Life expectancy of EPDM Roofing membrane over 50 years, scientific approach.

The WDK (Wirtschaftsverband Deutsche Kautschukindustrie) and the VESP (Vereniging EPDM Systeem Producenten Benelux) asked the SKZ (Süddeutsche Kunststoff Zentrum) in Würzburg to perform a study to determine the life expextancy of EPDM roofing membranes used in flat roofing.

The SKZ selected 39 roofs in Western Europe based on the reference lists of EPDMmembrane-manufacturers. The EPDM membranes were installed resp. 2 to 30 years ago and were unprotected during the entire time (no paint, no ballast).

Introduction

The minimum requirements for rubber membranes used in roofing applications are mentioned in i.e. DIN 7864. It is however impossible to predict the ageing behavior based on those requirements. There are no commonly accepted criteria to evaluate the ageing behavior of roofing membranes.

All materials undergo an ageing process and will eventually deteriorate to a point where they no longer perform. The ageing of an EPDM membrane is caused by the exposure to ozone and UV-radiation, temperature changes, micro- and macro-organisms, combined with static and dynamic loading.

Based on the above the SKZ looked for visible and measurable signs of ageing, like:

- Surface cracking
- Surface deterioration
- reduced mechanical properties
- reduced elasticity

Research

The 39 roofing projects were visited, the water integrity of the system was checked and the EPDM membrane was evaluated visually. All roofs were still watertight and there were no signs of ageing.

Following the visual inspection, samples of approx. 1 m² were cut out of each roof.

Laboratory testing

The physical characteristics of all samples were determined in the lab, as well as of reference samples taken from new material provided by the same manufacturers. All samples (old and new) were then submitted to an accelerated ageing test in a QUV-equipment (at 70°C) or through continuous exposure at a temperature of 80°C, 90°C, 100°C or 110°C.

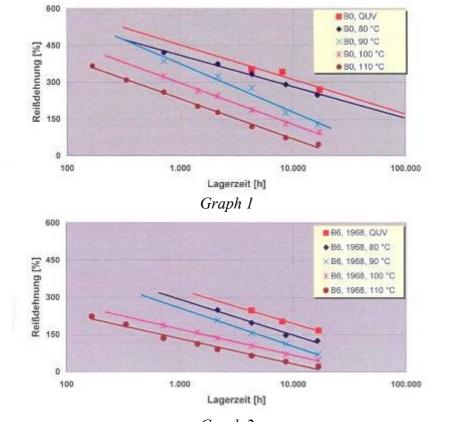
The physical properties were determined after resp. 7 and 14 days and after 1, 2, 3, 6, 12 and 24 months.

Results

A very conservative 150% "elongation at break" was used as a minimum requirement to classify an EPDM roofing membrane as "fit for purpose".

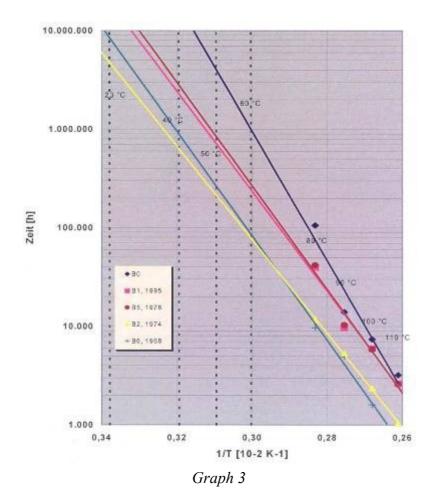
Comparison with other types of roofing membrane (bituminous, synthetic) who, in a fully adhered application, still function properly with a lower elongation at break is proof of the conservative nature of this limit.

Out of the huge amount of data obtained in the lab, the "elongation at break" values proved to be the only values that could give an indication of the actual exposure time and ageing and were therefore depicted in a graph with a logarithmical time scale (exposure time in accelerated ageing test). Graph 1 is for new reference material B0 (from one manufacturer) and graph 2 is for a 30 year old membrane B6 of the same manufacturer.



Graph 2

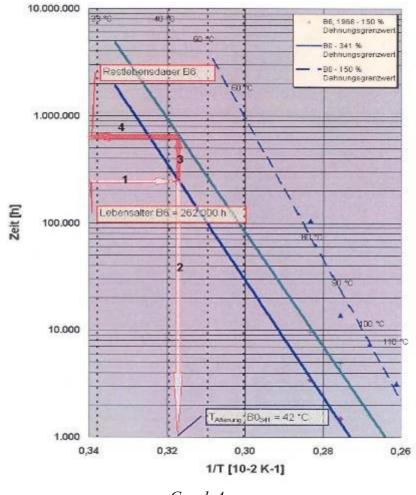
For each line (at resp. 70° (QUV), 80°C, 90°C, 100°C and 110°C) it is possible to determine the time at which point the "elongation at break" becomes less than 150%. These times are then put in a graph with 1/T (temperature in °K) as x-value and a logarithmical time scale as y-value. The results obtained on new material (B0) are also included next to B1-material from 1995, B2 from 1974, B5 from 1978 and B6 from 1968. Values at lower temperatures can be obtained by performing a linear regression. The different curves run very much parallel as shown in graph 3. The curve representing the new material is steeper.



The SKZ gives the following explanation: "The slope of the curves can be explained by taking into account the different ageing reactions of the EPDM material. The slope corresponds to the energy required to activate the ageing process. A steeper curve corresponds to a higher long-term stability. New membranes therefore show a better long-term stability due to improvements in the composition of the membrane"

The study assumes nevertheless that all curves run indeed parallel. With this hypothesis it is possible to make the following calculation (performed here for material B6 - 30 years old):

- Material B6 when tested prior to undergoing accelerated ageing has an elongation at break of 341%, even after 30 years.
- From the curves for new material BO (at resp. 70°, 80°C, 90°C, 100°C and 110°C) in graph 1 we can determine the exposure time after which an elongation at break of 341% is reached. These times are then put in a graph with 1/T (temperature in °K) as x-value and a logarithmical time scale as y-value (see graph 4).



Graph 4

- Using linear regression the values at lower temperatures can be obtained.
- This means that new material will achieve an elongation at break of 341% after 30 years or 262 800 hours when installed on a flat roof with an average year-temperature of 42°C. This exercise has allowed us to determine the average temperature on the roof from which the B6 material was taken.
- The life expectancy of the membrane already exposed for over 30 years can be determined again based on graph 4. When exposed to an average temperature of 42°C the "elongation at break" of 150%, considered to be the minimum

requirement, is obtained after approx. 650 000 h or 75 years, meaning another 45 years to go.

- Performing this exercise for all 39 roofs/materials gives an average temperature load of max. 50°C and a minimum life expectancy of 70 years.

Conclusion

Although a multitude of chemical processes, running parallel or in series, influence the ageing of EPDM membranes it was shown during this study that, within the temperatures relevant for this study, the Arrhenius-equation provides a good base to determine the influence of temperature on the ageing behavior of an EPDM membrane. In order to take into account the impact of material deviations, tolerances and differences in roof build-ups the SKZ recommends limiting the predicted life expectancy of an EPDM membrane to over 50 years.

ANNEXES

- 1. Meteorological data
- 2. Test results after continuous exposure at 80°C, materials B0 to B6
- 3. Test results after continuous exposure at 90°C, materials B0 to B6
- 4. Test results after continuous exposure at 100°C, materials B0 to B6
- 5. Test results after continuous exposure at 110°C, materials B0 to B6
- 6. Test results after QUV exposure at 70°C, materials B0 to B6

Objektliste mit meteorologischen Daten (nach Alter sortiert)

Proben- ent- nahme	Ver- lege-	Sonnenschein- dauer		Globalstrahlung		Befestigung	Objekt	Höhe	Land	Code
	jahr	Jahres- mittel	Summe	Jahres- mittel	Summe					
		[h]	[h]	[kJ/cm ²]	[kJ/cm ²]			[m]		
98-10-21	1968	1.552	46.560	362	10.860	verklebt	Garage	2,5	NL	111-6
98-10-06	1972	1.627	42.302	366	9.516	lose mit Auflast	Wohngebäude	3,5	D	1-9
98-10-22	1974	1.552	37.248	362	8.688	verklebt	Balkon	22,0	NL	111-2
98-10-22	1978	1.552	31.040	362	7.240	verklebt	Wohngebäude	8,0	NL	111-5
98-11-17	1978	1.682	33.640	395	7.900	mechanisch	Krafthaus	20,0	A	VI-6
98-11-17	1979	1.682	31.958	395	7.505	lose hängend	Hochhaus	25,0	A	VI-5
98-11-17	1980	1.682	30.276	395	7.110	mechanisch	Werkstatt	5,0	A	VI-7
98-09-14	1981	1.501	25.517	347	5.899	mechanisch	Industriehalle	8,0	D	V-4
98-10-21	1982	1.552	24.832	362	5.792	verklebt	Industriehalle	6,0	NL	111-4
98-10-28	1983	1.619	24.285	369	5.535	mechanisch	Lagerhalle	6,0	D	VI-1
98-10-28	1983	1.619	24.285	369	5.535	verklebt	Hallenbad	7,0	D	VI-4
98-10-19	1984	1.703	23.842	366	5.124	mechanisch	Industriehalle	6,0	NL	IV-2
98-10-28	1984	1.619	22.666	369	5.535	mechanisch	Werkstatt	4,5	D	VI-3
30.09.98	1984	1.855	25.970	371	5.194	lose mit Auflast	Krankenhaus	20,0	S	11-6
98-10-02	1985	1.469	19.097	328	4.264	lose mit Auflast	Industriehalle	6,0	S	11-7
98-10-19	1986	1.508	18.096	358	4.296	mechanisch	Industriehalle	15,0	NL	IV-6
98-10-19	1987	1.508	16.588	358	3.938	verklebt	Sporthalle	5,0	NL	IV-1
98-10-01	1987	1.855	20.405	371	4.081	lose mit Auflast	Bürogebäude	10,0	S	11-5
98-10-21	1988	1.552	15.520	337	3.370	mechanisch	Industriehalle	5,0	NL	111-3
98-09-16	1988	1.504	15.040	364	3.640	mechanisch	Lagerhalle	8,0	D	V-3
98-10-07	1988	1.688	16.880	359	3.590	verklebt	Industriehalle	21,0	D	1-8
98-10-19	1989	1.703	15.327	366	3.294	teilw. verklebt	Restaurant	3,5	NL	IV-5
98-09-14	1989	1.557	14.013	337	3.033	mechanisch	Wohngebäude	12,0	D	V-2
98-10-28	1989	1.619	14.571	369	3.321	mechanisch	Werkstatt	4,5	D	VI-2
98-10-06	1989	1.627	14.643	377	3.393	mechanisch	Industriehalle	10,0	D	1-5
98-10-07	1989	1.661	14.949	368	3.312	verklebt	Industriehalle	7,0	D	1-6
98-10-08	1989	1.673	15.057	380	3.420	mechanisch	Lagerhalle	10,0	D	1-7
98-09-30	1989	1.855	16.695	371	3.339	lose mit Auflast	Bürogebäude	10,0	S	11-3
98-09-30	1989	1.855	16.695	371	3.339	lose mit Auflast	Krankenhaus	6,0	S	11-4
98-10-02	1990	1.469	11.752	328	2.624	lose mit Auflast	Bürogebäude	4,0	S	11-2
98-10-20	1991	1.643	11.501	363	2.541	verklebt	Vorhalle		NL	IV-4
98-10-07	1991	1.627	11.389	377	2.639	mechanisch	Industriehalle	10,	D	1-4
98-09-30	1991	1.855	12.985	371	2.597	lose mit Auflast	Wohngebäude	5,0	S	II-1
98-10-20	1992	1.643	9.858	363	2.178	mechanisch	Wohngebäude		NL	IV-3
98-10-06	1993	1.627	8.135	366	1.830	mechanisch	Industriehalle	10,0	D	1-3
98-10-07	1994	1.448	5.792	345	1.380	mechanisch	Lagerhalle	8,0	D	V-1
98-10-07	1994	1.688	6.752	359	1.436	verklebt	Industriehalle	21,0	D	1-2
98-10-21	1995	1.552	4.656	362	1.086	mechanisch	Industriehalle		NL	111-1
98-10-07	1996	1.688	3.376	359	718	mechanisch	Industriehalle	21	D	1-1

Code	Lagerzeit	E ₁₋₂ -Modul		Spannung 100% Dehn		Reißfestigkeit		Reißdehnung		
	(Monate)	(Mpa))	(%)		(Mpa)		(%)		
		x	s	x	S	x	S	x	S	
B0, 80 °C	ALZ	4,0	0,4	2,4	0,0	10,2	0,2	492	14	
	1	4,8	0,2	3,0	0,0	10,7	0,1	421	5	
	3	5,5	0,2	3,5	0,1	10,9	0,0	374	11	
	6	5,6	0,3	4,0	0,1	10,9	0,1	333	4	
	12	6,3	0,6	4,6	0,1	10,9	0,2	290	9	
	24	6,9	0,7	5,4	0,1	10,8	0,2	248	5	
B1, 1995, 80 °C	ALZ	5,0	0,2		0,0	9,5	0,1	455	10	
	3	5,8	0,2	3,3	0,0	9,7	0,1	369	5	
	6	6,4	0,2	3,9	0,1	9,8	0,1	317	10	
	12	7,1	0,8		0,0	9,8	0,1	266	3	
	24	7,7	0,9		0,1	9,6	0,1	216	7	
B2, 1974, 80 °C	ALZ	8,2	0,4	3,7	0,0	9,4	0,3	341	12	
an in Arriston in the second second	3	9,3	0,4	5,3	0,1	9,3	0,2	235	3	
	6	11,0	0,2		0,1	9,4	0,1	195	3	
	12	12,2	1,0		0,1	9,5	0,3	163	7	
al a second a second as a second and a	24	12,6	0,6		0,2	9,7	0,2	136	7	
B5, 1978, 80 °C	ALZ	4,6	0,2	2,1	0,0	9,1	0,5	534	47	
an an an Anna	3	5,9	0,3	3,2	0,1	9,2	0,2	347	15	
	6	6,1	0,2		0,1	9,4	0,2	301	10	
	12	7,0	0,2		0,1	9,5	0,3	257	18	
	24	8,1	0,9		0,1		0,2	211	8	
B6, 1968, 80 °C	ALZ	8,3	0,6		0,0		0,2	341	11	
	3	11,3	0,4	5,6	0,1	10,9	0,2	249	5	
	6	12,4	0,6		0,1	the second se	0,2		4	
	12	14,8	1,8		0,2		2,5		17	
	24	20,0	1,7	10,8	0,3	12,0	0,3	124	0	

Tabelle 4: Einfluss der Wärmealterung bei 80 °C auf die Eigenschaften im Zugversuch

Ergebnisangabe: \vec{x} = arithm. Mittelwert, s = Standardabweichung

Code	Lagerzeit	E ₁₋₂ -Mod	lul	Spannu 100% De		Reißfes	ligkeit	Reißdehnung		
	(Monate)	(Mpa)		(%)		(Mpa)		(%)		
		x	s	x	s	x	s	x	s	
B0, 90 °C	ALZ	4,0	0,4	2,4	0,0	10,2	0,2	492	14	
energia di sena antisenta de la sena	1	5,7	1,2	3,3	0,0	10,9	0,1	386	11	
and the state of t	3	6,4	0,6	4,2	0,1	11,2	0,2	323	7	
	6	7,1	0,6	4,9	0,1	11,2	0,2	275	5	
and a set of the local and and the local set of the local set.	12	9,4	0,9	7,0	0,1	10,5	0,3	175	8	
	24	12,2	0,2	9,1	0,1	10,6	0,2	127	1	
B1, 1995, 90 °C	ALZ	5,0	0,2	2,5	0,0	9,5	0,1	455	10	
	3	6,6	0,4	4,1	0,0	9,8	0,1	291	3	
	6	8,3	0,5	5,3	0,0	9,7	0,1	224	3	
	12	9,6	1,0	7,1	0,0	9,6	0,1	159	1	
	24	13,4	1,0	9,4	0,0	9,5	0,2	101	1	
B2, 1974, 90 °C	ALZ	8,2	0,4	3,7	0,0	9,4	0,3	341	12	
	3	10,0	0,4	5,8	0,1	9,4	0,1	210	6	
	6	12,3	0,6	7,7	0,1	9,6	0,3	156	10	
	12	14,8	1,1	9,5	0,1	10,1	0,2	116	6	
	24	18,0	1.4	-	-	10,5	0,8	87	8	
B5, 1978, 90 °C	ALZ	4,6	0,2	2,1	0,0	9,1	0,5	534	47	
and the second second second second second	3	6,7	0,5	3,6	0,1	9,3	0,2	298	9	
	6	8,1	0,4	4,7	0,1	9,4	0,4	226	16	
an anna an an Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna	12	9.8	0,6	6.4	0,1	9,6	0,2	165	5	
	24	14,7	1,0	9,1	0,1	9,6	0,6	108	10	
B6, 1968, 90 °C	ALZ	8,3	0,6	4,0	0,0	10,7	0,2	341	11	
	3	10,8	0,6	6,5	0,1	11,0	0,3	208	10	
	6	15,1	0,6	8,9	0,2	11,7	0,2	154	4	
and the second states of the s	12	17,7	1,7	11,9	0,2	12,7	0,3	112	4	
	24	28,8	4,3	-	-	14,1	0,3	70	5	

Tabelle 5: Einfluss der Wärmealterung bei 90 °C auf die Eigenschaften im Zugversuch

Ergebnisangabe: \overline{x} = arithm. Mittelwert, s = Standardabweichung

Code	Lagerzeit	E ₁₋₂ -Modul		Spannung 100% Dehr		Reißfestigkeit		Reißdehnung		
	(Monate)	(Mpa)	(%)		(Mpa)		(%)		
30. 100 °C		x	s	x	s	\overline{x}	s	x	s	
80, 100 °C	ALZ	4,0	0,4	2,4	0,0	10,2	0	492	14	
	1	5,9	0,1	3,9	0,1	10,9	0	325	6	
	2	7,3	0,6	4,9	0,1	10,7	1	265	19	
	3	7,2	0,4	5,4	0,1	10,9	0	244	5	
	6	8,4	0,7	6,9	0,1	11,0	0	186	4	
	12	11,3	0,9	8,9	0,1	10,7	0	130	3	
	24	15,7	0,8	-		11,4	0	95	3	
B1, 1995, 100 °C	ALZ	5.0	0,2	2,5	0,0	9,5	0	455	10	
and a first second starting starting of the	1	6,3	0,3	3,7	0,1	9,8	0	319	5	
	2	7,0	0,3	4,5	0,1	9,6	0	259	6	
	3	7,3	0,5	4,9	0,1	9,6	0	239	9	
	6	9,0	0,3	6,3	0,1	9,2	0	175	5	
	12	10,4	1,3	8,4	0,1	9,2	0		2	
	24	18,6	1,9	-		9,0	0	68	5	
B2, 1974, 100 °C	ALZ	8,2	0,4	3,7	0,0	9,4	0	341	12	
	1	9,3	0,6		0,1	9,4	0	216	11	
	2	11,6	0,4	7,0	0,1	9,2	0	164	9	
	3	12,2	0,5	7,9	0,1	9,4	1	143	15	
	6	14,3	0,8	9,1	0,1	9,8	1	121	18	
	12	16,4	1,0			10,9	0	93	1	
	24	21,2	0,8	-	-	11,6	0		1	
B5, 1978, 100 °C	ALZ	4,6	0,2	2,1	0,0	9,1	1	534	47	
end ministration and a	1	6,1	0,3	3,6	0,1	9,2	0		11	
	2	7,0	0,4	4,0	0,1	9,3	0		7	
	3	7,6	0,5	4,5	0,1	9,1	0	220	13	
	6	9,0	0,6	5,6	0,1	9,3	0		9	
	12	12,6	1,3	8,7	0,2	9,1	0	106	5	
	24	15,8	2,0	-	- 1	9,2	1	75	9	
B6, 1968, 100 °C	ALZ	8,3	0,6	4,0	0,0		0		11	
	1	12,1	1,0	7,2	0,1	11,0	0		5	
	2	13,4 -	0,4	8,4	0,1	11,4	0		4	
	3	16,2	0,6	9,8	0,2	11,7	0		3	
	6	20,9	2,0		0,2		0	And a second	3 2 1	
	12 24	26,3	2,4		-	13,5	0	the second s	1	

Tabelle 6: Einfluss der Wärmealterung bei 100 °C auf die Eigenschaften im Zugversuch

Ergebnisangabe: \bar{x} = arithm. Mittelwert ± s = Standardabweichung

Code	Lagerzeit	E ₁₋₂ -Modul		Spannung 100% Deh	j bei nung	Reißfestig	Ikeit	Reißdehnung		
	(Monate)	(Mpa)		(%)		(Mpa	a)	(%)		
		x	s	\overline{x}	s	x	s	x	-	
B0, 110 °C	ALZ	4.0	0,4	2,4	0,0	10,2	0,2	492	14	
Sand and state and state and state and	7d	5,5	0,1	3,6	0,1	11,1	0,2		4	
	14 d	6,1	0,2		0,0		0,2		6	
	1	7,0	0,2	5,0	0,0	11,0	0,2		8	
1	2	8,8	0,8		0,1	11,0	0,2	201	6	
	3	9,5	0,3	7,4	0,1	11,2	0,1	177	ŧ	
	6	13,0	0,6	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	0,1	11,4	0,3	119		
	12	16,5	0,2	-	-	11,0	0,4	73	L	
	24	27,0	1,8	-	-	11,6	0,3	47	2	
B1, 1995, 110 °C	ALZ	5,0	0,2	2,5	0,0	9,5	0,1	455	10	
	7 d	6,2	0,4	3,4	0,1	9,7	0,1	351	10	
	14 d	6,3	0,1	3,8	0,0	9,9	0,1	315	4	
	1	7,0	0,3	4,9	0,0	9,4	0,2	232	6	
	2	8,0	0,2	5,8	0,1	9,0	0,1	183	ŧ	
	3	9,4	0,3	6,9	0,1	8,8	0,1	145	3	
	6	11,4	0,3	8,6	0,1	8,8	0,3	106	3	
	12	15,8	1,4		-	8,8	0,3	63	3	
	24	24,9	2,4	-	-	8,8	0,3	42	3	
B2, 1974, 110 °C	ALZ	8,2	0,4	3,7	0,0	9,4	0,3	341	12	
	7 d	8,8	0,2	5,0	0,2	9,3	0,4	235	11	
	14 d	9,4	0,6	5,8	0,1	9,7	0,3	214	9	
	1	11,0	0,2	7,3	0,1	9,5	0,4	163	E	
	2	12,2	0,5		0,2	9,7	0,2			
	3	14,1	0,3	9,8	0,1	10,0	0,2	107	6	
	6	17,6	0,8	-	-	10,9	0,2	79	0	
	12	22,8	2,0	-	-	11,3	0,3		2	
	24	36,8	3,4				0,2		1	
B5, 1978, 110 °C	ALZ	4,6	0,2		0,0		0,5		47	
	7d	6,0	0,2		0,0		0,1		7	
	14 d	6,2	0,1		0,1	9,3	0,1		7	
	1	7,6	0,5		0,1		0,3		13	
	2	8,1	E, 0		0,2		0,3		5	
	3	9,8	0,4		0,1		0,3		E	
	6	13,3	1,1		0,0		0,6		5	
	12	15,9	9,0				8,0		7	
	24	29,3	1,5		-		1,2		5	
B6, 1968, 110 °C	ALZ	8,3	0,6		0,0		0,2		11	
	7 d 14 d	10,0	0,2		0,0		0,3		1	
	140	14,2 +	0,9		0,3		0,4		7	
	2	16,8	0,7	Contract of the local data and t	0,2	and the second design of the s	0,1	111		
	3	20,0	1,4		-	12,4	0,2			
	6	26,5	1,1		-		0,3		1	
	12	38,2	2,8			10.0	0,6	Contraction of the local distance of the loc		

Tabelle 7: Einfluss der Wärmealterung bei 110 °C auf die Eigenschaften im Zugversuch

Ergebnisangabe: \bar{x} = arithm. Mittelwert, s = Standardabweichung

Code	Lagerzeit	E _{1.2} -Modul		Spannung 100% Dehr		Reißfestig	keit	Reißdehnung		
	(Monate)	(Mpa)		(%)		(Mpa)	(%)		
		\overline{x}	s	\overline{x}	S	x	S	x	s	
BO, QUV	ALZ	4,0	0,4	2,4	0,0	10,2	0,2	492	14	
	6	6,7	0,3	3,8	0,2	10,7	0,2	353	21	
	12	5,8	0,2	3,7	0,2	10,2	0,2	342	26	
a - Taran Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna	24	5,9	0,6	4,5	0,6	10,0	0,2	269	46	
B1, 1995, QUV	ALZ	5,0	0,2	2,5	0,0	9,5	0,1	455	10	
	6	6,7	0,5	3,3	0,3	9,7	0,1	381	39	
	12	7,1	0,7	4,1	0,4	9,2	0,2	294	34	
	24	10,3	0,8	6,1	0,8	8,8	0,3	183	40	
B2, 1974, QUV	ALZ	8,2	0,4	3,7	0,0	9,4	0,3	341	12	
	6	11,5	1,0	5,5	0,4	9,4	0,1	230	16	
	12	11,1	1,0	5,8	0,1	9,3	0,2	224	10	
	24	13,7	1,5	7,2	0,6	9,4	0,2	170	22	
B5, 1978, QUV	ALZ	4,6	0,2	2,1	0,0	9,1	0,5	534	47	
	6	7,0	0,4	3,2	0,1	9,2	0,2	361	17	
	12	7,2	0,8	3,8	0,2	9,3	0,2	288	32	
	24	9,5	0,9	4,6	0,2	9,5	0,2	244	19	
B6, 1968, QUV	ALZ	8,3	0,6	4,0	0,0	10,7	0,2	341	11	
nen en	6	10,9	1,9		0,3		0,3	246	17	
	12	11,2	1,4		0,5		0,2		19	
	24	14,2	0,9	7,8	0,5	10,8	0,1	166	15	

Tabelle 8: Einfluss der künstlichen Bewitterung im QUV auf die Eigenschaften im Zugversuch

Ergebnisangabe: \overline{x} = arithm. Mittelwert, s = Standardabweichung