



Standard Operating Procedure Leak Testing VAPOR PIN® Via Mechanical Means

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Scope:

The operating procedure describes the methodology to test a VAPOR PIN® or equivalent sub-slab sampling device and sample train for leakage of indoor air. Mechanical leak testing is generally simpler and less costly than testing with tracer gases such as helium, but relevant state, program, or other guidance documents should be consulted to determine if a specific type of leak test is needed.

Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that indoor air does not leak past the VAPOR PIN® or associated tubing and hardware, and dilute the sub-slab soil gas sample with indoor air.

Equipment Needed:

- VAPOR PIN®;
- 3 stopcocks
- 2 Tee fittings
- Vacuum pump or peristaltic pump
- Photo-Ionization Detector (PID) or other pump for purging soil gas
- Sample container
- Vacuum gauge
- 0.25-inch Outer Diameter sample tubing (Nylaflow LM shown)
- Tubing or fittings to connect sample tubing to equipment (Tygon™ R-3803 tubing shown)
- Distilled Water

For stick-up configuration only:

- Play-Doh or VOC-free modeling clay
- 2-inch diameter plastic pipe couple;

Procedure:

- 1) Drill a 5/8" diameter hole in the concrete slab and install the VAPOR PIN® as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). For a flush-mount installation, drill the 1-1/2" diameter hole first, and follow the SOP Use of the VAPOR PIN® Drilling Guide and Secure Cover. Testing evacuated ("Summa") canisters and regulators in accordance with ASTM standard D7663-11 or Restek Corporation's A Guide to Whole Air Canister Sampling prior to starting field work eliminates most risk of leakage when sampling with the VAPOR PIN®. Leave the canister closed until leak testing is completed.
- 2) Install the VAPOR PIN® as described in the SOP Installation and Extraction of the VAPOR PIN®.
- 3) Clean the slab within a 2-inch radius of the VAPOR PIN® to remove all dust. Avoid wetting the concrete or wait until the concrete is dry before proceeding, and avoid cleaning with VOC-containing substances. A whisk broom or shop vacuum is recommended. Remaining dust can be picked up with a scrap of clay.

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- 4) For a flush-mount installation, water is poured directly into the 1-1/2" depression without the PVC couple or modeling clay—proceed to the next step. For a stick-up installation, roll a 1-inch diameter ball of clay between your palms to form a “snake” approximately 7 inches long and press it against the end of the 2" pipe couple. Push the couple against the slab to form a seal between the pipe and the concrete. Notice that water soluble clays such as Play-Doh may absorb enough water to be unsuitable for tests lasting more than one hour.
- 5) Assemble the sample train as shown in Figure 1. Notice that the figure shows Photo-Ionization Detector (PID) at the end of the sample train, which should be replaced with the hand-held vacuum pump next to it, or a peristaltic pump, during shut-in testing. The shut-in test is conducted by closing stopcock 1, opening stopcocks 2 and 3, and imposing a vacuum of 15" mercury equivalent (in Hg) with the vacuum pump or peristaltic pump. Close stopcock 3, and observe the vacuum gauge for one to five minutes to verify that pressure in the sample train increases no more than 0.5 in Hg. Tighten or replace leaking components, if needed. The compression fitting connecting sample tubing to the sample canister is a common leak point.
- 6) Attach the peristaltic pump or PID and pour enough distilled water into the pipe couple or flush-mount depression to immerse the tubing connection to the VAPOR PIN®.
- 7) Open all stopcocks and purge and sample the sample point as required by the data quality objectives. Water level might drop slightly due to absorption into the concrete, but if there is a sudden drop in water level, the appearance of water in sample tubing, or other indication of water entering the sub-slab, remove the distilled water from the couple or depression, and reposition the VAPOR PIN® to stop the leakage before resuming the leak test and sampling.
- 8) If long-term sampling is conducted (e.g. 8-hour or 24-hour), the vacuum gauge, stopcock 3, PID and pumps can be removed immediately after closing stopcock 2, for use at subsequent sample locations.



Figure 1. Example of Sub-Slab Sampling and Leak-Test Setup