A Practice for Compressing Plastic Articles for Laboratory Evaluation

Introduction – Scope, Significance and Use - This practice presents the steps used in the laboratory to simulate the compression that occurs in a garbage truck when articles are transported from the curb to a material recovery facility (MRF). This is an important step when evaluating sortation performance since articles processed at the MRF and plastic reclaimer have undergone this potentially shape changing process prior to sortation.

Hazards and Safety Statement - This practice involves handling plastic items, lifting hinged equipment and using compressed air. The operator should have a working knowledge of the operation of pneumatic valves and regulators and the dangers that can be created by pressure. It is extremely important to follow all safety precautions.

Reference Documents. None

Practice Summary and Flow Diagram
The flow diagram below outlines the compression practice
Equipment Required:
- Compression device and pipe clamp constructed per annex 1 to this document
- Air compressor or centralized compressed air system

Materials and Reagents Required:
Test Articles – quantity according to the test method to be performed after compression.

Practice Steps:
1. Obtain candidate articles of sufficient quantity to satisfy the test method(s) to be performed after the compression practice. Note: all closures, attachments and labels should be included since the goal of tests requiring compression is to simulate articles as they are presented to the sorting system in real life.

2. Loosen but don’t remove closures. Insure the closure is loose enough that air escapes easily when the container is squeezed by hand.
3. Place the compression device on a hard, sturdy, flat surface with 4 – 6 inches hanging off the edge.

4. Turn directional valve handle to release pressure from device.

5. Connect the compressed air system to the compression device.
6. Adjust the pressure regulator to “0” in order to stop all air from flowing downstream.

7. Open the compression device and place one test article between the tires with the cap facing away from any people.

8. Close the compression device.
9. Open the pipe clamp jaws and place the pipe clamp on the compression device as shown.

10. While pulling down on the compression device and top of pipe clamp, slip the bottom moving jaw of the pipe clamp as close to the other jaw as possible.
11. Turn the top pipe clamp adjustment handle 10-15 full turns to apply mechanical pressure to the test article.

12. Adjust the pressure regulator so that the downstream pressure is 10 psi.
13. Turn the directional valve handle so the air pressure is applied to the device.

14. Wait for the system to equalize (typically 15-20 seconds). During this time it is common to hear creaking from both the package and the device.

15. Turn the directional valve handle to relieve the downstream pressure.
16. Remove the pipe clamp.

17. Open the compression device and remove the test article.

18. Repeat for the remaining articles.

19. Allow test articles to sit 30 minutes before testing to simulate the time the article sits on the MRF tip floor.

**Measurements:** None
Report Form and Assessment: None

Table and Figures: None

Disclaimer This document has been prepared by the Association of Plastic Recyclers as a service to the plastic packaging industry to promote the most efficient use of the nation’s plastics recycling infrastructure and to enhance the quality and quantity of recycled postconsumer plastics. The information contained herein reflects the input of APR members from a diverse cross-section of the plastics recycling industry, including professionals experienced in the recycling of PET packaging articles. The information in this document is offered without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, including WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, which are expressly disclaimed. APR and its members accept no responsibility for any harm or damages arising from the use of or reliance upon this information by any party. APR intends to update this document periodically to reflect new developments and practices.
Annex 1: Compression Device Construction:

Materials Required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18 x 850 - 8, 4-hole golf cart tire and wheel, Home Depot part #205719722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4' x 8' x 3/4&quot; (23/32) B-C or better plywood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&quot; x 4&quot; x 8&quot; Framing grade lumber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&quot; x 10&quot; x 8' Framing grade lumber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&quot; x 3&quot; x 8' Framing grade lumber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 lb</td>
<td>2&quot; exterior grade flat head screws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2-1/2&quot; exterior grade flat head screws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3/4&quot; steel threaded pipe caps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12&quot; long, 3/4&quot; steel pipe nipple, threaded both ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Air Chuck, 1/4 NPT Female air inlet with valve stem clip McMaster-Carr #6140A62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>PVC On-Off Valve, Directional control, 1/4 NPT Female, McMaster-Carr #4757K52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Air hose, 1/4 x 1/4 brass NPTF Male, 200 psi, black, 5 feet long, McMaster-Carr #1593N1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low pressure pipe fitting, Iron, Tee 1/4 NPT female, McMaster-Carr #44605K152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Standard wall steel pipe nipple threaded both ends, 1/4 pipe size, 2&quot; long McMaster-Carr #44615K432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Standard wall steel pipe nipple threaded both ends, 1/4 pipe size, close McMaster-Carr #44615K412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Standard wall steel pipe street elbow, 1/4 pipe size, McMaster-Carr #44605K132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Compact compressed air regulator, relieving, Al housing, 1/4&quot; NPT, 0-25 psi, McMaster-Carr #6763K82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fast-acting pressure relief valve for air, 1/4&quot; NPT male, 15 psi set pressure, McMaster-Carr #4772K4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/4&quot; compressed air quick connection to match existing compressed air hose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 hole strap for 1/2&quot; conduit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 hole strap for 3/4&quot; conduit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Any length bar clamp for 3/4&quot; pipe size, McMaster-Carr #5063A11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Standard wall steel pipe, 3/4&quot; diameter, 5' long, threaded both ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>#8 x 3/4&quot; pan head wood screws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tools Required:

- Circular saw
- Hand held drill
- Miter or hand saw
- 1-1/8” hole saw or forstner bit
- Tape measure
- Chalk line or straight edge
- Liquid pipe sealant suitable for pneumatics
- 2 Channel-lock pliers
Instructions:

Fabricate the Jaws:

1. Lay the plywood (#2) flat and cut 4 pieces as shown.
2. Drill a 1-1/8” hole through each plywood piece as shown at the points previously marked

3. Cut the 2x10 (#4) into 2, 4’ long sections

4. Align two of the cut plywood sections as shown with one of the cut 2 x 10’s and fasten using the 2” screws (#6) on 8” centers. Repeat with the remaining pieces.
5. Cut the 2x4 (#3) into 4 pieces 9 ¼” long, position and fasten these pieces to the plywood as shown using 2” screws (#6).
6. Deflate the tires and set them between the plywood pieces and the 2 x 4’s as shown with valve stems accessible, the valve stem of the two sets opposite each other.

7. Cut the 2 x 3 (#5) into 2 pieces 10 ¾” long and drill 2, 1/8” diameter holes 3/8” from either end as shown.
8. Place the 2 x 3’s through the center holes of the tires, square the pieces to the plywood and fasten to the plywood through the predrilled holes using the 2-1/2” screws (#7).

9. Thread one ¾” pipe cap (#8) onto the 12”, ¾” pipe nipple (#9).

10. Using 2 people, align the two device jaws so that the holes are aligned. Insert the pipe nipple through the entire assembly and thread the final ¾” pipe cap onto the exposed end.
Fabricate and Attach the Pneumatic Assembly:

1. Using a limited amount of pipe liquid pipe sealant connect the following as shown:
   a. a ¼” pipe tee (#13)
   b. the 2”, ¾” dia pipe nipple (#14)
   c. a ¼” pipe tee (#13)
   d. the pressure relief valve (#18)
   e. a ¼” close nipple (#15)
   f. the directional valve (#11) (insuring it is oriented as so that the compression device side of the valve is switched between the atmosphere and the compressed air supply))
   g. the ¾” street elbow (#16)
   h. the regulator (#17) (insuring the gage is threaded into the upward gage port, a plug ins inserted into the bottom gage port and the port marked “IN” is positioned correctly)
   i. the quick connector
2. Thread one air hose (#12) into each end of the pipe tee.

3. Thread one air chuck (#10) onto the exposed end of each air hose.

4. Using the ½” and ¾” 2-hole straps (#20 and 21) and the ¾” screws (#24) attach the pneumatic assembly to the jaws as shown. Connect the air chucks to the valve stems.
Assemble the Pipe Clamp:

1. Thread the side of the clamp (#22) onto one end of the 5’ long ¾” pipe.

2. Slide the traveling end of the clamp up the pipe from the other end

3. Attach the stop to the free end of the pipe clamp