



EXPLANATION
Thermal-maturity units—See text for explanation
Understore— R_p , 0.6 CAI 1.0
Mater 1— R_p , 0.6-1.3 CAI 1.0-2.0
Mater 2— R_p , 1.3-2.0 CAI 1.0-3.0
Overmature— R_p , 2.0-3.0 CAI 3.0-4.0
Supermature— R_p , 3.0-4.0 CAI 4.0-4.5
Ignom-Metamorphic— R_p , >5.0 CAI 4.5

EXPLANATION
Thermal-maturity unit contact—Dashed where inferred, dotted where concealed
High-grade fault—Dashed where inferred, dotted where concealed
Thrust fault—Dashed where inferred, dotted where concealed
Detrital fault—Dashed where inferred, dotted where concealed
Contact on U/M1 unit boundary—Elevation of U/M1 thermal maturity unit boundary (0.6% vitrinite reflectance isograd). Values, meters below sea level
Vitrinite reflectance
Conductance Color Alteration Index

Subsidence data
Selected oil well with vitrinite reflectance data—All elevations and vitrinite reflectance values are from regression lines drawn through the data; this line may be extrapolated slightly below the well bottom

EXPLANATION
Well name
Kally hanging elevation, meters above sea level
R_p Surf(7m) 0.25—Vitrinite reflectance at surface (%)
R_p TD(285m) 1.77—Vitrinite reflectance at total depth (%)
LMI: 250m—Bulk bottom, meters below sea level
M1M2—250m—Contacts between thermal map units, meters below M2C0—275m—sea level
Oil well—Used to constrain estimated U/M1 thermal maturity unit boundary (0.6% vitrinite reflectance isograd) in Cook Inlet and North Slope regions

EXPLANATION
OM well
Thrust fault
Basement
Boundary between thermal maturity units
Boundary between thermal maturity units

EXPLANATION
OM well
Thrust fault
Basement
Boundary between thermal maturity units
Boundary between thermal maturity units

INTRODUCTION
Thermal maturity is a measure of the level of thermal alteration of organic matter in sedimentary rocks. Inasmuch as different types of organic matter respond differently to heat, it is operationally defined differently. High thermal maturity values are associated with high thermal maturity units, indicating that maximum burial and subsequent thermal history have been experienced in evaluating hydrocarbon potential.

VITRINITE REFLECTANCE
Vitrinite is one of several types of organic matter commonly disseminated in clastic sedimentary rocks. Representing the remains of woody plant material, vitrinite is the major constituent of most, and is abundant in most terrestrial, shales. It is often present, although much less abundant, in coastal sediments, limestones, and marine rocks as well. Upon diagenesis, loss of volatile components and graphitization of carbon, an increase in the reflectivity of vitrinite. Vitrinite reflectance increases rapidly to approximately 1.0% at 100°C, and then more gradually to 2.0% at 300°C. Above 300°C, vitrinite reflectance increases more gradually to 4.0% at 500°C. Vitrinite reflectance is not susceptible to retrograde alteration (Bostick, 1979). Accordingly, vitrinite reflectance has become the most widely used measure of thermal maturity in sedimentary rocks. Recent kinetic models (Barham and Sweeney, 1989; Sweeney and Barham, 1990) and field studies in areas where the duration of heating has been well constrained (Baker and others, 1983; Barker, 1984) suggest that, for heating periods of greater than approximately 10 years, maximum temperature and the duration of heating largely determine the level of vitrinite reflectance. Vitrinite reflectance may be used, with caution, to establish absolute maximum temperatures. Many workers have proposed equations relating temperature and vitrinite reflectance (Bostick, 1979; Price, 1983; Barker and Pawlewicz, 1986; Barker, 1988). We prefer the correlation of Barker (1988, Table 1) (Bostick, 1979) as it most closely matches the results predicted by kinetic models (Barham and Sweeney, 1989; Sweeney and Barham, 1990).

CONDUCTANCE COLOR ALTERATION INDEX
Conductance is a measure of an organic group of primary terrestrial (probably related to peat) fossils, commonly 0.1 to 1 m in length, that are found in marine rocks of Late Cretaceous through Tertiary age. They are common in carbonate and some marine clastic rocks, and their abundance generally varies inversely with sedimentation rate. Conductors grew throughout the life of the animal by periodic addition of a relatively coarse lamella of apatite followed by a fine lamella of organic matter. During diagenesis, the organic matter is oxidized to transparent apatite lamellae—An index of relative coarse lamella of apatite followed by a fine lamella of organic matter. Carbonized, producing visible color changes. Colors range from pale yellow, to amber, light brown, dark brown, and black corresponding to temperatures ranging from 50F to 300F (Espinosa and others, 1977). Above 300F, conductance color changes from black to gray, to sooty white, and finally to crystal clear as a result of carbon loss, release of water of crystallization, and recrystallization. All of these color changes have been observed in natural samples and reproduced and calibrated by pyrolysis experiments in the laboratory (Espinosa and others, 1977; Rowland and others, 1978). The Conductance Color Alteration Index (CAI) is the quantification of these color changes through the use of established standards.

REFERENCES CITED
Barker, C.E., 1988, Geochemistry of petroleum systems: Implications of the stabilization of hydrocarbon thermal maturation after a geologically brief heating duration at peak temperatures, in Magpan, L.B., ed., Petroleum systems of the United States: U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1478, p. 26-29.
—1991, Implications for organic maturation studies of evidence for a geologically rapid increase and stabilization of vitrinite reflectance at peak temperature: Core-Prognostic system, Mexico: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, 75, p. 1857-1863.
Barker, C.E., Daniel, M.C., and Pawlewicz, M.J., 1983, A surface vitrinite reflectance anomaly related to Bull Creek Oil Field, Montana: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 83-876, 17 p.
Barker, C.E., and Pawlewicz, M.J., 1986, The correlation of vitrinite reflectance with maximum petroleum production in basins, in Bismuth, G., and Stegner, L., eds., Paleogeography: New York, Springer-Verlag, p. 79-93.
Bostick, R., 1979, Microscopic measurement of the level of catagenesis of solid organic matter in sedimentary rocks and its application for petroleum and to determine former burial temperatures—A review, in Schilling, P.A., and Schilling, F.R., eds., Aspects of Diagenesis: Tulsa, Oklahoma, Society of Economic Paleontologists and Microscopists Special Publication 26, p. 37-44.
Burham, A.K., and Sweeney, J.J., 1989, A chemical kinetic model of vitrinite reflectance: Implications for petroleum geology, in Proceedings of the 1989 International Symposium on Organic Geochemistry, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 993, 27 p.
Espinosa, A.G., Espinosa, J.B., and Harris, L.D., 1977, Conductance color alteration—An index to organic maturation, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 993, 27 p.
Hovius, V., Chapman, A., and Bertrand, R., 1979, Compaction and correlation of major basins, in Proceedings of the 1979 International Symposium on Organic Geochemistry, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 993, 11 p.
Hovius, V., Chapman, A., and Bertrand, R., 1979, Organic maturation and the generation of petroleum: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, 63, p. 984-990.
Johnson, M., Howell, D.G., and Bird, K.J., 1993, Thermal maturity patterns in Alaska: Implications to tectonic evolution and hydrocarbon potential: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, 77, p. 1875-1890.
Price, L.C., 1983, Geologic time as a parameter in organic metamorphism and vitrinite reflectance: An analytical paleogeothermometer: Journal of Petroleum Geology, 5, p. 3-18.
Reynolds, V.A., Harris, A.G., and Hubbard, J.S., 1987, Conductance color and vitrinite reflectance: An index to regional metamorphism, contact metamorphism, and hydrothermal alteration: Geological Society of America Bulletin, 99, p. 173-179.
Schilling, P.A., and Schilling, F.R., 1979, Aspects of diagenesis: Tulsa, Oklahoma, Society of Economic Paleontologists and Microscopists Special Publication 26, p. 47-73.
Stack, E., Mackoway, M., Teichmuller, M., Taylor, G.H., Chanda, D., and Schmitzler, R., 1982, Stack's textbook of coal petrology: Berlin, Gebrüder Borntraeger, 555 p.
Sweeney, J.J., and Burham, A.K., 1990, Evaluation of a simple model of vitrinite reflectance based on kinetic models: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, 74, p. 1539-1570.
Walker, V.A., Harris, A.G., and Hubbard, J.S., 1987, Conductance color and vitrinite reflectance: An index to regional metamorphism, contact metamorphism, and hydrothermal alteration: Geological Society of America Bulletin, 99, p. 173-179.
Schilling, P.A., and Schilling, F.R., 1979, Aspects of diagenesis: Tulsa, Oklahoma, Society of Economic Paleontologists and Microscopists Special Publication 26, p. 47-73.
Stack, E., Mackoway, M., Teichmuller, M., Taylor, G.H., Chanda, D., and Schmitzler, R., 1982, Stack's textbook of coal petrology: Berlin, Gebrüder Borntraeger, 555 p.
Sweeney, J.J., and Burham, A.K., 1990, Evaluation of a simple model of vitrinite reflectance based on kinetic models: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, 74, p. 1539-1570.

PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTORS
Kenneth J. Bird, Cynthia Dusel-Bacon, Christopher F. Hamilton, Anita G. Harris, Leslie B. Magpan, Mark J. Pawlewicz, and Zenon C. Valin

Previously unpublished data and samples contributed by:

K.E. Adams J.T. Dillon J.M. Murphy
T.S. Ahrens J.H. Dover S.W. Nelson
A.M. Anderson J.A. Dumitrescu W.J. Nashberg
A. Anderson J.T. Datto, Jr. A.T. Overshink
H.C. Berg L.F. Ellefseck W.W. Patton, Jr.
R.B. Blodgett P. Filiger A.W. Peter
D.A. Bodnar H.L. Foster A.W. Peter
D. Bobs W.G. Gilbert B.L. Reed
S. Boundy-Sanders P.D. Gruzlovic R.R. Reiffenstahl
S.E. Bow G. Hakkis H.N. Renier
E.E. Boush S.B. Roberts
D.A. Bron P.J. Harsveler J.M. Schmidt
British Petroleum B.K. Hollworth Shell Oil Co.
W.P. Brugg J.C. Huffman, Jr. U.S. Geological Survey
T.K. Buzdren B.L. Jones J.P. Sisk
C. Carlson S.M. Kelly R.G. Stanley
R.M. Chapman J.S. Kerley I.L. Tullner
Chevron Oil Co. M.M. Langbehn W. Thompson
M. Charlin, Jr. C.F. Mayfield A.B. Tih
K.H. Clanton M.L. Miller M.B. Underwood
J.G. Clough C.M. Molnar K.F. Wain
H.A. Cohen F.R. Moore
H.E. Cook C.G. Mall T.J. Wiley
S.M. Curtis M.W. Mullen

GENERALIZED THERMAL MATURITY MAP OF ALASKA
Compiled by
Mark J. Johnson and David G. Howell
1996

Base prepared by Geological Society of America from U.S. Geological Survey National Atlas, 17,200,000, 1970. Geologic modified from Dussel-Bacon (1984) and Balkman (1986). Map edited by Dale Russell and Terry A. Lindquist cartography by Robert L. Whitaker and Terry A. Lindquist. Map approved for publication July 1, 1994. Johnson, Mark J., and Howell, David G., eds., 1996, Thermal evolution of sedimentary basins in Alaska: U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 2142.

Any use of trade, product, or firm names in this publication is not a warranty, endorsement, or approval of the quality or value of such products or services by the U.S. Geological Survey. Information System, Box 25286, Federal Center, Denver, CO 80226