UL 60079-33:2021 (R2026)

(IEC 60079-33:2012, MOD)

Explosive Atmospheres – Part 33: Equipment Protection by Special Protection “s”

UL Standard for Safety for Explosive Atmospheres – Part 33: Equipment Protection by Special Protection “s”, UL 60079-33

First Edition, Dated May 25, 2021

Summary of Topics

This reaffirmation of ANSI/UL 60079-33 dated February 25, 2026 is issued to update the title page to reflect the most recent designation as a Reaffirmed American National Standard (ANS). No technical changes have been made.

UL 60079-33 is an Adoption of IEC 60079-33, Explosive Atmospheres – Part 33: Equipment Protection by Special Protection “s”, (first edition, issued by IEC September 2012). The National Difference document incorporates all of the U.S. National Differences for UL 60079-33.

Text that has been changed in any manner or impacted by ULSE's electronic publishing system is marked with a vertical line in the margin.

The requirements are substantially in accordance with Proposal(s) on this subject dated December 19, 2025.

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MAY 25, 2021
(Title Page Reprinted: February 25, 2026)

UL 60079-33:2021 (R2026)

(IEC 60079-33:2012, MOD)

Standard for Explosive Atmospheres – Part 33: Equipment Protection by Special Protection "s"

First Edition

May 25, 2021

This ANSI/UL Standard for Safety consists of the First Edition including revisions through February 25, 2026.

The most recent designation of ANSI/UL 60079-33 as a Reaffirmed American National Standard (ANS) occurred on February 25, 2026. ANSI approval for a standard does not include the Cover Page, Transmittal Pages, Title Page (front and back), or the Preface. The National Difference Page and IEC Foreword are also excluded from the ANSI approval of IEC-based standards.

Comments or proposals for revisions on any part of the Standard may be submitted to ULSE at any time. Proposals should be submitted via a Proposal Request in the Collaborative Standards Development System (CSDS) at https://csds.ul.com.

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Preface (UL)

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Note – Although the intended primary application of this Standard is stated in its Scope, it is important to note that it remains the responsibility of the users of the Standard to judge its suitability for their particular purpose.

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There are five types of National Differences as noted below. The difference type is noted on the first line of the National Difference in the standard. The standard may not include all types of these National Differences.

DR – These are National Differences based on the **national regulatory requirements**.

D1 – These are National Differences which are based on **basic safety principles and requirements**, elimination of which would compromise safety for consumers and users of products.

D2 – These are National Differences from IEC requirements based on existing **safety practices**. These requirements reflect national safety practices, where empirical substantiation (for the IEC or national requirement) is not available or the text has not been included in the IEC standard.

DC – These are National Differences based on the **component standards** and will not be deleted until a particular component standard is harmonized with the IEC component standard.

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Each national difference contains a description of what the national difference entails. Typically one of the following words is used to explain how the text of the national difference is to be applied to the base IEC text:

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FOREWORD

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EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES – Part 33: Equipment protection by special protection “s”

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International Standard IEC 60079-33 has been prepared by IEC technical committee 31: Equipment for explosive atmospheres.

The text of this standard is based on the following documents:

FDIS	Report on voting
31/997/FDIS	31/1011/RVD

Full information on the voting for the approval of this standard can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

This publication has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

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A list of all parts in the IEC 60079 series, published under the general title *Explosive atmospheres*, can be found on the IEC website.

The committee has decided that the contents of this publication will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC web site under "http://webstore.iec.ch" in the data related to the specific publication. At this date, the publication will be

• reconfirmed,

• withdrawn,

• replaced by a revised edition, or

• amended.

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INTRODUCTION

DV.1 DE ***Modify the IEC Introduction to replace with the following:***

This standard was created to provide a set of requirements for a Type of Protection, involving any Equipment Protection Level (EPL), referred to as Special protection "s".

Special protection "s" allows for the design, assessment and testing of equipment

• that cannot be fully assessed in accordance with existing Types of Protection under the UL 60079 and UL 80079 series of standards because of functional or operational limitations;

• that achieves the desired Equipment Protection Level (EPL) by the use of this standard; and

• that is based on identification and mitigation of failure modes as part of an ignition hazard assessment.

Regarding the identification and mitigation of failure modes, the assessed safety of the assigned EPL of the equipment shall satisfy the EPL requirements and, where appropriate, be at least equivalent to the EPL provided by the defined levels for other existing Types of Protection.

It must be understood that this standard is not immediately applicable just because equipment does not comply with other existing Types of Protection. Manufacturers are to first consider the possibilities for design and re-design to other existing Types of Protection, or combinations of other existing Types of Protection, before proceeding to Special protection "s". This standard is only applicable when:

• it can be clearly demonstrated that compliance with other existing Types of Protection is not practicable; and

• additional measures have been applied to establish an equivalent EPL.

The responsibility of initially demonstrating the need to design for Special protection "s", and subsequently establishing the criteria for verification, lies with the manufacturer. This specification defines the safety concepts and shows how the essential safety requirements are to be achieved. It is likely this will be done in consultation with experts in the assessment of existing explosion protection techniques.

By its very nature, assessment and testing to Special protection "s" cannot be as prescriptive as for the other existing types of protection. It is anticipated that considerable dialogue is required between the manufacturer and one or more independent verifiers. Special assessment and testing will be identified by the independent verifier(s) to ensure the relevant EPL is achieved.

The need for a standard to address Special protection "s" can be justified on the basis that:

• Under the Division system, there is permission in 500.7(P) of the National Electrical Code (NEC), NFPA:2020 for other approaches to explosion protection. This permits the ability for new and innovative designs to be certified for Division 1 or 2 applications that are outside the Scope of existing US ANSI Division system protection techniques.

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• While there is no such permission in the NEC under the Zone system, there is such permission under the IEC Zone system based on IEC 60079-33, Explosive atmospheres – Part 33: Equipment protection by special protection “s”.

• It is beneficial to have a US National approach that is consistent with this IEC approach and with the existing Division approach.

• There is an identified need, and has been a request, for this Special protection “s” standard from industry.

~~This part of IEC 60079 was created in response to a request from the IECEx certification system to provide a set of requirements to be used for certification within the IECEx product certification scheme when the standards for existing types of protection were not applicable.~~

~~The present standard refers to the use of one or more independent verifiers, in accordance with ISO/IEC rules on the writing of standards that mitigate against specifying particular forms of conformity assessment. The IECEx system will specify how the term "independent verifier" will be interpreted for the purposes of the scheme. For example, it may specify that in the case of three independent verifiers they shall all be certification body members of the scheme, each accepted specifically for the purpose of assessing special protection applications and each from a separate member country of the system.~~

~~The purpose of IEC 60079-33 special protection “s” for any equipment protection level (EPL) is to allow design, assessment and testing of equipment or parts of equipment that cannot be fully assessed within a recognized type of protection or combination of recognized types of protection because of functional or operational limitations and where the desired equipment protection level can be achieved by the use of this standard.~~

~~Special protection “s” allows a design concept that cannot comply in full with recognized types of protection, or where the design concept is not covered by recognized types of protection.~~

~~When specification for the equipment includes aspects as given above, additional information and data may be required from~~

~~• technical research,~~

~~• evaluation of existing data and information.~~

~~Manufacturers should first consider the possibilities for design to the recognized types of protection, or to combinations of recognized type of protection, before proceeding to special protection “s”.~~

~~This standard is intended to provide a framework to demonstrate how essential safety requirements can be met if not covered by established standards, thus allowing for innovation and dealing with unknowns.~~

~~When equipment intended to meet a recognized type of protection does not comply with all the provisions of the relevant standard, it is not to be considered under this standard unless:~~

~~• it can be clearly demonstrated that complete compliance with the type of protection is not practicable; and~~

~~• additional measures have been applied to establish an equivalent protection level.~~

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Special protection "s" is based on identification of failure modes and ignition hazard assessment in the identified modes. In this regard, the assessed safety of the assigned EPL of the equipment will satisfy the EPL requirements and, where appropriate, be at least equivalent to the EPL provided by the defined levels for the recognized types of protection.

IEC 60079-26 [1][1] provides for requirements for equipment with EPL Ga and Ga/Gb but depends on combining types of protection already described in other parts of the IEC 60079 series.

[1] Figures in square brackets refer to the Bibliography.

The responsibility of initially demonstrating the need to design for special protection "s" and establishing the criteria for verification lies with the manufacturer. The specification defines the safety concepts and shows how the essential safety requirements are to be achieved. It is likely this will be done in consultation with experts in the assessment of explosion protection techniques.

The requirements in this standard take into account:

• allowance for first, second or third party verification;

• the use of EPLs;

• the use of equipment groups for mining, gas and dust;

• alignment with existing temperature requirements;

• compatibility with the marking requirements given in IEC 60079-0.

Where requirements for a product/design concept are developed and intended for repeated use in subsequent designs, they should be reviewed and, provided the manufacturer is prepared to release the intellectual property, be included initially in an annex of this standard with the intention of being removed and relocated to an appropriate place at a later time, e.g. in an existing or new type of protection standard.

Unlike other recognized types of protection, special protection "s" may require the application of reliability engineering tools and procedures such as failure modes and effects analysis (FMEA), fault tree analysis (FTA) and failure modes, effects and criticality analysis (FMECA) to identify the failure modes of the equipment being tested. This type of analysis will ensure that the failure modes and corresponding mitigation designs are addressed by the most appropriate testing strategies, which simulate the environment in which the equipment will be operated, with appropriate factors of safety applied.

The probability of failure of the identified failure modes may need to be demonstrated to be of a similar likelihood as the failures expected in recognized types of protection.

Full life cycle conditions may need to be considered and any restrictions may form part of the mandatory directions for use of the equipment to ensure EPLs are maintained during the operational life of the equipment.

By its very nature, assessment and testing to special protection "s" cannot be as prescriptive as for the recognized types of protection. It is anticipated that considerable dialogue is required between the manufacturer and an independent verifier. Additional assessment and testing may be identified by the independent verifier to ensure the relevant EPL is achieved.

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~~When undertaking verification, it is strongly recommended the guidance provided in this standard is followed including:~~

~~• applying different levels of verification to match the EPL (similar in concept to the approach given in the IEC 61508 series);~~

~~• always involving at least one independent person/organization (an independent verifier);~~

~~• not using personnel who have had any involvement in research or determining the criteria for establishing the essential safety requirements in conjunction with the manufacturer.~~

~~Where it is intended to apply the requirements of this standard within a certification system/scheme, the following recommendations are made:~~

~~• the requirements laid down in EN 50495 [2] for safety devices are observed;~~

~~• an assessment should be performed by independent certification bodies (as the independent verifier) according to the requirements in this standard before issuing a certificate of conformity;~~

~~• a certification body performing an assessment for equipment not covered by recognized types of protection should have demonstrated expertise in the field under question.~~

~~The need for a standard to address special protection "s" can be justified on the basis that:~~

~~• provision has been in IEC 60079-0 for many years with reference Ex "s" in a note in the marking requirements or elsewhere. This reference goes back to IEC standards that pre-date 1957;~~

~~• there have been standards used on a national basis for many years for certification to special protection "s". Examples are SFA 3009 in the UK and AS/NZS 1826 in Australia and New Zealand;~~

~~• it is necessary to have an international approach that is consistent;~~

~~• there is an identified need and has been a request for a special protection "s" standard from IECEx.~~

~~Support for the approach in the standard:~~

~~• the approach draws on the experience of the use of verifiers already in other IEC standards.~~

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EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES – Part 33: Equipment protection by special protection “s”

1 Scope

1DV DR *DE Modification of Clause 1 to replace with the following:*

This ~~part of IEC 60079~~ standard gives the specific methodology for the assessment and testing, and requirements for marking of electrical equipment, parts of electrical equipment and Ex components with special protection “s”.

This ~~part of IEC 60079~~ standard applies to

• electrical equipment employing a method of protection not covered by any existing standard in the ~~IEC~~ UL 60079 series,

• electrical equipment employing one or more recognized types of protection where the design and construction is not fully compliant with the standard for the type of protection,

• electrical equipment where the intended use is outside the parameters of the scope of the standard for the type of protection.

• electrical equipment that may or may not also involve non-electrical ignition sources.

NOTE UL 80079-36 and UL 80079-37 apply to equipment that only involves non-electrical ignition sources.

This ~~part of IEC 60079~~ standard is not intended for equipment that is covered by the scope of other ~~IEC~~ UL 60079 equipment standards unless

• it is clearly demonstrated that compliance with the type of protection is not feasible, and

• additional measures are applied to establish an equivalent equipment protection level.

This ~~part of IEC 60079~~ standard for special protection “s” is applicable to Group I, Group II and Group III and for equipment protection levels Ma, Mb, Ga, Gb, Gc, Da, Db and Dc, as defined in ~~IEC~~ UL 60079-0.

Certain specific guidance for assessment and testing are provided in the annexes to this standard.

This standard supplements and modifies the general requirements of ~~IEC~~ UL 60079-0. Where a requirement of this standard conflicts with a requirement of ~~IEC~~ UL 60079-0, the requirement of this standard shall take precedence.

NOTE 1 This standard may be used where equipment requires a higher EPL than the underlying protection techniques provide. Additional control measures or additional design and test requirements would be applied.

NOTE 2 Parts of equipment that can be designed and tested to standardized techniques should be so designed. Only those parts where conformance with essential safety requirements is achieved through alternative controls should be considered for special protection “s”. Equipment similar in attributes and performance to other equipment within a particular type of protection should be reviewed first to that method of protection prior to being considered for the use of Ex ”s”. Some parts of ~~IEC~~ UL 60079 allow a degree of variance from the equipment

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requirements and where determined to be close enough by independent verifiers, then it is preferable to prescribe to the original type of protection.

Where references are made to IEC and ISO standards, the referenced requirements found in these standards shall apply as modified by any applicable US National Differences for the standard (see Clause 2).

Annex DVC outlines the application of this standard when special protection techniques are used in equipment identified for use in hazardous (classified) locations under the Division system, including the area classification method and installation requirements.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

2DV DR *Modification of Clause 2 references to replace with the following:*

FM 60079-29-1, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-1: Gas detectors – Performance requirements of detectors for flammable gases*

FM 60079-29-2, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-2: Gas detectors – Selection, installation, use and maintenance of detectors for flammable gases and oxygen*

NFPA 70, *National Electrical Code* (NEC)

UL 60079 (all parts), *Explosive atmospheres, specifically including:*

- **UL 60079-0, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 0: Equipment – General requirements***
- **UL 60079-29-1, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-1: Gas detectors – Performance requirements of detectors for flammable gases***
- **UL 60079-29-2, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-2: Gas detectors – Selection, installation, use and maintenance of detectors for flammable gases and oxygen***

~~**IEC 60079 (all parts), *Explosive atmospheres***~~

~~**IEC 60079-0, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 0: Equipment – General requirements***~~

~~**IEC 60079-29-1, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-1: Gas detectors – Performance requirements of detectors for flammable gases***~~

~~**IEC 60079-29-2, *Explosive atmospheres – Part 29-2: Gas detectors – Selection, installation, use and maintenance of detectors for flammable gases and oxygen***~~

~~**IEC 61508 (all parts), *Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems***~~

~~**IEC 61508-1, *Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems – Part 1: General requirements***~~

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~~**IEC 61511 (all parts),** ***Functional safety – Safety instrumented systems for the process industry sector***~~

~~**IEC 62061,** ***Safety of machinery – Functional safety of safety-related electrical, electronic and programmable electronic control systems***~~

~~**ISO 13849-1:2009,** ***Safety of machinery – Safety-related parts of control systems – Part 1: General principles for design***~~

~~**ISO 13849-2,** ***Safety of machinery – Safety-related parts of control systems – Part 2: Validation***~~

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in IEC 60079-0, as well as the following, apply.

3.1
hybrid mixture
mixture of a flammable gas with a combustible dust

3.2
special protection "s"
concept to allow design, assessment and testing of equipment that cannot be fully assessed within a recognized type of protection or combination of recognized types of protection because of functional or operational limitations, but which can be demonstrated to provide the necessary equipment protection level (EPL)

3.3
recognized type of protection
type of protection, other than special protection "s", as listed in IEC 60079-0 and with defined design, construction, assessment and test requirements

3.4
independent verifier
person or organization, with the appropriate competency in the applied explosion protection methodology, responsible for the verification of design calculations, assessment and testing who are separate and distinct by management and other resources including financial, from the person or organizations responsible for all the activities associated with the design, manufacture or sales of the equipment

Note 1 to entry: This may be a second or third party assessor, a test laboratory, a certifying body, etc.

4 General

4.1 Application

Special protection "s" allows for the design of a product that cannot comply in full with recognized types of protection or where the standards for the recognized types of protection do not cover the required operating conditions such as:

• outside normal atmospheric pressure given in the IEC 60079 series;

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