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Rapid Method for Sodium Hydroxide Fusion of Asphalt Matrices Prior to Americium, Plutonium, Strontium, Radium, and Uranium Analyses

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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Sodium Hydroxide Fusion of Asphalt Matrices

Revision History

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RAPID METHOD FOR SODIUM HYDROXIDE FUSION OF ASPHALT MATRICES PRIOR TO AMERICIUM, PLUTONIUM, STRONTIUM, RADIUM, AND URANIUM ANALYSES

1. Scope and Application

- 1.1. The method is applicable to the sodium hydroxide fusion of asphalt samples, prior to the chemical separation procedures described in the following procedures:
 - 1.1.1. Rapid Radiochemical Method for Americium-241 in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents (Reference 16.1).
 - 1.1.2. Rapid Radiochemical Method for Plutonium-238 and Plutonium-239/240 in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents (Reference 16.2).
 - 1.1.3. Rapid Radiochemical Method for Radium-226 in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents (Reference 16.3).
 - 1.1.4. Rapid Radiochemical Method for Total Radiostrontium (Sr-90) in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents (Reference 16.4).
 - 1.1.5. Rapid Radiochemical Method for Isotopic Uranium in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents (Reference 16.5).
- 1.2. This general method applies to asphalt samples collected following a radiological or nuclear incident. The asphalt samples may be received as core samples, crushed samples or in pieces of various sizes. The term “asphalt” is used in this procedure to mean asphalt concrete typically used for road, parking lot, and pathway surfaces.
- 1.3. The rapid fusion method is rapid and rigorous, effectively digesting refractory radionuclide particles that may be present.
- 1.4. Asphalt samples should be crushed and pulverized prior to taking a representative aliquant for furnace heating and fusion. Even asphalt samples containing softer, stickier tar and bitumin will dry when aggregate particles are pulverized, releasing a powder that facilitates drying. The asphalt sample should be milled and sieved to achieve a particle size small enough that representative subsamples can be taken and representative aliquants analyzed.
- 1.5. After a homogeneous subsample is obtained, the asphalt aliquant is taken and heated to destroy organics in the sample matrix. After heating, the sample aliquant is fused to digest the asphalt sample matrix, and matrix removal steps are employed to collect and preconcentrate the radionuclides from the alkaline fusion matrix. As this method is a sample digestion and pretreatment technique to be used prior to other separation and analysis methods, the user should refer to those individual methods and any project-specific requirements for the determination of applicable measurement quality objectives (MQOs).

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1.6. Application of this method by any laboratory should be validated by the laboratory using the protocols provided in *Method Validation Guide for Qualifying Methods Used by Radioanalytical Laboratories Participating in Incident Response Activities* (Reference 16.6), or the protocols published by a recognized standards organization for method validation.

1.6.1. In the absence of project-specific guidance, MQOs for asphalt samples may be based on the analytical action levels (AALs), the required method uncertainty (u_{MR}), and the required relative method uncertainty (ϕ_{mr}) found in the *Radiological Laboratory Sample Analysis Guide for Incident Response — Radionuclides in Soil* (Reference 16.7).

2. Summary of Method

2.1. The method is based on heating a representative, finely milled 1–1.5-g aliquant asphalt sample to remove organic components present followed by rapid fusion using a sodium hydroxide process at 600 °C.

2.2. Pu, U, and Am are separated from the alkaline matrix using an iron/titanium hydroxide precipitation (enhanced with calcium phosphate precipitation) followed by a lanthanum fluoride matrix removal step.

2.3. Sr is separated from the alkaline matrix using a phosphate precipitation, followed by a calcium fluoride precipitation to remove silicates.

2.4. Ra is separated from the alkaline matrix using a carbonate precipitation.

2.5. The resulting solutions are subsequently processed using the methods referred to in Steps 1.1.1–1.1.5.

3. Definitions, Abbreviations and Acronyms

3.1. Discrete Radioactive Particles (DRPs or “hot particles”). Particulate matter in a sample of any matrix where a high concentration of radioactive material is present as a tiny particle (<millimeter [mm] range).

3.2. *Multi-Agency Radiological Analytical Laboratory Protocols (MARLAP) Manual* (Reference 16.8) provides guidance for the planning, implementation, and assessment phases of those projects that require the laboratory analysis of radionuclides.

3.3. The use of the term asphalt throughout this method is not intended to be limiting or prescriptive, and the method described herein refers to all asphalt-related materials (roads, parking lots, and pathway surfaces). In cases where the distinction is important, the specific issues related to a particular sample type will be discussed.

NOTE: A separate method has been validated for asphalt shingles and roofing materials.

4. Interferences and Limitations

4.1. Asphalt samples with larger particle size may require a longer fusion time during Step 11.1.11.

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- 4.2. Information regarding the elemental composition of the sample may be helpful. For example, asphalt may have native concentrations of uranium, radium, thorium, strontium, or barium, all of which may have an effect on the chemical separations used following the fusion of the sample. In some cases (e.g., strontium analysis), elemental analysis of the digestate prior to chemical separations may be necessary to determine native concentrations of carrier elements present in the sample. The processing of additional sample aliquants without Sr carrier added may also be utilized to determine if a stable Sr carrier correction is needed. In a radiological emergency, this may be a less disruptive approach than separate digestion of aliquants for elemental Sr assay.

NOTE: In those samples where native constituents are present that could interfere with the determination of the chemical yield (e.g., strontium for ^{90}Sr analysis) or with the creation of a sample test source (e.g., Barium [Ba] for ^{226}Ra analysis by alpha spectrometry), it may be necessary to determine the concentration of these native constituents in advance of chemical separation (using a separate aliquant of fused material) and make appropriate adjustments to the yield calculations or amount of carrier added.

- 4.3. Matrix blanks for these matrices may not be practical to obtain. Efforts should be made to obtain independent, analyte-free materials that have similar composition as the samples to be analyzed. These blanks will serve as process monitors for the fusion, and as potential monitors for cross contamination during batch processing.
- 4.4. Uncontaminated asphalt material may be acceptable blank material for Pu, Am, and Sr analyses, but this material will contain background levels of naturally occurring U and Ra isotopes.
- 4.4.1. If analyte-free blank material is not available and an empty crucible is used to generate a reagent blank sample, it is recommended that 100–125 milligram (mg) calcium (Ca) per gram of sample be added as calcium nitrate to the empty crucible as blank simulant. This step facilitates strontium phosphate and radium carbonate precipitations from the alkaline fusion matrix.
- 4.4.2. Tracer yields may be slightly lower for reagent blank matrices, since asphalt matrix components typically enhance recoveries across the precipitation steps.
- 4.5. Samples with elevated activity or samples that require multiple analyses from a single aliquant may need to be split after dissolution. In these cases the initial digestate and the split fractions should be carefully measured to ensure that the sample aliquant for analysis is accurately determined.
- 4.5.1. Tracer or carrier amounts (added for yield determination) may be increased where the split allows for the normal added amount to be present in the subsequent aliquant. For very high activity samples, the addition of the tracer or carrier may need to be postponed until following the split, in which case special care must be taken to ensure that the process is quantitative until isotopic exchange with the yield monitor is achieved. This deviation from the method should be thoroughly documented and reported in the case narrative.
- 4.5.2. When this method is employed and the entire volume of fused sample is processed in the subsequent chemical separation method, the original sample

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size and units are used in all calculations, with the final results reported in the units requested by the project manager.

- 4.5.3. In cases where the sample digestate is split prior to analysis, the fractional aliquant of the sample is used to determine the sample size. The calculation of the appropriate sample size used for analysis is described in Section 12.
- 4.6. Blank samples, laboratory control samples (LCSs), and duplicates should be created as early in the process as possible, following the same tracer/carrier additions, digestion process, and sample splitting used for the field samples. In this method, quality control (QC) samples should be initiated at the point samples are aliquanted into crucibles for fusion.
- 4.7. Zirconium crucibles used in the furnace ashing and fusion process may be reused.
 - 4.7.1. Before reuse, the crucibles should be cleaned very well using soap and water, followed by warm nitric acid (multiple rinses) and then water. Blank measurements should be monitored to ensure effective cleaning and control against cross-contamination.
 - 4.7.2. Segregation of crucibles used for low and high activity samples is recommended to minimize the risk of cross-contamination while maximizing the efficient use of crucibles.
- 4.8. Centrifuge speeds of 3500 rotations per minute (rpm) are recommended but lower rpm speeds may be used if 3500 rpm is not available.
- 4.9. Aluminum nitrate reagent typically contains trace levels of uranium contamination. To achieve the lowest possible blanks for isotopic uranium measurements, some labs have removed the trace uranium by passing ~250 mL of the 2 Molar (M) aluminum nitrate reagent through ~7 mL TRU Resin or UTEVA Resin, but this will have to be tested and validated by the laboratory.
- 4.10. It is very important to achieve as homogeneous and representative a sample aliquant of the asphalt as possible to allow reliable assessment of radiological contamination of the asphalt samples taken. The asphalt sample should be milled and sieved to a 50–100 mesh particle size if possible. Radioactivity from a radiological event is deposited on the surface of the asphalt, not inside the larger aggregate rocks, so removal of the larger rocks via sieves still results a conservative, reliable assessment of radiological deposition.

5. Safety

5.1. General

- 5.1.1. Refer to your laboratory's safety manual for concerns of contamination control, personal exposure monitoring and radiation safety manual for radiation dose monitoring.
- 5.1.2. Refer to your laboratory's chemical hygiene plan (or equivalent) for general safety rules regarding chemicals in the workplace.

5.2. Radiological

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5.2.1. Discrete Radioactive Particles (DRPs or hot particles)

- 5.2.1.1. Hot particles will likely be small, on the order of 1 millimeter (mm) or less. DRPs typically are not evenly distributed in the media and their radiation emissions are not uniform in all directions (anisotropic).
- 5.2.1.2. Asphalt media should be individually surveyed using a thickness of the solid sample that is appropriate for detection of the radionuclide decay particles.

NOTE: The information regarding DRPs should accompany the samples during processing as well as be described in the case narrative that accompanies the sample results.

5.3. Procedure-Specific Non-Radiological Hazards:

- 5.3.1. The furnace ashing and sodium hydroxide fusion are performed in a furnace at 600 °C. The operator should exercise extreme care when using the furnace and when handling the hot crucibles. Long tongs are recommended. Thermal protection gloves are also recommended when performing this part of the procedure. The fusion furnace should be used in a well-ventilated area (hood, trunk exhaust, etc.).
- 5.3.2. Particular attention should be paid to the use of hydrofluoric acid (HF). HF is an extremely dangerous chemical used in the preparation of some of the reagents and in the microprecipitation procedure. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used in strict accordance with the laboratory safety program specification.

6. Equipment and Supplies

- 6.1. Adjustable temperature laboratory hotplates.
- 6.2. Balance, top loading or analytical, readout display of at least ± 0.01 g.
- 6.3. Beakers, 100 mL, 150 mL capacity.
- 6.4. Centrifuge able to accommodate 225-mL tubes.
NOTE: 225-mL centrifuge tubes are specified but 250-mL centrifuge tubes may also be used instead.
- 6.5. Centrifuge tubes, 50-mL and 225-mL capacity.
- 6.6. Crucibles, 250 mL, zirconium, with lids.
- 6.7. 100-microliter (μL), 200- μL , 500- μL , and 1-mL pipets or equivalent and appropriate plastic tips.
- 6.8. 1-10 mL electronic/manual pipet(s).
- 6.9. Hot water bath or dry bath equivalent.
- 6.10. Muffle furnace capable of reaching at least 600 °C.
- 6.11. Tongs for handling crucibles (small and long tongs).
- 6.12. Tweezers or forceps.

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- 6.13. Sample size reduction equipment (hydraulic press, milling equipment, hammer, mallet, etc) and sieves. The necessary equipment will be based on a laboratory's specific method for the process of producing a uniformly ground sample from which to procure an aliquant.

NOTE: See Appendix A for a method for homogenization of asphalt samples.

- 6.14. Vortex stirrer.

7. Reagents and Standards

NOTES: Unless otherwise indicated, all references to water should be understood to mean Type I reagent water (ASTM D1193; Reference 16.9).

All reagents are American Chemical Society (ACS)-grade or equivalent unless otherwise specified and are commercially available.

- 7.1. Type I reagent water as defined in ASTM Standard D1193 (Reference 16.9).
- 7.2. Aluminum nitrate solution, 2M ($\text{Al}(\text{NO}_3)_3$): Add 750 g of aluminum nitrate nonahydrate ($\text{Al}(\text{NO}_3)_3 \cdot 9\text{H}_2\text{O}$) to ~600 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L. Low-levels of uranium are typically present in $\text{Al}(\text{NO}_3)_3$ solution.
- 7.3. Ammonium hydrogen phosphate (3.2M): Dissolve 106 g of $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{HPO}_4$ in 200 mL of water, heat on low to medium heat on a hot plate to dissolve and dilute with water to 250 mL.
- 7.4. Boric Acid, H_3BO_3 .
- 7.5. Calcium nitrate (1.25M): Dissolve 147 g of calcium nitrate tetrahydrate ($\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$) in 300 mL of water and dilute with water to 500 mL.
- 7.6. Iron carrier (50 mg/mL): Dissolve 181 g of ferric nitrate ($\text{Fe}(\text{NO}_3)_3 \cdot 9\text{H}_2\text{O}$) dissolved in 300 mL water and dilute with water to 500 mL. This carrier does not need to be standardized.
- 7.7. Hydrochloric acid (12M): Concentrated HCl.
- 7.7.1. Hydrochloric acid (0.01M): Add 0.83 mL of concentrated HCl to 800 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L.
- 7.7.2. Hydrochloric acid (1.5M): Add 125 mL of concentrated HCl to 800 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L.
- 7.8. Hydrofluoric acid (28M): Concentrated HF.
- 7.9. Lanthanum carrier (1.0 mg La^{3+} /mL): Add 1.56 g lanthanum (III) nitrate hexahydrate [$\text{La}(\text{NO}_3)_3 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$] in 300 mL water, dilute with water to 500 mL. This carrier does not need to be standardized.
- 7.10. Nitric acid (16M): Concentrated HNO_3 .
- 7.1.1. Nitric acid (3M): Add 191 mL of concentrated HNO_3 to 700 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L.

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- 7.1.2. Nitric acid (3M)–boric acid (0.25M) solution: Add 15.4 g of boric acid and 190 mL of concentrated HNO₃ to 500 mL of water, heat to dissolve, and dilute with water to 1 L.
 - 7.1.3. Nitric acid (7M): Add 443 mL of concentrated HNO₃ to 400 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L.
 - 7.1.4. Nitric acid (8M): Add 506 mL of concentrated HNO₃ to 400 mL of water and dilute with water to 1 L.
 - 7.2. Sodium carbonate (2M): Dissolve 212 g anhydrous Na₂CO₃ in 800 mL of water, then dilute with water to 1 L.
 - 7.3. Sodium hydroxide pellets.
 - 7.4. Titanium (III) chloride solution (TiCl₃), 10 percent by mass (wt%) solution in 20–30 wt% hydrochloric acid. (This reagent is typically available commercially in this concentration; however, if a different concentration, for example, 20% TiCl₃, is available it may be used with an appropriate volume adjustment.)
 - 7.5. Radioactive tracers/carriers (used as yield monitors) and spiking solutions. A radiotracer is a radioactive isotope of the analyte that is added to the sample to measure any losses of the analyte. A carrier is a stable isotope form of a radionuclide (usually the analyte) added to increase the total amount of that element so that a measureable mass of the element is present. A carrier can be used to determine the yield of the chemical process and/or to carry the analyte or radiotracer through the chemical process. Refer to the chemical separation method(s) to be employed upon completion of this dissolution technique. Tracers/carriers that are used to monitor radiochemical/chemical yield should be added at the beginning of this procedure. This allows for monitoring and correction of chemical losses in the combined digestion process, as well as in the chemical separation method. Carriers used to prepare sample test sources but not used for chemical yield determination (e.g., cerium (Ce) added for microprecipitation of plutonium or uranium), should be added where indicated.
8. Sample Collection, Preservation, and Storage
Not Applicable.
 9. Quality Control
 - 9.1. Where the subsequent chemical separation technique requires the addition of carriers and radioactive tracers for chemical yield determinations, these are to be added prior to beginning the fusion procedure, unless there is good technical justification for doing otherwise.
 - 9.2. Quality control samples are generally specified in the laboratory's quality manual or in a project's analytical protocol specifications (APS). At the very minimum, the following are suggested:
 - 9.2.1. A LCS, which consists solely of the reagents used in this procedure and a known quantity of radionuclide spiking solution, shall be run with each batch

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- of samples. The concentration of the LCS should be at or near the action level or level of interest for the project.
- 9.2.2. One reagent blank shall be run with each batch of samples. The blank should consist solely of the reagents used in this procedure (including tracer or carrier from the analytical method added prior to the fusion process).
- 9.2.3. A sample duplicate that is equal in size to the original aliquant should be analyzed with each batch of samples. This provides assurance that the laboratory's sample size reduction and subsampling processes are reproducible.
- 9.3. Batch quality control results shall be evaluated and meet applicable APS prior to release of unqualified data. In the absence of project-defined APS or a project-specific quality assurance project plan (QAPP), the quality control sample acceptance criteria defined in the laboratory's Quality Manual and procedures shall be used to determine acceptable performance for this method.

10. Calibration and Standardization.

- 10.1. Refer to the individual chemical separation and analysis methods for calibration and standardization protocols.

11. Procedure

11.1. Fusion

- 11.1.1. In accordance with the data quality objectives (DQOs) and sample processing requirements stated in the project plan documents, remove extraneous materials from the asphalt sample using a clean forceps or tweezers.
- 11.1.2. Weigh out a representative, finely milled 1-g aliquant of sample into a 250 mL crucible (1.5-g aliquants for ^{90}Sr analysis). See Appendix A for the asphalt milling procedure.

NOTES: For Sr and Ra analyses, a reagent blank of 100–150-mg Ca per gram of sample (prepared by evaporating 2.5 mL of 1.25M calcium nitrate, $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$, for radium and 3 mL of 1.25M calcium nitrate for strontium) should be added to the crucible as a blank simulate to ensure the blank behaves like the asphalt samples during the precipitation steps.

It is anticipated that asphalt sample material will be dry enough to aliquant without a preliminary drying step, although this may be used if needed. Soft asphalt will dry when aggregate particles are crushed and a white/grey powder is released that changes the texture and minimizes the sticky nature of the organics.

- 11.1.3. Add the proper amount of tracer or carrier appropriate for the method being used and the number of aliquants needed.
- 11.1.4. Place crucibles on a hot plate and heat to dryness on medium heat.
NOTE: Heat on medium heat to dry quickly but not so high as to cause splattering.
- 11.1.5. Remove crucibles from hot plate and allow to cool.

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- 11.1.6. Place the crucibles with lids in a furnace at ~200 °C using tongs, ramp furnace to 600 °C and heat for ~1 hour (or until black tar color is gone).
- 11.1.7. Remove crucibles from furnace using tongs and allow to cool.
- NOTE: If the asphalt sample residue looks like soil with the black tar color gone, it is ready for the fusion step (11.1.9).**
- 11.1.8. If the black tar color is not removed effectively by furnace heating alone, add ~5 mL 15.8M HNO₃ and ~3 mL 30 wt% of H₂O₂ to each crucible. Allow to react briefly and then place on hot plate on medium heat and heat to dryness.
- NOTE: If a black tar color is still present, the sample aliquant may be wet-ashed and or reheated briefly in a furnace at 600 °C as needed to destroy the organics present.**
- 11.1.9. Add the following amounts of sodium hydroxide based on the aliquant size/analysis required.
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1 g for Pu, Am, U: | 15 g NaOH |
| 1.5 g for Sr: | 15 g NaOH |
| 1 g for Ra: | 10 g NaOH |
- 11.1.10. Place the crucibles with lids in the 600 °C furnace using tongs.
- 11.1.11. Fuse samples in the crucibles for ~15–20 minutes.
- NOTE: Longer times may be needed for larger particles.**
- 11.1.12. Remove hot crucibles from furnace very carefully using tongs, and transfer to a hood.
- 11.1.13. Add ~25-50 mL of water to each crucible ~8 to 10 minutes (or longer) after removing crucibles from furnace, and heat on hotplate to loosen and dissolve solids.
- 11.1.14. Transfer each fused sample to a 225 mL centrifuge tube, rinse crucibles well with water, and transfer rinses to each 225 mL tube
- 11.1.15. If necessary for complete dissolution, add more water, and warm as needed on a hotplate. Transfer rinses to each 225 mL tube until all solids have been transferred.
- 11.1.16. Proceed to Section 11.2 for the actinide preconcentration procedure, 11.3 for strontium preconcentration, or 11.4 for radium preconcentration steps.
- 11.2. Preconcentration of Actinides (Pu, U, or Am) from Hydroxide Matrix
- NOTE: The Iron (Fe) and Lanthanum (La) carriers may be added to the 225 mL centrifuge tubes prior to transferring the dissolved sample to the tubes.**
- 11.2.1. Pipet 2.5 mL of iron carrier (50 mg/mL) into a labeled 225-mL centrifuge tube for each sample.
- 11.2.2. Pipet 1 mg La/mL to each tube as follows:
- | | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Pu, U: | 5-mL 1 mg La/mL |
| Am: | 3-mL 1 mg La/mL |
- 11.2.3. After each fused sample has been transferred to a 225-mL centrifuge tube, ensure crucibles have been rinsed well with water, and the rinses have been transferred to each tube.

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- 11.2.4. Add 10 mL 3 M HNO₃ to each crucible and heat crucibles on a hot plate until hot. Transfer the 3M HNO₃ rinse to the 225 mL tube, followed by additional rinses of water.
- 11.2.5. Dilute each sample to ~180 mL with water.
- 11.2.6. Cool the 225-mL centrifuge tubes in an ice bath to approximately room temperature.
- 11.2.7. Pipet 1.25M Ca(NO₃)₂ and 3.2M (NH₄)₂HPO₄ into each tube as follows:
Pu, Am: 1-mL 1.25M Ca(NO₃)₂ and 3-mL 3.2M (NH₄)₂HPO₄
U: 1-mL 1.25M Ca(NO₃)₂ and 5-mL 3.2M (NH₄)₂HPO₄
- 11.2.8. Cap tubes and mix well.
- 11.2.9. Pipet 7 mL of 10 percent by mass (wt%) TiCl₃ into each tube, and cap and mix immediately.
- NOTE: Other strengths of TiCl₃ may be used, with the volume aliquot adjusted to add an equivalent amount of TiCl₃, for example, 4 mL of 16.9% or 20% TiCl₃.**
- 11.2.10. Cool 225 mL centrifuge tubes in an ice bath for ~10 minutes.
- 11.2.11. Centrifuge tubes for ~6 minutes at 3500 rpm or more or as needed.
- 11.2.12. Pour off the supernate and discard to waste.
- 11.2.13. Add 1.5M HCl to each tube to redissolve each sample in a total volume of ~80 mL.
- NOTE: The volume of 1.5M HCl can be increased to reduce the amount of lanthanum/calcium fluoride precipitate for very high calcium samples. This may help minimize any undissolved solids in load solution.**
- 11.2.14. Cap and shake each tube to dissolve solids as well as possible.
- NOTE: Typically, there will be undissolved solids at this point, which is acceptable.**
- 11.2.15. Dilute each tube to ~170 mL with 0.01M HCl. Cap and mix.
- 11.2.16. Pipet 1 mL of 1.0 mg La/mL and 1 mL 1.25M Ca into each tube.
- 11.2.17. Pipet 3 mL of 10 wt% TiCl₃ into each tube. Cap and mix.
- 11.2.18. Add ~25 mL of concentrated HF into each tube. Cap and mix well.
- 11.2.19. Cool 225 mL centrifuge tubes in an ice bath for ~10 minutes.
- 11.2.20. Centrifuge for ~5 to 10 minutes at 3500 rpm or more or as needed.
- 11.2.21. Pour off supernate, and discard to waste.
- 11.2.22. Pipet 7 mL of 3M HNO₃ – 0.25M boric acid into each tube.
- 11.2.23. Cap, mix and transfer contents of the tube into a labeled 50-mL centrifuge tube.
- 11.2.24. Pipet 6 mL of 7M HNO₃ and 8 mL of 2M aluminum nitrate into each tube, cap and mix (shake or use a vortex stirrer), and transfer rinse to 50-mL centrifuge tube.

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- 11.2.25. Pipet 3 mL of 3M HNO₃ directly into the 50-mL centrifuge tube. Cap and mix. Samples may be heated in a water bath or hot block if needed to dissolve, and then allowed to cool.
 - 11.2.26. Centrifuge the 50-mL centrifuge tubes at 3500 rpm for 5 minutes to remove any traces of solids (may not be visible prior to centrifuging), and transfer solutions to labeled beakers or tubes for further processing. Discard any solids.
 - 11.2.27. Proceed directly to the Am, Pu, or U methods listed in Steps 1.1.1, 1.1.2, or 1.1.5.
- 11.3. Preconcentration of ⁹⁰Sr from Hydroxide Matrix
- 11.3.1. After each fused sample has been transferred to a 225-mL centrifuge tube, ensure crucibles have been rinsed well with water, and the rinses have been transferred to each tube.
 - 11.3.2. Dilute each sample to ~150 mL with water.
 - 11.3.3. Cool the 225-mL centrifuge tubes in an ice bath to approximately room temperature.
 - 11.3.4. Pipet 2 mL 1.25M Ca(NO₃)₂, 1 mL of iron carrier (50 mg/mL), and 5 mL 3.2M (NH₄)₂HPO₄ into each tube.
 - 11.3.5. Cap tubes and mix well.
 - 11.3.6. Allow 225-mL centrifuge tubes to sit for ~10 minutes.
 - 11.3.7. Centrifuge tubes for ~6 minutes at 3500 rpm or more or as needed.
 - 11.3.8. Pour off the supernate and discard to waste.
 - 11.3.9. Add 1.5M HCl to each tube to redissolve each sample in a total volume of ~60 mL.
 - 11.3.10. Cap and shake each tube to dissolve solids as well as possible.
NOTE: Typically, there will be undissolved solids, which is acceptable.
 - 11.3.11. Dilute each tube to ~170 mL with 0.01M HCl. Cap and mix.
 - 11.3.12. Add ~22 mL of concentrated (28M) HF into each tube. Cap and mix well.
 - 11.3.13. Allow 225 mL tubes to sit for ~10 minutes.
 - 11.3.14. Centrifuge for ~5 to 10 minutes at 3500 rpm or more or as needed.
 - 11.3.15. Pour off supernate and discard to waste.
 - 11.3.16. Pipet 5 mL of concentrated HNO₃ and 5 mL of 3M HNO₃ - 0.25M boric acid into each 225-mL centrifuge tube to dissolve precipitate.
 - 11.3.17. Cap and mix well. Transfer contents of the tube into a labeled 50-mL centrifuge tube.
 - 11.3.18. Pipet 5 mL of 3M HNO₃ and 5 mL of 2M aluminum nitrate into each tube, cap tube and mix.

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- 11.3.19. Transfer rinse solutions to 50-mL centrifuge tubes and mix well (shake or use vortex stirrer). Samples may be heated in a water bath or hot block if needed to dissolve, and then allowed to cool.
 - 11.3.20. Centrifuge the 50-mL tubes at 3500 rpm for 5 minutes to remove any traces of solids.
 - 11.3.21. Transfer solutions to labeled beakers or new 50-mL centrifuge tubes for further processing.
 - 11.3.22. If solids remain, add 5 mL 3M HNO₃ to each tube, cap and mix well, centrifuge for 5 minutes and add the supernate to the sample solution. Discard any residual solids.
 - 11.3.23. Proceed directly to the Sr method listed in Step 1.1.4.
- 11.4. Preconcentration of ²²⁶Ra from Hydroxide Matrix
- 11.4.1. After each fused sample has been transferred to a 225-mL centrifuge tube, ensure crucibles have been rinsed well with water, and the rinses have been transferred to each tube.
 - 11.4.2. Dilute to ~150 mL with water.
 - 11.4.3. Add 10 mL concentrated HCl to each tube.
 - 11.4.4. Cap and mix each tube well.
 - 11.4.5. Pipet 1 mL 1.25M Ca(NO₃)₂ into each tube.
 - 11.4.6. Add 10 mL 2M Na₂CO₃ to each tube.
 - 11.4.7. Cap tubes and mix.
 - 11.4.8. Allow tubes to stand for ~10 minutes.
 - 11.4.9. Centrifuge tubes for 6 minutes at 3500 rpm.
 - 11.4.10. Pour off the supernate and discard to waste.
 - 11.4.11. Pipet 10 mL 1.5M HCl into each tube to dissolve precipitate. Cap and mix.
 - 11.4.12. Transfer sample solution to a 50-mL centrifuge tube.
 - 11.4.13. Pipet 10 mL 1.5M HCl into each 225-mL centrifuge tube to rinse. Cap and rinse well.
 - 11.4.14. Centrifuge the 50 mL tubes at 3500 rpm for 5 minutes to remove any traces of solids.
 - 11.4.15. Transfer rinse solution to 50-mL tube and shake to mix well (or use vortex stirrer).

NOTE: Typically, the HCl added to dissolve the carbonate precipitate is sufficient to acidify the sample. If the precipitate was unusually large and suspended solids remain, additional acid may be needed. The pH can be checked to verify it is pH 1 or less. To acidify the pH <1, add 1 or 2 mL of concentrated hydrochloric acid to the solution and get it to clear. Tubes may be warmed in a water bath to help dissolve samples.

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- 11.4.16. If solids remain, add 5-mL 1.5M HCl to each tube, cap and mix well, centrifuge for 5 minutes and add the supernate to the sample solution. Discard any residual solids.
- 11.4.17. Proceed directly to the Ra method listed in Step 1.1.3.

12. Data Analysis and Calculations

- 12.1. Equations for determination of final result, combined standard uncertainty, and radiochemical yield (if required) are found in the corresponding chemical separation and analysis methods, with the units being provided by the project manager.
- 12.2. In cases where samples have elevated activity, smaller initial sample aliquants may be taken from the original sample. Alternately, smaller aliquant volumes may be taken from the final sample volume containing the dissolved precipitate (digestate). Aliquants should be removed carefully and accurately from this final sample volume.

NOTE: Small aliquants taken from the final sample digestate for Sr and Ra analysis may be used in the respective analytical procedures as is. Smaller aliquants for actinide analysis should be diluted to a 15-mL total volume with 3M HNO₃ so that load solution acidity is maintained when valence adjustment reagents are added.

For a single split, the effective size of sample is calculated:

$$W_a = W_s \frac{D_a}{D_s} \quad (1)$$

Where:

- W_s = original sample size, in the units designated by the project manager (e.g., kg, g, etc.)
- D_s = mass or volume of the entire final digestate, (e.g., 20 mL, etc.).
- D_a = mass or volume of the aliquant of digestate used for the individual analyses, (e.g., 5.0 mL, etc.). Note that the values for D_a must be in the same units used in D_s .
- W_a = sample aliquant size, used for analysis, in the units designated by the project manager (e.g., kg, g, etc.).

NOTE: For higher activity samples, additional dilution may be needed. In such cases, the equation above (1) should be modified to reflect the number of splits and dilutions performed. It is also important to measure the masses or volumes, used for aliquanting or dilution, to enough significant figures so that their uncertainties have an insignificant impact on the final uncertainty budget. In cases where the sample will not be split prior to analysis, the sample aliquant size is simply equal to the original sample size, in the same units requested by the project manager.

13. Method Performance

- 13.1. Method validation results are to be reported.
- 13.2. The method performance data for the analysis of asphalt samples by this dissolution method may be found in the attached appendices.

13.3. Expected turnaround time per sample

- 13.3.1. For a representative, finely ground 1-g aliquant of sample, the furnace heating and fusion steps should add approximately 3.75 hours per batch to the time specified in the individual chemical separation methods.
- 13.3.2. The preconcentration steps should add approximately 0.75 to 1 hour per batch for a total of 4.5 to 4.75 hours.

NOTE: Processing times for the subsequent chemical separation methods are given in those methods for batch preparations.

14. Pollution Prevention

This method inherently produces no significant pollutants. The sample and fusion reagents are retained in the final product and are carried into the ensuing chemical separation techniques, which marginally increases the salt content of the effluent waste. It is noted that if the sampled particulates include radionuclides that may be volatile under the fusion conditions, these constituents will be exhausted through the fume hood system.

15. Waste Management

- 15.1. Refer to the appropriate chemical separation methods for waste disposal information.

16. References

Cited References

- 16.1. EPA 2013. *Rapid Radiochemical Method for Americium-241 in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents*. Office of Air and Radiation, Washington, DC. EPA. Available [here](#).
- 16.2. EPA 2013. *Rapid Radiochemical Method for Pu-238 and Pu-239/240 in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents*. Office of Air and Radiation, Washington, DC. Available [here](#).
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- 16.4. EPA 2013. *Rapid Radiochemical Method for Total Radiostrontium (Sr-90) in Building Materials for Environmental Remediation Following Radiological Incidents*. Office of Air and Radiation, Washington, DC. Available [here](#).
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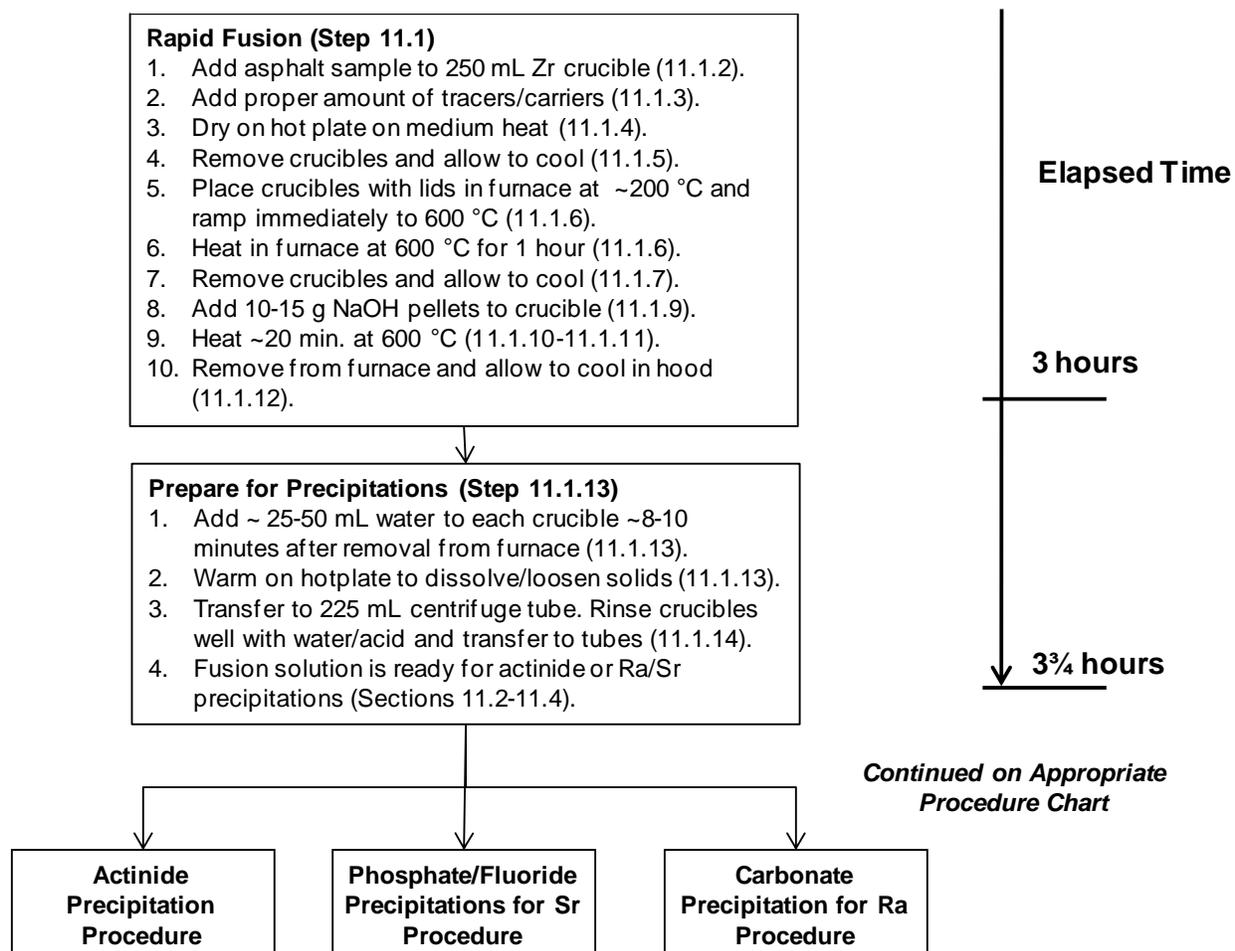
Other References

- 16.10. Maxwell, S., Culligan, B. and Noyes, G. 2010. Rapid method for actinides in emergency soil samples, *Radiochimica Acta*. 98(12): 793-800.
- 16.11. Maxwell, S., Culligan, B., Kelsey-Wall, A. and Shaw, P. 2011. “Rapid Radiochemical Method for Actinides in Emergency Concrete and Brick Samples,” *Analytica Chimica Acta*. 701(1): 112-8.
- 16.12. Maxwell, S., Culligan, B., and Hutchison, J. 2014. “Rapid Determination of Actinides in Asphalt Samples,” *J. Radioanalytical and Nuclear Chemistry* 299:1891-1901
- 16.13. EPA 2010. *Rapid Radiochemical Methods for Selected Radionuclides in Water for Environmental Restoration Following Homeland Security Events*, Office of Air and Radiation, (February). EPA 402-R-10-001, February. Revision 0.1 of rapid methods issued October 2011. Available [here](#).

17. Tables, Diagrams, and Flow Charts

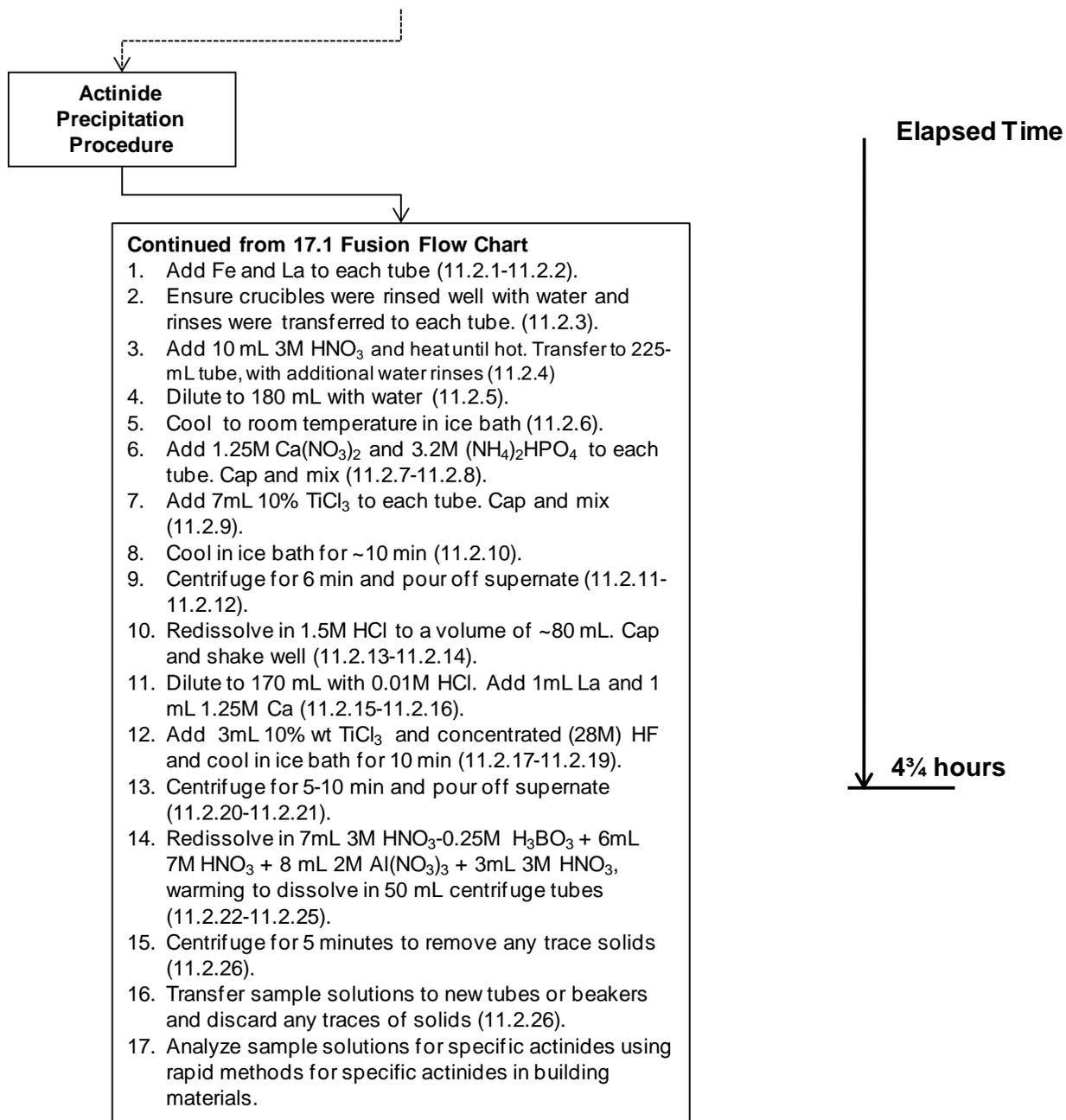
17.1. Fusion Flow Chart

Timeline for Rapid Fusion and Preparation of Asphalt Samples for Precipitation and Analysis



17.2. Actinide Precipitation Flow Chart

Actinide Precipitation Procedure



17.3. Strontium Precipitation Flow Chart

Strontium Precipitation Procedure

**Ca₃(PO₄)₂ / CaF₂
Precipitation for Sr
Procedure**

Continued from 17.1 Fusion Flow Chart

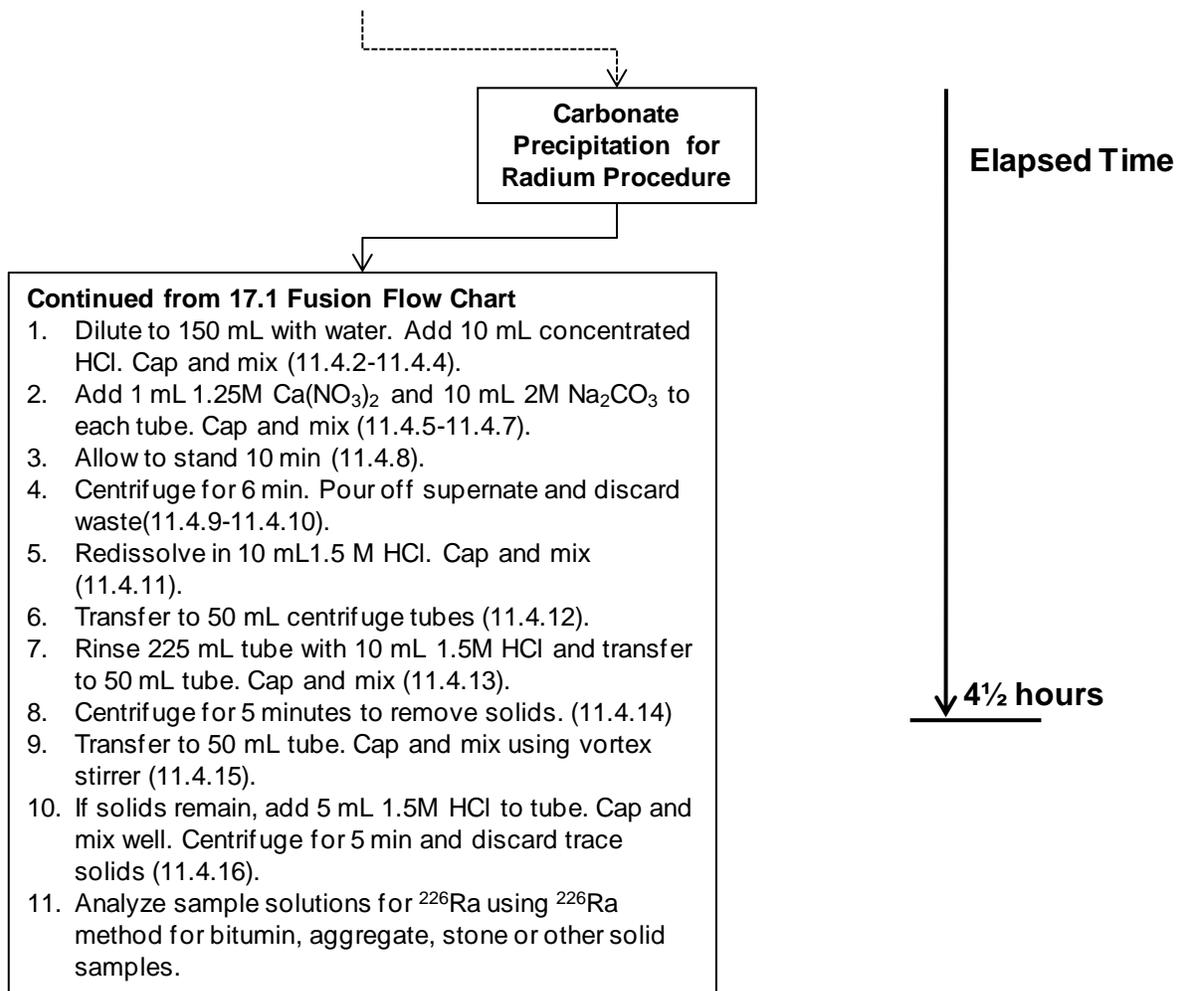
1. Dilute to 150 mL with water. Cool in ice bath (11.3.2-11.3.3).
2. Add 2 mL 1.25 M Ca(NO₃)₂, 1 mL Fe carrier, and 5 mL 3.2M (NH₄)₂HPO₄ to each tube. Mix and allow to sit for ~10 minutes (11.3.4-11.3.6).
3. Centrifuge for 6 min. and pour off supernate (11.3.7-11.3.8).
4. Redissolve in ~60 mL 1.5M HCl. Cap tubes and mix well (11.3.9-11.3.10).
5. Dilute to 170 mL with 0.01M HCl (11.3.11).
6. Add 22 mL concentrated (28M) HF and wait 10 min (11.3.12-11.3.13).
7. Centrifuge for 5-10 min and pour off supernate (11.3.14-11.3.15).
8. Redissolve in 5mL 3M HNO₃-0.25M H₃BO₃ + 5mL concentrated HNO₃ +5 mL 2M Al(NO₃)₃ + 5mL 3M HNO₃ (11.3.16-11.3.18).
9. Transfer to 50 mL tube. Cap and mix using vortex stirrer (11.3.19).
10. Centrifuge for 5 min and discard trace solids (11.3.20).
11. Analyze sample solutions for ⁹⁰Sr using ⁹⁰Sr method for building materials.

Elapsed Time

4³/₄ hours

17.4. Radium Precipitation Flow Chart

Carbonate Precipitation for Radium Procedure



Appendix:

Rapid Technique for Milling and Homogenizing Asphalt Samples

A1. Scope and Application

- A1.1. Asphalt samples may be received as core samples, chunks or crushed pieces. The goal is to obtain representative sample aliquants from homogeneous amounts of sample. Significant effort should be applied to ensure representative sampling of the asphalt materials.
- A1.2. This method describes one approach for the rapid, gross preparation of asphalt samples to yield representative 1–1.5-g aliquant for radiochemical analysis of non-volatile radionuclides. The method addresses steps for splitting, and milling of 50–1000-g asphalt samples. The sample must be reduced to small non-sticky pieces prior to using the ball mill. This can be done with a hydraulic press or heavy hammer.
- A1.3. The method is designed to be used as a preparatory step for the attached methods for furnace heating and fusion of asphalt for measurement of ^{241}Am , ^{238}Pu , $^{239/240}\text{Pu}$, $^{\text{U}}$, ^{90}Sr , and ^{226}Ra . It may also be applied to other matrices whose physical form is amenable to pulverization.
- A1.4. If the levels of activity in the sample are low enough to permit safe radiological operations, up to 1 kg of asphalt can be processed.

A2. Summary of Methods

- A2.1. This method uses disposable equipment or materials to contact the sample when possible, minimizing the risk of contamination and cross-contamination and eliminating concerns about adequate cleaning of equipment.
- A2.2. The entire sample as received (after reducing fragment size by pulverizing and crumbling into small particles) is split by coning and quartering until ~75-250 mL of the asphalt is available for subsequent processing. If less than ~450 mL of asphalt is received, the entire sample is processed.

NOTE: Large chunks of asphalt will require initial crushing prior to coning and quartering.

- A2.3. The asphalt is transferred to a hydraulic press and crushed. Alternately, the asphalt may be crushed with a heavy hammer while in plastic bags and enclosed in aluminum foil loaf or casserole pan. After crushing, the flattened asphalt may be easily crumbled by hand. A ball mill approach with disposable paint cans is used to mill the samples into fine particles after crushing and crumbling of the asphalt pieces, which become drier and non-sticky when pulverized and dust is released.
- A2.4. Other milling apparatus, such as lab pulverizers/crushers, also could be used to mill the asphalt sample to finely ground, well-homogenized, particles, but not recommended. In this case, effort must be made to ensure no sample carry-over effects occur between the processing of individual samples. A disposable approach

without the risk of sample carry-over contamination using a hammer/press is preferred.

- A2.5. Additional replicate analyses may also be performed to provide further assurance that analytical results are representative of asphalt samples received.
- A3. Definitions, Abbreviations, and Acronyms
- A3.1. Discrete Radioactive Particles (DRPs or hot particles). Particulate matter in a sample of any matrix where a high concentration of radioactive material is contained in a tiny particle (< 1 mm).
- A3.2. *Multi-Agency Radiological Analytical Laboratory Protocols (MARLAP) Manual* (Reference A16.1) provides guidance for the planning, implementation, and assessment phases of those projects that require the laboratory analysis of radionuclides.
- A4. Interferences
- A4.1. Radiological Interferences
- A4.1.1. Coning and quartering provides a mechanism for rapidly decreasing the overall size of the sample that must be processed while optimizing the representativeness of the subsampling process. By decreasing the time and effort needed to prepare the sample for subsequent processing, sample throughput can be significantly improved. Openly handling large amounts of highly contaminated materials, however, even within the containment provided by a fume hood, may pose an unacceptable risk of inhalation of airborne contamination and exposure to laboratory personnel from radioactive or other hazardous materials. Similarly, it may unacceptably increase the risk of contamination of the laboratory.
- A4.1.2. In such cases, coning and quartering process may be eliminated in lieu of processing the entire sample.
- A4.1.3. The precise particle size of the milled sample is not critical to subsequent processes. However, milling the sample to smaller particle sizes, and thorough mixing, both facilitate representative subsampling by minimizing the amount of sample that is not pulverized enough to pass through a 30 mesh sieve (~ 600 µm particle size) and must be discarded. Milling to a smaller particle size facilitates a homogeneous dispersion of particles and enhances the probability that a 1-1.5 g subsample is representative of the larger sample received. Additionally, subsequent fusion and digestion processes are more effective when performed on more finely milled samples.
- A4.1.4. This method assumes that radioactivity in the sample is primarily adsorbed onto the surface of particles, as opposed to being present as a hot particle (see discussion of DRPs below). Thus, nearly all of the activity in a sample will be associated with sample fines.

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- A4.1.5. If the sample was collected near the epicenter of a radiological dispersal device (RDD) or improvised nuclear device (IND) explosion, it may contain millimeter- to micrometer-sized particles of contaminant referred to as DRPs. DRPs may consist of small pieces of the original radioactive source and thus may have very high specific activity.
- A4.1.6. When DRPs are present, this method isolates larger particles by passing the sample through a disposable 30-mesh sieve after which they can be reliably checked for radioactivity. DRPs may reliably be identified by their very high specific activity, which is readily detectable, since they show high count rates using hand-held survey equipment such as a thin-window Geiger-Muller (G-M) probe.
- A4.1.7. When present, DRPs may be further milled and then recombined with the original sample. Alternatively, the particles, or the entire sample may need to be processed using a different method capable of completely solubilizing the contaminants such that the radionuclides they contain are available for subsequent chemical separation.

A5. Safety

A5.1. General

- A5.1.1. Refer to your laboratory's safety manual for concerns of contamination control and personal exposure monitoring.
- A5.1.2. Refer to your laboratory's chemical hygiene plan (or equivalent) for general safety rules regarding chemicals in the workplace.

A5.2. Radiological

- A5.2.1. Refer to your radiation safety manual for direction on working with known or suspected radioactive materials and radiation dose monitoring.
- A5.2.2. This method has the potential to generate airborne radioactive contamination. The process should be carefully evaluated to ensure that airborne contamination is maintained at acceptable levels. This should take into account the activity level, and physical and chemical form of contaminants possibly present, as well as other engineering and administrative controls available.
- A5.2.3. Discrete Radioactive Particles (DRPs or hot particles)
 - A5.2.3.1. Hot particles will usually be small, on the order of 1 mm or less. Typically, DRPs are not evenly distributed in the media, and their radiation emissions are not uniform in all directions (anisotropic).

A5.3. Method-Specific Non-Radiological Hazards

- A5.3.1. This method employs a hydraulic press and/or paint can shaker which should be evaluated for any potential hazards associated with the crushing process.

Sodium Hydroxide Fusion of Asphalt Matrices

A6. Equipment and supplies

- A6.1. Aluminum foil loaf or casserole pans, disposable.
- A6.2. Balance, top-loading, range to accommodate sample size encountered, readability to $\pm 1\%$.
- A6.3. Butcher paper or equivalent.
- A6.4. Drying oven, at 110 ± 10 °C.
- A6.5. Disposable wire cloth – nominal 48 mesh size (~ 300 μm).
- A6.6. Disposable or reusable sieves, U.S. Series No. 50 (300 μm or 48 mesh) and U.S. Series No. 100 (150 μm or 100 mesh).
- A6.7. Heavy ball peen hammer or equivalent
- A6.8. Hydraulic press.
- A6.9. Disposable scoop, scraper, tongue depressor or equivalent.
- A6.10. Red Devil 5400 mechanical paint shaker, or equivalent.
- A6.11. Sieves, 10 mesh and 30 mesh
- A6.12. Steel paint cans and lids (pint, quart, 2 quart, 1 gallon, as needed).
- A6.13. Steel or ceramic grinding balls or rods for ball milling, ~ 15 – 25 -mm diameter. The size and number of grinding media used should be optimized to suit the types of asphalt pieces, the size of the can, and the volume of asphalt processed.

A7. Reagents and Standards

No reagents needed.

A8. Sample Collection, Preservation and Storage

- A8.1. Samples should be collected in appropriately sized plastic, metal or glass containers.
- A8.2. Standard sample collection protocols generally provide solid sample volumes equivalent to approximately 500 mL of sample. Such samples will require two splits to obtain a ~ 100 mL sample.

A9. Quality Control

- A9.1. Batch quality control results shall be evaluated and meet applicable analytical protocol specifications (APSs) prior to release of unqualified data. In the absence of project-defined APS or a project-specific quality assurance project plan (QAPP), the quality control sample acceptance criteria defined in the laboratory quality manual and procedures shall be used to determine acceptable performance for this method.
- A9.2. Quality control samples should be initiated as early in the process as possible. Since the risk of cross-contamination using this process is relatively low, initiating blanks and laboratory control samples at the start of the chemical separation process is acceptable. If sufficient sample is available, a duplicate sample should be

Sodium Hydroxide Fusion of Asphalt Matrices

prepared from the two discarded quarters of the final split of the coning and quartering procedure.

A10. Procedure

NOTE: This method ensures that only disposable equipment or materials come in contact with sample materials to minimize the risk of sample cross-contamination and concerns about adequate cleaning of equipment. Under certain circumstances (disposable sieves are not available; for example), careful, thorough cleaning of the sieves with water and the ethanol may be an option.

A10.1. If necessary, reduce the asphalt particle diameter to less than ~25 mm using a hydraulic press, mallet, or alternate equipment capable of reducing the fragment size.

A10.2. Estimate the total volume of sample, as received.

NOTE: Asphalt samples typically do not contain large amounts of moisture. The determination of moisture through drying can be problematic due to the difficulty of drying to a constant weight with volatile organics present. Large chunks of asphalt will require crushing prior to coning and quartering. The next step uses absorbent paper in a different fashion than for the paper's normal use; it allows for a smooth division of the sample and control of contamination.

A10.2.1. Spread a large piece of plastic backed absorbent paper, plastic side *up* in a hood.

A10.2.2. If the asphalt sample is received with chunks that are too large to cone and quarter, crush the larger pieces to manageable size using a hydraulic press or hammer.

A10.2.2.1. Wrap asphalt pieces in butcher paper (or plastic bags) and place in small disposable aluminum foil pan. Fold over or place another aluminum foil pan on top of wrapped asphalt sample.

A10.2.2.2. Crush sample between the aluminum foil pans using a hydraulic press or heavy hammer.

A10.2.2.3. Break crushed pieces into smaller pieces for coning and quartering. A hammer can be used to crush further, if needed.

A10.2.2.4. Unwrap crushed asphalt and break apart into smaller pieces for coning and quartering, then ball milling.

A10.2.3. If the sample volume is less than ~450 mL, there is no benefit to coning and quartering (Reference A16.1).

A10.2.3.1. Carefully pour the sample onto the paper.

A10.2.4. If the sample volume is greater than ~450 mL, carefully pour the entire sample into a cone onto the paper.

A10.2.5. The sample is split at least twice using the coning and quartering steps that follow.

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NOTE: Unused quarters are considered representative of the original sample and may be reserved for additional testing. The process should be carried out expediently to minimize loss of volatile components in the sample, especially if volatile components or percent solids are to be determined.

- A10.2.5.1. Spread the material into a flat circular cake of asphalt using a tongue depressor or other suitable disposable implement. Divide the cake radially and return two opposing quarters to the original sample container.
- A10.2.5.2. Reshape the remaining two quarters into a smaller cone, and repeat Step A10.2.5.1 until the total volume of the remaining material is approximately 100–150 mL.
- A10.2.6. Transfer the coned and quartered asphalt sample to a tared and labeled 1-pint paint can. If the initial total volume (Step A10.1.3) was less than ~450 mL, transfer the entire sample to a tared and labeled 1-quart paint can.
- A10.3. Place the can (without lid) in an oven at 110 ± 10 °C and dry the asphalt to constant mass.
- NOTE: Asphalt samples may be dry enough such that heating prior to homogenizing the sample is not required. Heating to a constant mass may be difficult due to the presence of volatile organics.**
- A10.4. Weigh the combined mass of the can, sample, and lid. If the percent solids are required see Section A12.1 calculations. Remove can from oven and allow to cool.
- A10.5. Add two to five 1.5–2.5-centimeter (cm) stainless-steel or ceramic balls to the can. Replace the lid and seal well.
- A10.6. Shake the can and contents for ~10 minutes, or longer, as needed to produce a finely-milled, well-homogenized, sample.
- NOTE: Although the precise particle size of the milled sample is not critical, complete pulverization and fine particle size facilitates representative subsampling and subsequent fusion or digestion processes.**
- A10.7. Following milling, a small fraction of residual larger particles may remain in the sample.
- NOTE: The following steps offer guidance that may be used if larger-particle DRPs are encountered. The goal is to crush and mill and homogenize the asphalt samples in a way that allows representative aliquants to be taken for analysis. This guidance may be modified as needed with concurrence from the incident commander.**
- A10.7.1. If the sample was collected close to the epicenter of an RDD or IND explosion, it may also contain particles of contaminant referred to as “discrete radioactive particles” or DRPs. In such a case, the larger particles should be isolated by passing through a disposable 30 mesh sieve and checked for radioactivity. DRPs are readily identified by their very high specific activity which is detectable using hand-held survey

equipment such as a thin-window G-M probe held within an inch of the particles.

A10.7.1.1. If radioactivity is clearly detected, the sieved material is returned to the can and ball milled until the desired mesh is obtained. In some cases, these materials may be resistant to further pulverization and may need to be processed according to a method specially designed to address highly intractable solids.

A10.7.1.2. If the presence of DRPs is of no concern (no high activities detected for specific particles), the larger particles need not be included in subsequent subsamples taken for analysis. It may be possible to easily avoid including them during aliquanting with a disposable scoop. If not, however, they should be removed by sieving through a nominal 30 mesh sieve (disposable) prior to further subsampling for subsequent analyses.

A10.8. Sample fines may be stored in, and aliquanted directly from, the container used for pulverization, if the paint can ball mill approach was used.

A11. Calibration and Standardization

A11.1. Balances used shall be calibrated using National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)-traceable weights according to the process defined by the laboratory's quality manual.

A12. Data Analysis and Calculations

NOTE: Asphalt samples may be dry enough such that heating prior to homogenizing the sample is not required. Heating to a constant mass may be difficult due to the presence of volatile organics.

A12.1. The percent solids (dry-to-as-received mass ratio) for each sample is calculated from data obtained during the preparation of the sample as follows:

$$\% \text{ Solids} = \frac{M_{\text{dry}} - M_{\text{tare}}}{M_{\text{as rec}} - M_{\text{tare}}} \times 100$$

Where:

M_{dry} = mass of dry sample + labeled can + lid (g)

M_{tare} = tare mass of labeled can + lid (g)

$M_{\text{as rec}}$ = mass of sample as received + labeled can + lid (g)

A12.2. If requested, convert the equivalent mass of sample, as received, to dry mass. Dry mass is calculated from a measurement of the total as received mass of the sample received as follows:

$$\text{Dry Sample Equivalent} = M_{\text{total-as rec.}} \times \frac{\% \text{ Solids}}{100}$$

where:

$M_{\text{total-as rec}}$ = total mass of sample, as received (g)

A12.3. Results Reporting

A12.3.1. The result for percent solids and the approximate total mass of sample as received should be reported for each result.

A13. Method Performance

A13.1. Expected turnaround time for these sample preparation steps is about 3 hours for an individual sample and about 4 hours per batch.

A14. Pollution Prevention.

Not applicable.

A15. Waste Management

A15.1. All radioactive and other regulated wastes shall be handled according to prevailing regulations.

A16. References

A16.1. EPA 2004. *Multi-Agency Radiological Laboratory Analytical Protocols Manual* (MARLAP). Volumes 1 – 3. Washington, DC: EPA 402-B-04-001A-C, NUREG 1576, NTIS PB2004-105421, July. Available [here](#).

A16.2. International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). 1997. *Compendium of Chemical Terminology*, 2nd ed. (the “Gold Book”). Compiled by A. D. McNaught and A. Wilkinson. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford. XML on-line corrected version: <http://goldbook.iupac.org/C01265.html>. (2006) created by M. Nic, J. Jirat, B. Kosata; updates compiled by A. Jenkins. Last update: 2010-12-22.