This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.

Designation: E426 – 16 (Reapproved 2021)

Standard Practice for Electromagnetic (Eddy Current) Examination of Seamless and Welded Tubular Products, Titanium, Austenitic Stainless Steel and Similar Alloys[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E426; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.

1. Scope*

1.1 This practice[2] covers procedures for eddy current examination of seamless and welded tubular products made of relatively low conductivity materials such as titanium, stainless steel, and similar alloys, such as nickel alloys. Austenitic chromium-nickel stainless steels, which are generally considered to be nonmagnetic, are specifically covered as distinguished from the martensitic and ferritic straight chromium stainless steels which are magnetic.

1.2 This practice is intended as a guide for eddy current examination of both seamless and welded tubular products using either an encircling coil or a probe-coil technique. Coils and probes are available that can be used inside the tubular product; however, their use is not specifically covered in this document. This type of examination is usually employed only to examine tubing which has been installed such as in a heat exchanger.

1.3 This practice covers the examination of tubular products ranging in diameter from 0.125 to 5 in. (3.2 to 127.0 mm) and wall thicknesses from 0.005 to 0.250 in. (0.127 to 6.4 mm).

1.4 For examination of aluminum alloy tubular products, see standard Practice E215.

1.5 *Units*—The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.6 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.7 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*[3]

E215 Practice for Standardizing Equipment and Electromagnetic Examination of Seamless Aluminum-Alloy Tube

E543 Specification for Agencies Performing Nondestructive Testing

E1316 Terminology for Nondestructive Examinations

2.2 *Other Documents:*

SNT-TC-1A Recommended Practice for Personnel Qualification and Certification in Nondestructive Testing[4]

ANSI/ASNT CP-189 ASNT Standard for Qualification and Certification of Nondestructive Testing Personnel[4]

NAS-410 NAS Certification and Qualification of Nondestructive Personnel (Quality Assurance Committee)[5]

ISO 9712 Non-Destructive Testing—Certification and Qualification of NDT Personnel[6]

3. Terminology

3.1 Standard terminology relating to electromagnetic testing may be found in Terminology E1316, Section C, Electromagnetic Testing.

[1] This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E07 on Nondestructive Testing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E07.07 on Electromagnetic Method.

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[2] For ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code applications see related Practice SE-426 in Section II of that Code.

[3] For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

[4] Available from American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT), P.O. Box 28518, 1711 Arlingate Ln., Columbus, OH 43228-0518, http://www.asnt.org.

[5] Available from Aerospace Industries Association of America, Inc. (AIA), 1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1700, Arlington, VA 22209-3928, http://www.aia-aerospace.org.

[6] Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO Central Secretariat, BIBC II, Chemin de Blandonnet 8, CP 401, 1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland, http://www.iso.org.

***A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard**

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4. Summary of Practice

4.1 The examination is conducted using one of two general techniques shown in Fig. 1. One of these techniques employs one or more exciter and sensor coils which encircle the pipe or tube and through which the tubular product to be examined is passed. Some circuit configurations employ separate exciter and sensor coils; whereas other configurations employ one or more coils that concurrently function as both exciters and sensors. Alternating current passes through the exciting coil which by reason of its proximity induces current in the tubular product. The sensor coil detects the resultant electromagnetic flux related to these currents. The presence of discontinuities in the tubular product will affect the normal flow of currents and this change is detected by the sensor. The encircling coil technique is capable of examining the entire 360-deg expanse of the tubular product.

4.2 Another technique employs a probe coil with one or more exciters and sensors which is brought in close proximity of the surface of the tubular product to be examined. Since the probe is generally small and does not encircle the article being examined, it examines only a limited area in the vicinity of the probe. If it is desired to examine the entire volume of the tubular product, it is common practice to either rotate the tubular product or the probe. In the case of welded tubular products frequently only the weld is examined by scanning along the weld zone. In the case where the tubular products are joined by welding and the probe is rotated, the probe is orbited about the central axis of the tube such that a circumferential examination of the tube and/or weld may be made. The depth of penetration of the interrogating magnetic fields into the tubular product may be smaller for this type of probe coil compared to the encircling coil.

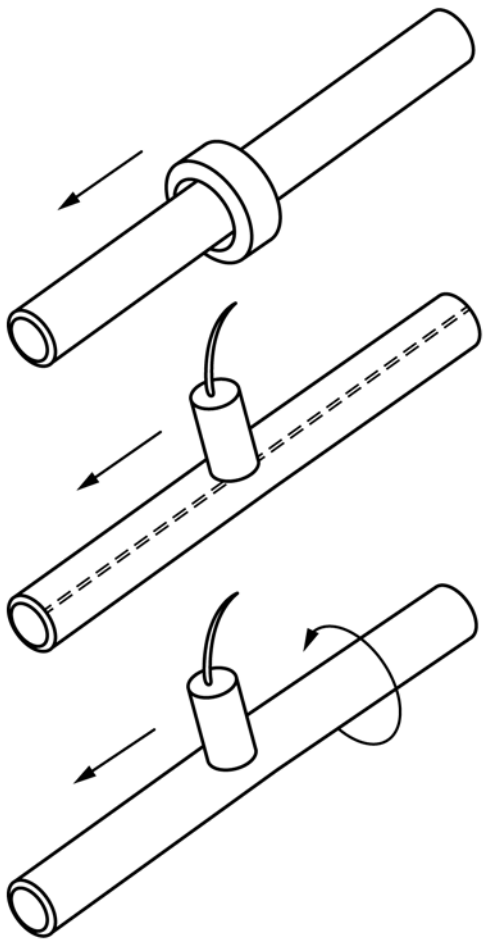

FIG. 1 Sketch Showing Encircling-Coil and Probe-Coil Techniques for Electromagnetic Examination of Tubular Products

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Eddy current testing is a nondestructive method of locating discontinuities in a product. Changes in electromagnetic response caused by the presence of discontinuities are detected by the sensor, amplified and modified in order to actuate audio or visual indicating devices, or both, or a mechanical marker. Signals can be caused by outer surface, inner surface, or subsurface discontinuities. The eddy current examination is sensitive to many factors that occur as a result of processing (such as variations in conductivity, chemical composition, permeability, and geometry) as well as other factors not related to the tubing. Thus, all received indications are not necessarily indicative of defective tubing.

6. Basis of Application

6.1 If specified in the contractual agreement, personnel performing examinations to this practice shall be qualified in accordance with a nationally recognized NDT personnel qualification practice or standard such as ANSI/ASNT-CP-189, SNT-TC-1A, NAS-410, ASNT-ACCP, ISO 9712, or a similar document and certified by the certifying agency, as applicable. The practice or standard used and its applicable revision shall be identified in the contractual agreement between the using parties.

NOTE 1—MIL-STD-410 is canceled and has been replaced with NAS-410, however, it may be used with agreement between contracting parties.

6.2 If specified in the contractual agreement, NDT agencies shall be qualified and evaluated in accordance with Specification E543. The applicable edition of Specification E543 shall be specified in the contractual agreement.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Electronic Apparatus*—The electronic apparatus shall be capable of energizing the examination coils or probes with alternating currents of suitable frequencies and shall be capable of sensing the changes in the electromagnetic response of the sensors. Equipment may include a detector, phase discriminator, filter circuits, modulation circuits, magnetic-saturation devices, recorders, and signaling devices as required for the particular application.

7.2 *Examination Coils*—Examination coils shall be capable of inducing current in the tube and sensing changes in the electrical characteristics of the tube.

NOTE 2—Fill factor effect is an important consideration since coupling variations can affect the examination significantly.

7.3 *Probe Coils*—Probe coils shall be capable of inducing current in the tube and sensing changes in the electrical characteristics of the tube (Note 3). Probes generally consist of