METHOD 3820

HEXADECANE EXTRACTION AND SCREENING OF PURGEABLE ORGANICS

1.0 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

1.1 This method is a screening procedure for use with purge-and-trap GC or GC/MS. The results of this analysis are purely qualitative and should not be used as an alternative to more detailed and accurate quantitation methods.

2.0 SUMMARY OF METHOD

2.1 An aliquot of sample is extracted with hexadecane and then analyzed by GC/FID. The results of this analysis will indicate whether the sample requires dilution or methanolic extraction prior to purge-and-trap GC or GC/MS analysis.

3.0 INTERFERENCES

3.1 Method interferences may be caused by contaminants in solvents, reagents, and glassware. All these materials must be routinely demonstrated to be free from contaminants by running laboratory reagent blanks. Matrix interferences may be caused by contaminants that are coextracted from the sample. The extent of matrix interferences will vary considerably from sample to sample depending upon the nature and diversity of the water being sampled.

3.2 The flame ionization detector varies considerably in sensitivity when comparing aromatics and halogenated methanes and ethanes. Halomethanes are approximately 20x less sensitive than aromatics and haloethanes approximately 10x less sensitive. Low-molecular-weight, water-soluble solvents (e.g., alcohols and ketones) will not extract from the water, and therefore will not be detected by GC/FID.

4.0 APPARATUS AND MATERIALS

4.1 Balance: Analytical, capable of accurately weighing 0.0001 gm.

4.2 Gas Chromatograph: An analytical system complete with gas chromatograph suitable for on-column injection and all required accessories including syringes, analytical columns, gases, detector, and strip-chart recorder (or equivalent). A data system is recommended for measuring peak heights and/or peak areas.

4.2.1 **Detector:** Flame ionization (FID).

4.2.2 **GC column:** 3-m x 2-mm I.D. glass column packed with 10% OV-101 on 100/120 mesh Chromosorb W-HP (or equivalent). The column temperature should be programmed from 80°C to 280°C at 16°C/min and held at 280°C for 10 min.

4.3 Centrifuge: Capable of accommodating 50-mL glass tubes.

4.4 Vials and caps: 2-mL for GC autosampler.

4.5 Volumetric flasks: 10- and 50-mL with ground-glass stopper or Teflon-lined screw-cap.

4.6 Centrifuge tubes: 50-mL with ground-glass stopper or Teflon-lined screw-cap.

4.7 Pasteur pipets: Disposable.

4.8 Bottles: Teflon-sealed screw-cap.

5.0 REAGENTS

5.1 Hexadecane and methanol: Pesticide quality or equivalent.

5.2 Reagent water: Reagent water is defined as water in which an interference is not observed at the method detection limit of each parameter of interest.

5.3 Stock standard solutions (1.00 ug/uL): Stock standard solutions can be purchased as certified solutions or can be prepared from pure standard materials.

5.3.1 Prepare stock standard solutions by accurately weighing about 0.0100 grams of pure material. Dissolve the material in methanol in a 10-mL volumetric flask and dilute to volume (larger volumes may be used at the convenience of the analyst). If compound purity is certified at 96% or greater, the weight can be used without correction to calculate the concentration of the stock standard. Commercially available stock standards may be used if they are certified by the manufacturer.

5.3.2 Transfer the stock standard solutions into Teflon-sealed screw-cap bottles. Store at 4°C and protect from light. These standards should be checked frequently for signs of degradation or evaporation.

5.4 Standard mixture #1: Standard mixture #1 should contain benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylene. Prepare a stock solution containing these compounds as described in Paragraph 5.3 and then prepare a working standard (through dilution) in which the concentration of each compound in the standard is 100 ng/uL in methanol.

5.5 Standard mixture #2: Standard mixture #2 should contain n-nonane and n-dodecane. Prepare a stock solution containing these compounds as described in Paragraph 5.3. Dilute the stock standard with methanol so that the concentration of each compound is 100 ng/uL.

6.0 SAMPLE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION, AND HANDLING

6.1 See the introductory material to this chapter, Organic Analytes, Section 4.1.

7.0 PROCEDURE

7.1 Sample preparation:

7.1.1 Water:

7.1.1.1 Allow the contents of the 40-mL sample vial to come to room temperature. Quickly transfer the contents of the 40-mL vial to a 50-mL volumetric flask. Immediately add 2.0 mL of hexadecane, cap the flask, and shake the contents vigorously for 1 min. Let phases separate. Open the flask and add sufficient reagent water to bring the hexadecane layer into the neck of the flask.

7.1.1.2 Transfer approximately 1 mL of the hexadecane layer to a 2.0-mL GC vial. If an emulsion is present after shaking the sample, break it by:

1. pulling the emulsion through a small plug of Pyrex glass wool packed in a pipet, or

2. transferring the emulsion to a centrifuge tube and centrifuging for several min.

7.1.2 Standards:

7.1.2.1 Add 200 uL of the working standard mixtures #1 and #2 to separate 40-mL portions of reagent water. Follow the instructions in Sections 7.1.1.1 and 7.1.1.2 with the immediate addition of 2.0 mL of hexadecane.

7.1.3 Sediment/Soil:

7.1.3.1 Add approximately 10 g of sample (wet weight) to 40 mL of reagent water in a 50-mL centrifuge tube. Cap and shake vigorously for 1 min. Centrifuge the sample briefly. Quickly transfer the supernatant water to a 50-mL volumetric flask.

7.1.3.2 Follow the instructions given in Sections 7.1.1.1 and 7.1.1.2, starting with the addition of 2.0 mL of hexadecane.

7.2 Analysis:

7.2.1 **Calibration:**

7.2.1.1 External standard calibration: The GC/FID must be calibrated each 12-hour shift for half of full-scale response when

injecting 1-5 uL of each extracted standard mixture #1 and #2 (Paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5).

7.2.2 **GC/FID analysis:** Inject the same volume of hexadecane extract for the sample under investigation as was used to perform the external standard calibration. The GC conditions used for the standards analysis must also be the same as those used to analyze the samples.

7.2.3 **Interpretation of the GC/FID chromatograms:** There are two options for interpretation of the GC/FID results.

7.2.3.1 Option A: The standard mixture #1 is used to calculate an approximate concentration of the aromatics in the sample. Use this information to determine the proper dilution for purge-and-trap if the sample is a water. If the sample is a sediment/soil, use this information to determine which GC/MS purge-and-trap method (low- or high-level) should be used. If aromatics are absent from the sample or obscured by higher concentrations of other purgeables, use Option B.

7.2.3.2 Option B: The response of standard mixture #2 is used to determine which purge-and-trap method should be used for analyzing a sample. All purgeables of interest have retention times less than the n-dodecane retention time. A dilution factor (Paragraph 7.2.4.1.3) may be calculated for water samples, and an X factor (Paragraph 7.2.4.2.3) for soil/sediment samples, to determine whether the low- or high-level purge-and-trap procedure should be used.

7.2.4 Analytical decision point:

7.2.4.1 Water samples: Compare the hexadecane sample extract chromatograms against an extracted standard chromatogram.

7.2.4.1.1 If no peaks are noted, analyze a 5-mL water sample by the purge-and-trap method.

7.2.4.1.2 If peaks are present prior to the n-dodecane peak and aromatics are distinguishable, follow Option A (Paragraph 7.2.3.1).

7.2.4.1.3 If peaks are present prior to the n-dodecane but the aromatics are absent or indistinguishable, Option B should be used as follows: If all peaks (prior to n-dodecane) are <3% of the n-nonane, analyze 5 mL of water sample by the purge-and-trap method. If any peak is >3% of the n-nonane, measure the area of the major peak and calculate the necessary dilution factor as follows:

$$\text{dilution factor} = 50 \times \frac{\text{area of major peak in sample}}{\text{peak area of n-nonane}}$$

The water sample should be diluted using the calculated factor just prior to purge-and-trap GC or GC/MS analysis.

7.2.4.2 **Soil/sediment samples:** Compare the hexadecane sample extract chromatograms against an extracted standard chromatogram.

7.2.4.2.1 If no peaks are noted, analyze a 5-g sample by the low-level purge-and-trap procedure.

7.2.4.2.2 If peaks are present prior to the n-dodecane and aromatics are distinguishable, follow Option A using the concentration information given in Table 1 to determine whether to analyze the sample by a low- or high-level purge-and-trap technique.

7.2.4.2.3 If peaks are present prior to n-dodecane but aromatics are absent or indistinguishable, use Option B. Calculate an X factor for the sample using the following equation:

$$X \text{ factor} = \frac{\text{area of major peak in sample}}{\text{area of n-nonane}}$$

Use the information provided in Table 1 to determine how the sample should be handled for GC/MS analysis.

7.2.4.2.4 If a high-level method is indicated, the information provided in Table 2 can be used to determine the volume of methanol extract to add to 5 mL of reagent water for analysis (see Methods 5030 and 8240 for methanolic extraction procedure).

8.0 QUALITY CONTROL

8.1 It is recommended that a reagent blank be analyzed by this screening procedure to ensure that no laboratory contamination exists. A blank should be performed for each set of samples undergoing extraction and screening.

9.0 METHOD PERFORMANCE

9.1 No data available.

10.0 REFERENCES

1. U.S. EPA Contract Laboratory Program, Statement of Work for Organic Analysis, July 1985, Revision.

TABLE 1. DETERMINATION OF GC/MS PURGE-AND-TRAP METHOD

X Factor	Approximate Concentration Range [a]	Analyze by
0-1.0	0-1,000 ug/kg	Low-level method
>1.0	>1,000 ug/kg	High-level method

[a] This concentration range is based upon the response of aromatics to GC/FID. The concentration for halomethanes is 20x higher, and haloethanes 10x higher, when comparing GC/FID responses.

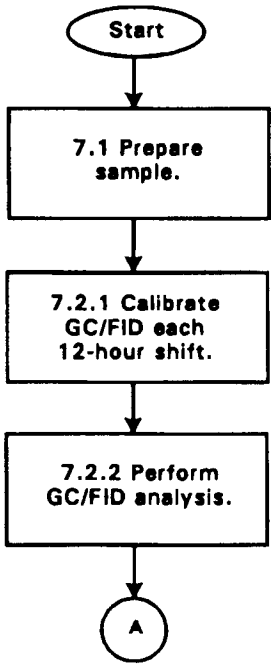
TABLE 2. QUANTITY OF METHANOL EXTRACT REQUIRED FOR ANALYSIS OF HIGH-LEVEL SOIL/SEDIMENTS

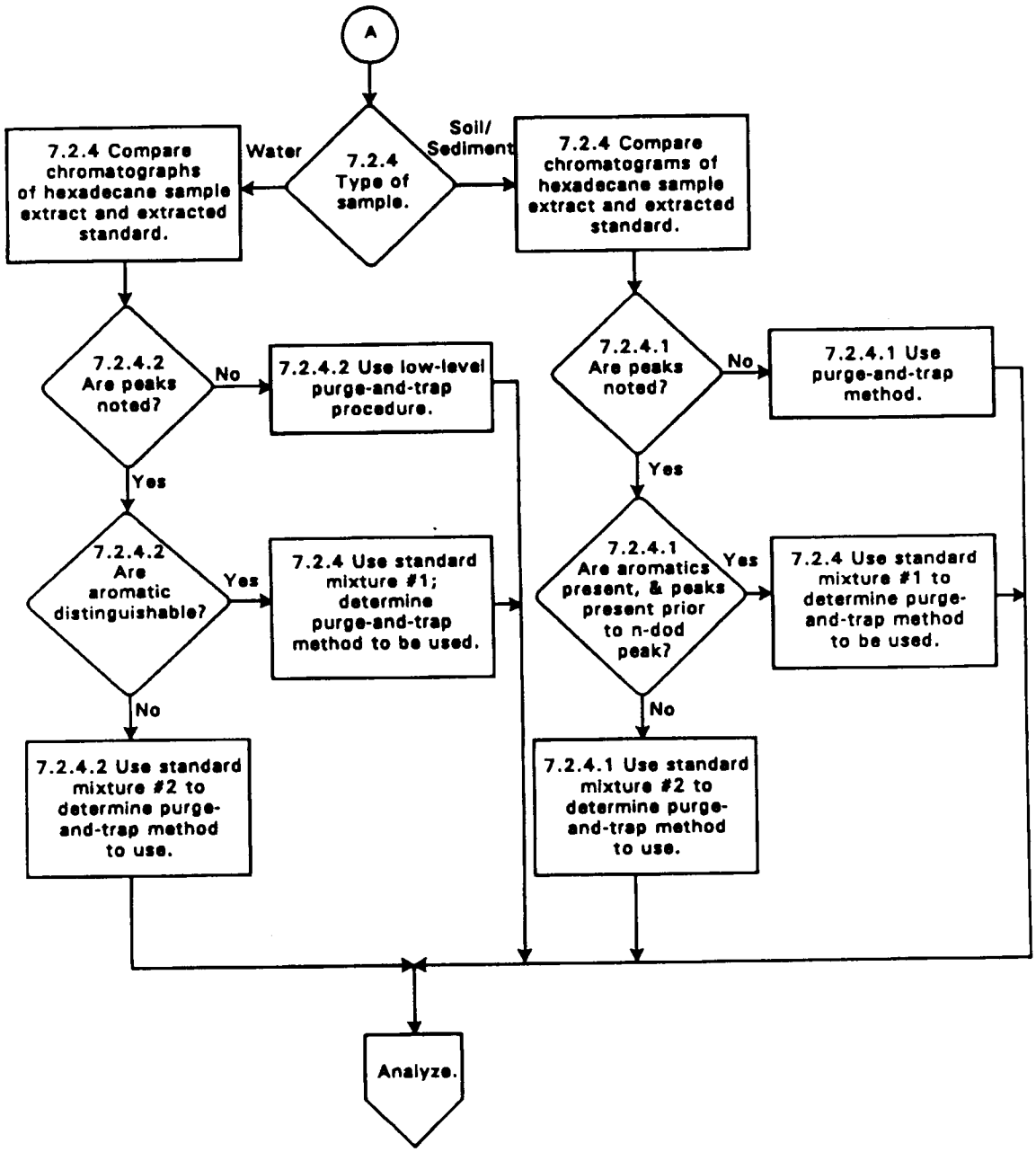
X Factor	Approximate Concentration Range [a]	Volume of Methanol Extract [b]
0.25-5.0	500-10,000 ug/kg	100 ul
0.5-10.0	1,000-20,000 ug/kg	50 ul
2.5-50.0	5,000-100,000 ug/kg	10 ul
12.5-250	25,000-500,000 ug/kg	100 uL of 1/50 dilution [c]

[a] Actual concentration ranges could be 10 to 20 times higher than this if the compounds are halogenated and the estimates are from GC/FID.

[b] The volume of methanol added to 5 mL of water being purged should be 100 uL. Therefore if the amount of methanol extract required is less than 100 uL, additional methanol should be added to maintain the constant 100-uL volume.

[c] Dilute an aliquot of the methanol extract and then take 100 uL for analysis.


Start
7.1 Prepare sample.
7.2.1 Calibrate GC/FID each 12-hour shift.
7.2.2 Perform GC/FID analysis.
A


A
7.2.4 Type of sample.
Water
Soil/ Sediment
7.2.4 Compare chromatographs of hexadecane sample extract and extracted standard.
7.2.4 Compare chromatograms of hexadecane sample extract and extracted standard.
7.2.4.2 Are peaks noted?
No
7.2.4.2 Use low-level purge-and-trap procedure.
Yes
7.2.4.2 Are aromatic distinguishable?
Yes
7.2.4 Use standard mixture #1; determine purge-and-trap method to be used.
No
7.2.4.2 Use standard mixture #2 to determine purge-and-trap method to use.
7.2.4.1 Are peaks noted?
No
7.2.4.1 Use purge-and-trap method.
Yes
7.2.4.1 Are aromatics present, & peaks present prior to n-dod peak?
Yes
7.2.4 Use standard mixture #1 to determine purge-and-trap method to be used.
No
7.2.4.1 Use standard mixture #2 to determine purge-and-trap method to use.
Analyze.