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Facile Enrichment and Photocatalytical Degradation of Low Concentration MB in Aqueous Solution

Journal	Applied Mechanics and Materials (Volumes 110 - 116)
Volume	Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Edited by	Wu Fan
Pages	2308-2315
DOI	10.4028/www.scientific.net/AMM.110-116.2308
Citation	Liu Xue Zhang et al., 2011, Applied Mechanics and Materials, 110-116, 2308
Online since	October, 2011
Authors	Liu Xue Zhang, Xiu Lian Wang
Keywords	Absorbent, Anatase Titania, Attapulgite, Decantation, Enrichment, Photodegradation, Simple Separation
Abstract	Fine particles of photoactive anatase-type TiO2, prepared by hydrolysis of tetrabutyl orthotitanate and crystallized under microwave (MV) irradiation, were loaded on adsorbent support attapulgite (ATP). The prepared hybrids TiO2-ATP were characterized with transmission electron microscopy (TEM), selected-area electron diffraction (SAED), and X-ray diffraction (XRD) and photoactivity properties were evaluated separately. The substrates of target were adsorbed on the adsorbent support, and then a high concentration environments of the substrate was formed around the loaded TiO2, resulting in an increase in the photodestruction rate. One of the most interesting features of the resulting catalysts with low titania contain (<30%) is their fast decantability in comparison with that of TiO2. This way one of the most important drawbacks of photocatalysis, the catalysts separation from the solution, was overcome by simple sedimentation and decantation. The low concentrations MB may be removed through enrichment and photodegradation using the prepared TiO2-ATP photocatalyst.
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Applied Mechanics and Materials Vols. 110-116 (2012) pp 2308-2315 Online available since 2011/Oct/24 at www.scientific.net © (2012) Trans Tech Publications, Switzerland doi: 10.4028/www.scientific.net/AMM.110-116.2308

Facile Enrichment and Photocatalytical Degradation of Low Concentration MB in Aqueous Solution

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Keywords: anatase titania; attapulgite; absorbent; enrichment; photodegradation; decantation; simple separation

Abstract. Fine particles of photoactive anatase-type TiO2, prepared by hydrolysis of tetrabutyl orthotitanate and crystallized under microwave (MV) irradiation, were loaded on adsorbent support attapulgite (ATP). The prepared hybrids TiO2-ATP were characterized with transmission electron microscopy (TEM), selected-area electron diffraction (SAED), and X-ray diffraction (XRD) and photoactivity properties were evaluated separately. The substrates of target were adsorbed on the adsorbent support, and then a high concentration environments of the substrate was formed around the loaded TiO2, resulting in an increase in the photodestruction rate. One of the most interesting features of the resulting catalysts with low titania contain (<30%) is their fast decantability in comparison with that of TiO2. This way one of the most important drawbacks of photocatalysis, the catalysts separation from the solution, was overcome by simple sedimentation and decantation. The low concentrations MB may be removed through enrichment and photodegradation using the prepared TiO2-ATP photocatalyst.

I. INTRODUCTION

Within the recent years, the application of photocatalytic materials has increasingly been addressed by many research groups and companies for the removal of numerous organic pollutants from water because it is a cleaning technology in water system treatment and the final decomposition products of organic compounds can be only CO₂, water and products of mineralization [1-2]. Due to its high oxidizing power, its high stability against photocorrosion and its environmental non-toxicity, TiO₂ in its anatase modification has become the most important material for this use [3-5]. When suspended particles are applied for water purification, the resulting highly active surfaces are advantageous, because of their availability for reactants and photons.

Such TiO₂-photocatalytic processes have important significance when applied to the destruction of target compounds of very low concentrations of ppm level or below. The allowance limit of these substances is very low such as less than 0.1 mg/l for substances dissolved in water and such as less than 0.1 ppm for vapor of bad smell substances, though the absolute values of the allowance limit are different depending on the kind of the substances. Therefore, the photodegradation of these harmful and/or bad smell substances should be achieved to a level far below the allowance limit.

In order to make the environmental application of TiO₂ photocatalysis for the destruction of target compounds of very low concentrations of ppm level or below, immobilization of TiO₂ on a certain suitable substrate is inevitably required. Recently it has been demonstrated that the rate of photodegradation at TiO₂ is enhanced by loading TiO₂ onto adsorbents and a few kinds of adsorbents such as SiO₂ [6-8], alumina [6-7], zeolites [6, 9], ZrO₂ [10], pillared clay (such as montmorillonite, saponite and fluorine mica) [11-12] and activated carbon [6-7, 13] were used. The adsorbent supports make a high concentration environment of target compounds around TiO₂, hence, increasing the collision probability between them. The most important in the preparation of hybrid photocatalysts is to select the most suitable adsorbent for TiO₂-loading. The adsorbents should have high absorbabilities for the substances of target but the diffusion of the adsorbed substrates should not be seriously hindered.

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