AA07 - Effect of CGM on the Particle Size of Aluminum Hydroxide During the Seed Addition to a Sodium Aluminate Solution

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Abstract

The addition of CGM to sodium aluminate solution affects seed secondary nucleation and is one of the main factors contributing to fine aluminum hydroxide particles agglomeration. The experimental results showed that adding the right amount of CGM to a sodium aluminate solution can inhibit to some extent seed secondary nucleation, reduce seed secondary nucleation rate, promote the fine aluminum hydroxide particles agglomeration and optimize the grain size of aluminum hydroxide. In this experiment, the appropriate amount of CGM was 15 – 20 ppm and excessive addition did not play a positive role in secondary nucleation and particle agglomeration of seed. According to the seed addition process of an industrial sodium aluminate solution, the appropriate amount of CGM should be determined by experiments under different process conditions, so as to obtain the best aluminum hydroxide particle size composition and sodium oxalate removal rate.

Keywords: CGM, sodium aluminate solution, crystal seed decomposition, secondary nucleation, agglomeration.

1. Introduction

It is well known that the decomposition process of sodium aluminate solution includes the decomposition process of aluminate ion and the crystallization process of aluminum hydroxide. The crystallization process of aluminum hydroxide includes the following steps: Nucleation (primary and secondary), agglomeration, growth and breakage or attrition. The agglomeration and crystal growth of seed will make the aluminum hydroxide crystal coarser, while the secondary nucleation and crystal breakage will lead to fine aluminum hydroxide crystals. Inhibiting the formation of secondary crystal nucleus and promoting the adhesion and crystal growth of aluminum hydroxide are beneficial to the production of sandy alumina. Because the additive has interface adsorption, orientational, micelle formation, and the resulting decline properties such as surface tension, adding additives to sodium aluminate solution can control the particle size, strengthening the particles in order to obtain uniform particle size and shape for the coarse sand alumina [2]. But because in the process of decomposition of sodium aluminate solution, the decomposition temperature, time, influent concentration and addition amounts of seed produce a great impact on the crystal of aluminum hydroxide precipitation. The decomposition process of a sodium aluminate solution by adding CGM is more complicated. CGM addition requires research on the impact of secondary nucleation and crystals agglomeration for the production of aluminum hydroxide and its particle size control.

Because of the complexity of sodium aluminate solution, a lot of factors associated with the production of alumina such as bauxite chemical composition, liquor caustic and alumina concentration and the adiition of CGM has an impact on aluminum hydroxide granulometry.

In this paper, the effects of additives on the secondary nucleation of seed were studied using two indexes secondary nucleation frequencies f1.92 and f3.55 (the number of 1.92 µm and 3.55 µm particles), and the effects of additives on the polymerization of alumina hydroxide were studied on the three indexes of -45µm, -60µm and D50.

2. Test Materials and Instruments

2.1 Test Materials

Sodium hydroxide: analytical pure chemical reagent.

Crystal seed alumina hydroxide: The aluminum hydroxide filter cake from precipitation process was washed with hot deionized water several times to remove the sodium aluminate and sodium oxalate and other impurities attached to the surface of the crystal. After blending, the sample was sealed and stored for use. The particle size of the washed seed was determined to be -45 µm (12 % by weight) and D50 of 63.30 µm.

Additive CGM: derived from an additive used in an aluminum oxide plant and manufactured by Norandel.

Sodium aluminate solution: pure sodium hydroxide dissolved in a certain volume of deionized water mixture. Industrial aluminum hydroxide was dissolved in the heated sodium hydroxide solution and then filtered. The obtained sodium aluminate solution was analyzed for caustic and alumina.

2.2 Test Instruments and Equipment

Electronic balance, electric sensitive area particle size meter, temperature control water bath decomposition tank, vacuum pump, etc.

3. Test and Analysis Methods

3.1 Test

Aluminum hydroxide crystal seed was added to a certain amount of synthetic sodium alumina solution, and the decomposition test was carried out in a water bath decomposition tank to simulate the production conditions at the site. After the end of the decomposition test, the slurry was filtered, and the mass concentration of caustic soda and alumina determined in the filtrate. The filter cake of aluminum hydroxide was thoroughly washed with hot deionized water many times, and and a blended sample was analyzed forparticle size.

3.2 Analysis Method

The caustic alkali concentration in sodium aluminate solution was determined using a standard solution of hydrochloric acid and the alumina concentration was determined by EDTA complexometric titration. The particle size of aluminum hydroxide was measured with the use of a Coulter Counter.

4. Experimental Results and Discussion

The effect of CGM on particle size was shown by the frequency of secondary nucleation of seed and the precipitation of fine particles of alumina hydroxide. Nucleation frequency is defined as the number of the finest particles in the seed separation process, and the main measuring decomposition of synthetic sodium aluminate solution is 15-20 ppm, under which the aluminum hydroxide with coarse particle size can be obtained. When it is higher than or lower than 15-20 ppm, the seed has a greater chance of secondary nucleation and less particle agglomeration, which is not conducive to obtaining qualified sandy alumina.

According to seeded solutions of sodium aluminate, the suitable amount of CGM should be determined by experiments under different concentration conditions, so as to facilitate the production of sandy alumina.

6. References

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