

Short-Term Thermal Aging Test for motors

Accelerate time to market with UL's alternative test method.

Overview

Safety and performance reliability are essential attributes of electrical insulation systems (EIS) used in electric motors. The UL 1004-x Series "Rotating Electrical Machines" require that electrical insulation systems go through a full thermal aging program covered under UL 1446 "Systems of Insulating Materials" Standard help ensure that insulating materials perform as intended at elevated temperatures. Although an accelerated aging program, this insulation system evaluation takes over nine months to demonstrate that the insulation system is appropriate.

As speed to market and the adaptation of new insulating materials often determine success for a manufacturer, UL has developed an alternate insulation system evaluation method that helps motor manufacturers get to market in less than two months.

The UL 1004-1 Annex A test method covers an accelerated aging test on motors and offers agility to manufacturers. This method allows manufacturers to quickly and easily test new or alternate insulation systems in less than two months through a 1000-hour elevated temperature aging program.

Test method:

The aging test is conducted on six motors and consists of four cycles. Each cycle is performed by locking the rotors and passing a current to increase the winding temperature 40°C above the desired class rating. After 250 hours of exposure at this elevated temperature the samples are conditioned in a 93% RH chamber for 48 hrs. This cycle is repeated three more times. Compliance is determined after the fourth cycle by an electric strength test (test voltage reduced to 50%). A lower elevated temperature can be chosen by the manufacture for

testing; however, the conditioning time is doubled for each 10°C drop. Because the test is performed on the actual motors, expensive and time-consuming general purpose model (aka motorette) sample preparation is not required.

Certification:

Systems that comply with UL 1004-1 Annex A will be issued an Insulation System Certification Report that outlines the insulating materials used in the evaluation. The insulation system can be used for other motors within that series provided the insulating materials are similar.

Primary program benefits:

- › Reduced time-to-market due to an accelerated aging test evaluation
- › Less expensive than the full thermal aging UL 1446 program
- › Reduced sample preparation costs and time due to actual motor testing

Getting started:

For additional questions or to get started with a short-term thermal aging test on motors, please contact our sales team at PMSales@ul.com or contact your local customer service professional at [UL.com/contactus](https://www.ul.com/contactus).



Frequently asked questions

Where can I learn more about the test program?

The complete test program is detailed in UL 1004-1 Annex A.

What motors are covered by this short-term test program?

Random-wound electric motors rated at 1,000 volts or less.

What is the UL submission process?

The submittal process is easy and can be completed in 3 simple steps.

1. Submit an order to UL for short-term motor evaluation.
2. Provide UL with manufacturing process details, all applicable insulating materials, and six motors.
3. After successful completion of the test, UL will issue an Insulation System Report Certification.

What if a motor does not comply during the test program?

The UL 1004-1 Annex A test method allows for failure of one of the six motors during the evaluation, although a fifth aging cycle is typically required.

How is the test temperature determined?

The test temperature is determined by the desired or required class rating needed for the motor, plus 40°C for the shortest evaluation.

Can I test at a lower elevated temperature?

A lower aging temperature can be chosen by the manufacture (a maximum 30°C drop). For each 10°C drop in temperature, the elevated temperature aging time is doubled.

Where is the motor temperature measured during the test?

The temperature is measured at the rotor and stator winding. Both windings need to be at or above the temperature increase defined by the test method.

Is the leakage current test required?

If the motor design is such that leakage current test is not possible or not applicable to the design (e.g. industrial motors or field installed motors), then the test requirement may be waived. The test deviation will be documented as a Condition of Acceptability within the UL Certification Report.

Can this test method be used for generators?

The test method can be applied to random-wound electric generators rated at 1,000 volts or less.

What is documented in the Certification Report?

The magnet wire (generic type), varnish, insulating materials (e.g. slot liners), tie cords, spaces and any other materials that contract the magnet wire are listed in the UL report.

How do I add alternate materials?

Any material(s) can be added by successful completion of a subsequent series of six motors tested to this method.

Materials identified as minor component (see UL 1446, Table 4.2) may be added by either conducting a subsequent series of six motors using different materials or via a sealed tube component compatibility test as outlined in UL 1446. Motors evaluated with an impregnating resin or varnish are not eligible for the component compatibility test.

What if I encounter a non-compliance during the short-term thermal aging program?

If your product doesn't meet the test method requirements, you will receive a letter from UL describing the specific requirements your product did not meet. You can submit the materials for evaluation under the traditional UL 1446 program or modify the product and re-submit to the short term thermal aging test method requirements.

What are the advantages of using the traditional UL 1446 full thermal aging program?

Motor manufactures may choose to use the traditional full thermal aging program as it provides a way to evaluate multiple ground materials (up to 18) and multiple magnet wire types in one test. The traditional program is not application-specific and can be used across many different UL standards that require UL 1446 (transformers, ballasts, solenoids, etc.). Thus, the traditional UL 1446 aging program provides more flexibility to the customer and broader end-use applications.

