# **TECHNICAL NOTE**

**Electrochemistry** 

### November 2013



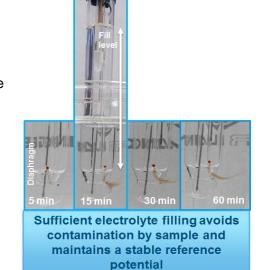
## pH electrode filling

### pH electrode filling solution

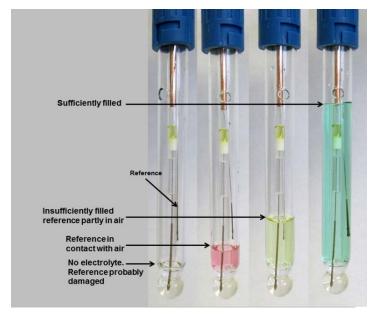
The pH measurement chain is a combination of pH glass and reference electrodes. The pH glass electrode is filled with KCl and sealed. The reference electrode must be in contact with the sample solution. Liquid filled electrodes are separated from sample solution by a diaphragm. Depending on the measuring conditions and on the type of diaphragm, more or less electrolyte can flow through the diaphragm, lowering the electrolyte

level.

The reference element must be covered with electrolyte solution, otherwise it can be damaged. The level of electrolyte provides a certain hydrostatic pressure on



the inner side of the diaphragm to keep sample solution out. If the electrolyte level decreases, the pressure decreases as well. Depending on the depth of immersion of the pH probe, sample solution may have a higher hydrostatic pressure than the

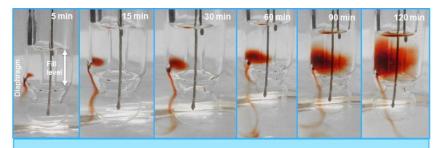


inner electrolyte. Sample solution can flow through the diaphragm inside the probe. The contamination with sample solution dilutes the electrolyte. It introduces ions, which may react with the reference electrode material or form particles or precipitates. Last can block the diaphragm.

All above is the reason for unreliable pH measurements.

### The correct electrolyte filling:

Electrolyte filling level should be 5mm below the refill hole. If the level is 2 cm lower or more, refill the electrode. Never let the reference element become dry and in contact with air. This will damage the reference element.



Low electrolyte fill level leads to contamination inside the probe body and probably damages the reference element. The diaphragm can not hinder sample solution passing through and after 2 hours all remaining electrolyte is contaminated. The reference element can no longer give a stable potential.