

Argon Gas Filling

Since 1988, Cardinal IG Company has been gas filling their IG units. Gas filling, and more particularly argon gas filling, is used to lower the U-Factor of the IG unit.

Initial Argon Fill Level

It is well understood insulating glass units cannot be 100% filled with any particular gas. Cardinal designs their units to have initial average argon fills of 90% or above (unless otherwise specified).

Insulating glass unit size, geometry, and addition of internal grilles, etc. can negatively influence the effectiveness of the argon filling process and the resulting percentage of argon in the air space. For example, grilles inside the airspace contain ambient air and the air in the grille can reduce the overall initial argon fill percentage by several percentage points.

Cardinal IG is a licensee of IGCC (Insulating Glass Certification Council) and IGMA (Insulating Glass Manufacturers Alliance) under their argon fill certification programs. Cardinal IG has submitted the required IG units to IGCC/IGMA for testing per ASTM E2190. The test units must meet a minimum average initial argon gas content of 90%, and a minimum average gas content of 80% after ASTM E2190 weathering cycle. See www.igcc.org <https://fgiaonline.org> for more information.

At the time of manufacturing, Cardinal automatically measures argon fill levels of its IG units using various spectroscopy techniques. All these techniques have inherent limitations and do not allow the measurement of gas fill levels of all IG units.

Argon Permeation

Cardinal IG has also uses the European *EN 1279-3 Long Term Test Method and Requirements for Gas Leakage Rate and For Gas Concentration* to determine the argon permeation rate of tested units. These tests, conducted by an independent laboratory, found the Cardinal IG units had an argon initial permeation rate below 1% per year.

Cardinal IG manages its manufacturing processes for the purpose of consistently constructing units in a manner similar to the units that were tested under the EN 1279-3 standard. However, Cardinal IG cannot certify or assure any particular IG unit will have an argon permeation rate of below 1% per year.

Argon Filling of IG Units Without LoE™

Cardinal IG does not recommend the use of argon in units without a LoE coating. The addition of argon gas provides only a small improvement in U-Factor compared to the addition of a LoE coating. In the absence of a LoE coating, the argon gas will only provide a small incremental improvement in U-Factor and no effects on Visible Light Transmission (VLT) and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) values. This is illustrated in Fig IG02-01 below.

	3mm Clear / 13.0 / 3mm Clear	
	100% Air	90% Argon, 10% Air
U-Factor	0.48	0.46
VLT	82%	82%
SHGC	0.78	0.78

Fig IG02-01 U-Factor units of BTU/hr-ft²-F. Calculations done with LBNL Window software.

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