

ASTM International – Consensus Standards and Environmental Solutions

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ABSTRACT

ASTM International, originally known as the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), was formed over a century ago, when a forward-thinking group of engineers and scientists got together to address frequent rail breaks in the burgeoning railroad industry. Their work led to standardization on the steel used in rail construction, ultimately improving railroad safety for the public. As the century progressed and new industrial, governmental and environmental developments created new standardization requirements, ASTM answered the call with consensus standards that have made products and services safer, better and more cost-effective.

In the mid 1980's, the US Environmental Protection Agency, along with the US Geological Survey and the Department of Defense entered into a cooperative agreement with ASTM to accelerate the development of standards in the area of ground water investigation. This federal response was a result of OMB Circular A-119, which evolved into Public Law 104-113 National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act, steering the federal government to the private sector for standards development needs. The agencies recognized the pool of technical experts, consisting of geologists, hydrogeologists, and engineers, from the private sector, academia, and state and federal government, would be ideal for developing marketplace relevant standards. As a result over 300 professionals worked together to develop 100 standard test methods, practices and guides for sampling techniques, well construction and installation, ground water modeling, subsurface hydraulic analysis, vadose zone investigation, design of monitoring networks, and remediation techniques. These standards are referenced in many state and federal environmental strategies.

This presentation would focus on an ASTM overview, including the process of bringing the global experts together and working in a transparent system, for the development consensus standards. Included will be a summary of the collection of standards developed thus far, as well as the new areas being addressed by D18.21.

KEYWORDS

ASTM, consensus, standards, groundwater