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The thermal decomposition of CH₃I in a gas flow

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The localization of volatile radioactive iodine compounds by various sorbents from vapor-gas media is a vital issue for environmental protection during both irradiated nuclear fuel reprocessing and accidents at nuclear power enterprises, including nuclear power plants (NPPs).

The work studies the thermal decomposition of methyl iodide CH₃I, a volatile radioactive iodine organic compound, in a gas flow in the presence of various modifications of “Fizkhmin”TM granulated materials based on silica gel impregnated with d-elements.

Test facility concluded the following basic parts: rotameters (1); a CH₃I generator (2); scrubber with water (3); the heating furnace of mine type (4); composite materials under study (5); the thermocouple (6); a column with SiO₂-CuO (7); scrubber with 0.05 M Na₂SO₃ solution (8); the heating furnace of tubular type (9); columns with SiO₂-AgNO₃ (10).

The study found that in the absence of “Fizkhmin”TM material, the degree of the decomposition of CH₃I (10 mg) in air (flow rate 4.5–5.5 cm/s and time of the air flow presence in the heating zone 1.0–1.5 s) was equal to 7–10% at (540 ± 10)°C, 70–75% at (640 ± 10)°C, and 97–99% at (770 ± 15)°C.

In the presence of silica gel granules measuring 1.0–3.0 mm, the degree of the decomposition of CH₃I (10 mg) in air (linear flow rate 4.8–5.2 cm/s and time of the air flow presence in the heating zone 1.0–1.1 s) was equal to 2–3% at (240 ± 10)°C, 10–15% at (340 ± 10)°C, 75–80% at (440 ± 10)°C, and 97–99% at (540 ± 10)°C. Silica gel granules allow decreasing the CH₃I thermal decomposition temperature in an air flow by ~200°C.

In the presence of “Fizkhmin”TM granulated materials impregnated with Ni compounds or Ni-Cu mixture (8–10 wt.% and granule size 1.0–3.0 mm), the degree of the decomposition of CH₃I (10 mg) in air (linear flow rate 4.8–5.2 cm/s and time of the air flow presence in the heating zone 0.8–1.1 s) was equal to <0.2% at (20 ± 3)°C, 0.3–1.0% at (150 ± 20)°C, 15–30% at (250 ± 10)°C, 85–92% at (340 ± 15)°C, and 95–99% at (465 ± 20)°C. “Fizkhmin”TM granules containing 8–10 wt.% Ni or its mixture with Cu, allow decreasing the CH₃I thermal decomposition temperature in an air flow by more than ~300°C.

The work studies the dependence of the CH₃I thermal decomposition degree on the concentration of a d-element in the “Fizkhmin”TM material and its storage time, as well as on the amount of CH₃I in an air flow.

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