



amc technical briefs

recommendation

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The estimation and use of recovery factors

The use of recovery information to correct analytical results has been a contentious issue in the past. Some analysts have regarded correction for recovery as a natural extension to the analytical method, while others have spurned the practice as akin to adjusting the results in an illegitimate manner. Moreover, practice varies within different sectors of analysis. However, recent developments in the international forum have shown how to resolve these difficulties. The key to this resolution lies in the distinction between 'rational' and 'empirical' methods, discussed overleaf. The whole topic is documented in 'Harmonised Guidelines for the Use of Recovery Information in Analytical Measurement' (Pure Appl. Chem., 1999, 71, 337-348), sponsored by IUPAC, ISO and AOAC International.

Recommendation

Quantitative analytical results should be corrected for recovery unless there are specific reasons for not doing so (for example, the method is acknowledged to be 'empirical', the method is defined in law, or the recovery is known to be 100 %).

