ covers techniques for both direct and indirect monitoring of corrosion and related parameters in field applications.

1.3.4 EPRI⁽²⁾ Report TR-112024⁵ covers on-line monitoring techniques employed by utility end users.

1.4 This standard covers simulation of plant heat exchangers with cooling water on the tube side where the monitor incorporates (1) a test surface heated by high-purity steam or an electrical resistance heater of constant heat flux, or (2) pressure-drop methodology, generally unheated to evaluate microbiological growth. However, other heating media such as hot water or a heat transfer fluid have been used as the heat source. When numerical results are given for fouling, they represent only what occurred under a specific set of heat exchanger operating conditions and water quality. On-line monitors, such as those covered in this standard, are not designed to model operational problems such as localized hot spots, changing heat flux, localized low-velocity areas, hydraulic shocks, or mechanical cleaning that may occur in operating plant heat exchangers. As with most process modeling, on-line monitors cannot replicate the total process heat exchanger at one time. Thus, the user must choose the section of the heat exchanger (e.g., inlet, middle, outlet) to be modeled.

Section 2: Apparatus—Fouling/Deposit Monitors

2.1 Electrically Heated Apparatus

2.1.1 Principles of Operation

2.1.1.1 On-line monitors are often designed for easy use and simplicity, using an electrical resistance heating element to impose a heat load on the metal surface and measuring the rate of heat transfer from that metal surface into a water stream passing by it. (See Figure 1.) This enables the heat transfer efficiency and overall cleanliness to be determined. This heat transfer rate is relatively constant as long as the surface remains free of foulant. However, as substances, such as hardness salts, oxides and hydroxides of iron, silt, biomass, and process contamination, form deposits on the heated surface, they decrease the overall

cleanliness and reduce heat transfer. The heat load is supplied by an electrically heated element that is located near or directly in contact with the metal probe surface.

2.1.1.2 Fouling is a function of water temperature, viscosity, flow characteristics (Reynolds number and shear stress), geometry, materials of construction, and temperature of the heat transfer surface. The levels of dissolved and suspended solids, microbiological matter, and process contamination are the most important water characteristics, while the velocity, shear stress, and fluid viscosity are the determinant flow characteristics.

2.1.1.3 Certain parameters must be measured to find the accurate rate of heat dissipation into the water. Sensors are located between the surface

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⁽²⁾ Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), 3412 Hillview Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94304.