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Selection Criteria for Oxidation Method in Total Organic Carbon Measurement

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2	Measurement
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15 Abstract

During the measurement of total organic carbon (TOC), dissolved organic carbon is converted into CO₂ 16 17 by using high temperature combustion (HTC) or wet chemical oxidation (WCO). However, the criteria for selecting the oxidation methods are not clear. In this study, the chemical structures of organic 18 19 material were considered as a key factor to select the oxidation method used. Most non-degradable 20 organic compounds showed a similar oxidation efficiency in both methods, including natural organic 21 compounds, dyes, and pharmaceuticals, and thus both methods are appropriate to measure TOC in 22 waters containing these compounds. However, only a fraction of the carbon in the halogenated 23 compounds (perfluorooctanoic acid and trifluoroacetic acid) were oxidized using WCO, resulting in 24 measured TOC values that are considerably lower than those determined by HTC. This result is likely due to the electronegativity of halogen elements which inhibits the approach of electron-rich sulfate 25 26 radicals in the WCO, and the higher bond strength of carbon-halogen pairs as compared to carbon-27 hydrogen bonds, which results in a lower degree of oxidation of the compounds. Our results indicate 28 that WCO could be used to oxidize most organic compounds, but may not be appropriate to quantify 29 TOC in organic carbon pools that contain certain halogenated compounds.

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