

# How Standards are Developed

## Creating New Documents

Do you have an idea for a new standard that will help your product be accepted in the marketplace, make it easier to ensure that your suppliers are provided with a quality product, or aid with a procurement or regulatory requirement? ASTM International would like to be responsive to any standards need that is identified. Some information gathering at the outset will be essential to moving forward in an efficient manner.

With assistance from the ASTM Staff, the first step is to research whether there is an existing standard in the area identified through contact with trade associations, government agencies, or other standards developing organizations (SDOs). Duplication of effort and parallel standardization activities cause marketplace confusion and drain the resources of stakeholders participating in the standards development process. If you are aware of an ASTM Technical Committee that appears to be able to cover the scope of the proposed activity, contact the Staff Manager (contact information is located on the home page for each ASTM International committee). If you are unable to identify a committee that covers the scope of the proposed activity, contact Pat Picariello, Director, Developmental Operations, 610-832-9720; [ppicarie@astm.org](mailto:ppicarie@astm.org). Next it is necessary to identify and contact key stakeholders to ensure that there is agreement that the standards area identified has market relevance for the industry and stakeholders are committed to participate on the project.

If the initial research indicates the area of interest is ripe for standardization, it is time to issue a formal request to consider formation of a new task group or subcommittee to the appropriate ASTM Technical Committee, or if a Technical committee does not exist, establish a new committee.

The committee staff manager will be able to provide information about the structure of the committee, the process by which a standard is developed, and any other ASTM-specific questions.

ASTM International committees are receptive to new activities and strive to be responsive to market driven standardization needs. Once approval to proceed with the creation of a new standard is given by the subcommittee, a task group will be formed to develop a first draft. It is appropriate for the proponent to be active, and possibly even chair the task group.

The Chairman of the new task group needs to be familiar with the standards development tools available and should immediately visit the [Draft Standards Template](#) and [Form & Style Manual](#) links on the ASTM International website. The Template link offers a series of standards templates that cover the full range of documents produced by ASTM - specification, test method, practice, guide, classification, & terminology. The templates provide clear and easy to follow links to all mandatory sections for each type of standard, are downloadable to most personal computers, and, once completed, provide the proponent of the activity with an electronic copy of a document ready to begin the journey toward an approved ASTM standard. The Form & Style Manual provides clear and concise information regarding the format for the many different types of ASTM standards, including mandatory sections, legal aspects of standards, and usage of SI units.

The completed draft standard should be forwarded to the Chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the new activity for transmission to ASTM for formal balloting. [Click Here](#) for information on Committee Structure.

## **Modifying Existing Documents**

Should you have the need to revise an existing ASTM International standard, your first step is to contact the Chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the document in question to explain the rationale for your proposed change and request a task group be formed to develop a revision. NOTE: If you do not know which subcommittee has jurisdiction, contact the Staff Manager or search the [ASTM International website](#) to locate the specific committee, subcommittee, and Staff Manager for all approved ASTM International standards.

Once you have received approval to begin the revision from the subcommittee, register your new work item using the registration form in the .Members Only. area of the ASTM web site.

An electronic version of the ASTM standard will be sent to you in Word.

When making changes to the document clearly indicate the nature of the proposed changes. The preferred format is underlined text for additions, ~~stricken text~~ for deletions, and revision bars clearly placed in the margin of the document. Microsoft Word has a utility in .Tools. called .protection. that provides this function.

If you are only interested in changing a small portion of the standard, you may choose to only submit those specific sections. Please copy and paste the relevant sections into a separate document. NOTE: Please verify that the standard designation number and the exact year date are clearly located on the revision.

Ballot submittal instructions will be included along with the Word document. Please note that if you experience any problems during the revision process, the Staff Manager for your committee is available to answer questions.

### **How Standards are Produced**

Once a standard has successfully cleared the three levels of peer review provided by ASTM (subcommittee, main committee, and Society), it is assigned a fixed alphanumeric designation and receives an official approval date. The document is now considered to be an ASTM standard and is capable of being cited in contractual language, referenced by a code body, or mandated by a state or local government.

During the main committee ballot and Society Review, the ASTM editorial department works to ensure that the standard is in the correct format and is correctly tagged using standard generalized markup language (SGML).

Approximately eight weeks after a standard is approved, it is available for distribution as a stand-alone document in a variety of media (email, fax, hard-copy) and may be purchased from ASTM International via customer service (610-832-9585) or the ASTM International website ([www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)). All ASTM International standards are housed in specific volumes of ASTM's annual book of standards. Information regarding the complete book of standards is located on the ASTM website [BOS Availability Calendar](#)).

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