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PROCESS FOR MANUFACTURING OLEFINS USING A
PENTASIL ZEOLITE BASED CATALYST

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is a naphtha cracking catalyst and an improved catalytic naphtha cracking process for producing olefins from paraffins, particularly paraffins which are present in a hydrocarbon mixture commonly known as naphtha. The process provides relatively higher propylene yields and significantly lower methane yields over the commercially important range of about 60 to about 90 percent naphtha conversion, while providing about the same or lower yields of aromatics and light paraffins over the range, as compared to well known prior art catalytic and thermal processes. Additionally, the process resists deactivation of the catalyst by coking.

In one aspect, the invention is a process for producing a relatively light olefin. Naphtha is the preferred feedstock for this process. In the process, a hydrocarbon feedstock, which includes hydrocarbons having about three to about twenty carbon atoms, preferably paraffinic and isoparaffinic hydrocarbons having about four to about eleven carbon atoms per molecule, is passed into a reactor containing a pentasil zeolite catalyst. The zeolite-containing catalyst typically includes about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus and about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, germanium, tin and mixtures thereof. At least a portion of the hydrocarbon is converted to produce an olefin having about two to about three carbon atoms per molecule. The hydrocarbon may be passed into the reactor together with a heat-conducting diluent such as steam, nitrogen, alkanes such as methane and ethane, and mixtures thereof which are substantially inert under the process conditions used.

In another aspect, the invention is a process for producing an olefin, which process comprises contacting a naphtha which includes a paraffin having about four to about eleven carbon atoms per molecule with a catalyst in a reactor at a temperature of



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about 400 to about 650 degrees C and a pressure of about one to about three atmospheres. The catalyst is a pentasil zeolite catalyst having a silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of about 10 to about 400 and on which is typically placed about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus and about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of a promoting metal selected from the group consisting of germanium, gallium, tin, and mixtures thereof. At least a portion of the naphtha is cracked in the reactor to produce olefins having about two to about three carbon atoms per molecule. The naphtha may be passed into the reactor together with a diluent in the molar ratio in the range of about 9 to about 0.1. Alternatively, the naphtha may be passed into the reactor together with additional propane in a molar ratio in the range of about 6 to about 1. A portion of the reactor product may be recycled to the reactor.

In yet another aspect, the invention is a catalyst useful for producing light olefins from a hydrocarbon mixture, such as a naphtha, which includes one or more paraffins. The catalyst comprises a pentasil zeolite comprising silicon and aluminum in a silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of about 10 to about 400, about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus, and about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of germanium, gallium, tin, and mixtures thereof. Preferably, the pentasil zeolite is ZSM-5.

According to further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a process for producing at least one light olefin and relatively less aromatic products, comprising: contacting at a temperature of 400-600°C and a pressure of 1-3 atmospheres, a feedstock comprising a volatile hydrocarbon mixture which is liquid at room temperature and pressure, in a reactor with a catalyst comprising a pentasil zeolite catalyst which contains about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus and about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, germanium, tin and mixtures thereof based on the total weight of the catalyst, under effective reaction conditions to produce at least one olefin having two to about three carbon atoms per molecule.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

20 Fig. 1 is a graph showing ethylene yield as a function of naphtha
conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum
atomic ratio equal to 30, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to
aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30 with gallium, respectively;

25 Fig. 2 is a graph showing propylene yield as a function of naphtha
conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum

atomic ratio equal to 30, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30 with gallium, respectively;

Fig. 3 is a graph showing aromatics yield as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30 with gallium, respectively;

Fig. 4 is a graph showing the weight ratio of C_1 through C_3 paraffins produced to C_2 through C_3 olefins produced as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30 with gallium, respectively;

Fig. 5 is a graph showing ethylene yield as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 with gallium, germanium or tin, respectively;

Fig. 6 is a graph showing propylene yield as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 with gallium, germanium or tin, respectively,

Fig. 7 is a graph showing aromatics yield as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 with gallium, germanium or tin, respectively; and

Fig. 8 is a graph showing the weight ratio of C_1 through C_3 paraffins produced to C_2 through C_3 olefins produced as a function of naphtha conversion catalyzed by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, and by phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 with gallium, germanium or tin, respectively

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED ASPECTS OF THE INVENTION

In a preferred aspect, the present invention is a process in which a hydrocarbon feedstock comprising paraffins, aromatics, naphthenes, or mixtures thereof, is at least partially catalytically cracked to produce valuable lower olefins such as, for example, ethylene, propylene and butylene. The process includes contacting the hydrocarbon feedstock at effective reaction conditions with a pentasil zeolite catalyst which includes phosphorus and a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, germanium, tin and mixtures thereof.

Generally, naphthas comprise the most suitable feedstock materials. Naphtha means a volatile hydrocarbon mixture which is liquid at room temperature and pressure. Preferred naphthas comprise one or more paraffins, each of the paraffins having about three to about twenty carbon atoms per molecule, more preferably about four to about eleven carbon atoms per molecule, and exhibit an atmospheric volumetric average boiling point in the range of about negative 22 to about 466 degrees C., more preferably about negative 1 to about 204 degrees C. For the present purposes, paraffin means a saturated hydrocarbon of the empirical chemical formula C_nH_{2n+2} wherein n is an integer greater than zero. Paraffins include normal paraffins, which are unbranched, and isoparaffins, which contain at least one branched carbon chain per molecule. Especially preferred naphthas comprise proportions of various hydrocarbons present in the following ranges, expressed in weight percent of the total naphtha weight.

Normal Paraffins	Isoparaffins	Naphthenes	Olefins	Aromatics
6-34%	20-78%	1-35%	0-1.0%	0-18%

In practicing this aspect of the invention, contacting of the hydrocarbon feedstock and the pentasil zeolite catalyst is carried out at conditions which favor the formation of lower olefins. Preferably, the hydrocarbon feedstock and the pentasil zeolite catalyst, which is described in more detail below, are contacted in a reactor. For the present purposes, reactor means an apparatus such as, for example, a vessel, a tube, a riser or a coil, which encloses a volume which is maintained at reaction conditions effective to promote a desired chemical reaction. The invention may be practiced utilizing any of various types of reactors, some of which are known in the art as, for example, a fixed bed down flow reactor with feed preheating, a radial flow reactor, a fluidized bed reactor, or a transport riser reactor.

The process of the instant invention is highly endothermic. Preferably, fluidized bed solid catalyst conversion procedures are used in which the feed hydrocarbon material is contacted in vapor form with fluidized catalyst particles comprising pentasil zeolite catalyst. On the other hand, this aspect of the invention can be successfully practiced using fixed bed procedures. When a fixed bed of catalyst is employed, the use of reactors in series with interstage heating is advantageous.

Moving catalyst bed technology, such the catalyst regenerating technology employed commercially for the reforming of naphtha fractions, may be advantageously employed with the instant invention. A preferred reactor system is a moving bed radial flow multi-stage reactor with interstage heating, as described in U.S. Patent No.s 3,652,231; 4,094,814; 4,110,081; and 4,403,909, which are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety, and specifically for their teachings regarding moving catalyst bed technology and regeneration systems. This reactor system normally

employs a spherical catalyst having a diameter of about 0.03 to about 0.13 of an inch (about 0.76 to about 3.3 millimeter).

For the present purposes, effective reaction conditions means conditions which favor the formation of lower olefins. Conditions which favor the formation of lower
 5 olefins and, therefore, should be maintained in the reactor include a temperature of about 400 to about 650 degrees C., preferably about 480 to about 635 degrees C., more preferably about 540 to about 620 degrees C., and most preferably about 540 to about 600 degrees C. Preferably, the total pressure in the reactor of this preferred aspect of the invention typically about 1 to about 2 atmospheres absolute, more preferably about
 10 1 to about 1.5 atmospheres absolute, most preferably about 1 to about 1.15 atmospheres absolute.

The partial pressure attributable to all hydrocarbons present in the reactor at effective reaction conditions is about 0.1 to about 0.9 atmospheres absolute. The hydrocarbon feedstock may be admixed with a diluent useful for heat transfer
 15 composed of nitrogen, steam or a relatively refractory hydrocarbon such as, for example, methane or ethane. The partial pressure of the diluent at effective reaction conditions may be from about 0.9 to about 0.1 atmospheres absolute.

The hydrocarbon feedstock may be admixed with a co-feed composed substantially of propane. In this case, the hydrocarbon feedstock and the co-feed are
 20 passed into the reactor together, and the molar ratio of propane passed into the reactor to the hydrocarbon passed into the reactor is preferably about 6 to about 1. Some portion of reactor products may be recycled back to the reactor.

Preferably, space time in the reactor is about 1 to about 180 grams of catalyst per mole of hydrocarbon feedstock per hour, more preferably about 50 to about 100
 25 grams of catalyst per mole of hydrocarbon feedstock per hour. For the present

purposes, space time means the mass of catalyst in grams present in the reactor for each mole per hour of hydrocarbon feedstock which enters the reactor

In another preferred aspect, the invention is a catalyst. The active catalyst component is a phosphorus-containing pentasil zeolite such as, for example, ZSM-5
5 zeolite or ZSM-11 zeolite. For the present purposes, zeolite means a crystalline molecular sieve, which has an open porous structure and an ion exchange capacity. A zeolite may contain elements in addition to silicon and aluminum in their framework structures. For example, a zeolite may be a silicate having a framework structure into which a relatively small quantity of another element has been substituted, such as
10 aluminum in ZSM-5 aluminosilicalite or boron in HAMS-1-B borosilicate.

Silicalite is described in U.S Patent No. 4,061,724, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety, and especially for its teachings regarding silicalite. HAMS-1-B is described in U.S Patent No. 4,269,813, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety, and especially for its teachings regarding
15 HAMS-1B.

Pentasil means a family of zeolites having similar framework structures with ZSM-5 and ZSM-11 as its two end members. The framework structures are formed by linking chains of 5-membered ring secondary building units. Further information regarding pentasil zeolites may be found at pages 12-14 of *Shape Selective Catalysts in*
20 *Industrial Applications* by N.Y. Chen et al., copyright 1989, published by Marcel Dekker, Inc. of New York.

The pentasil zeolite useful in this invention also includes a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, germanium, tin, and mixtures thereof. Preferably, the zeolite is a phosphorus-containing ZSM-5 having a surface silicon to
25 aluminum atomic ratio in the range of about 10 to about 400, preferably about 30 to about 180, and more preferably about 30 to about 60.

The silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of the zeolite is conveniently controlled by regulating the amounts of components which are used to formulate the zeolite in accordance with known procedures. For example, phosphorus may be added to the formed pentasil zeolite by impregnating the zeolite with a phosphorus compound in accordance with the procedures described, for example, in U.S. Patent No. 3,972,832 and U.S. Patent No. 5,171,921 (which patents are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety, and especially for their teachings regarding pentasil zeolite)

Alternatively, the phosphorus compound can be added to a multicomponent mixture from which the pentasil catalyst is formed. In either case, the phosphorus compound is added in an amount sufficient to provide a final pentasil zeolite composition having preferably about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus, more preferably about 0.5 to about 2 weight percent phosphorus, most preferably about 0.75 to about 1.5 weight percent phosphorus, and usually about 1 weight percent phosphorus, based on the total weight of the pentasil zeolite.

The promoter metal may be incorporated into the phosphorus-containing pentasil zeolite (hereinafter referred to as "P-pentasil zeolite") by any suitable manner known in the art which results in a relatively uniform dispersion of the second metal such as, for example, by ion exchange, cogelation, or impregnation. The promoter is added in an amount sufficient to provide a final P-pentasil zeolite having preferably about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of the promoter metal, more preferably about 0.5 to about 5 weight percent of the promoter metal, most preferably about 0.75 to about 2 weight percent of the promoter metal, and ideally about 1 weight percent of the promoter metal based on the total weight of the pentasil zeolite

The phosphorus-containing pentasil zeolite described in this invention is preferably combined with or incorporated into known inert binders or matrices such as alumina, silica and silica alumina and may be formed into pellets, spheres or other discrete forms suitable for use in a hydrocarbon conversion

reactor. In a typical procedure, a pentasil zeolite product may be formed into discrete forms by extruding from a die and chopping. Typical extrudates may be about 1 to about 10 millimeters in diameter, often about 2 to about 6 millimeters in diameter, and about 4 to about 20 millimeters in length as suitable for the reactor system utilized. Alternatively, a zeolite binder product may be formed into a sphere by rolling or by dropping in a liquid filled tower. Typical spheres are about 0.03 to about 0.5 inches (about 0.75 to about 12 millimeters) in diameter.

For use in this invention, a pentasil zeolite is modified by incorporation of phosphorus and a promoter metal species. Typically, phosphorus is incorporated by adding a suitable phosphorus containing compound to the zeolite-containing material in a liquid medium, followed by drying and calcining. Similarly, the promoter metal may be incorporated by methods including impregnation and ion exchange, either to the zeolite alone or to the zeolite incorporated into the binder. Alternatively, it is contemplated that one or more of the promoter metals may be added to the binder or to the zeolite-binder product.

The binder or matrix generally comprises about 5 to about 90 weight percent of the catalyst composition, preferably about 20 to about weight percent, and more preferably about 30 to about 50 weight percent. The phosphorus-containing pentasil zeolite need not be treated with steam after incorporation of phosphorus.

For the present purposes, naphtha conversion means a mole-weighted average of the individual conversions of fifteen non-aromatic key components which are present in the naphtha but are not created under reaction conditions. The use of the key components in calculating naphtha conversion tends to minimise ambiguities which might otherwise arise when individual components

are simultaneously created and destroyed in the same reactor. More information regarding the determination of naphtha conversion may be found in a technical paper entitled "Scaling Up of Naphtha Cracking Coils" by P.S. Van Damme, G.F. Froment, and W.S. Balthasar which appears in Industrial Engineering Chemistry Process Design and Development, 1981, vol. 20, at page 366, which is
 5 incorporated by reference herein.

The following Examples are presented order to better communicate, but not limit the invention.

Example 1: Conversion of Naphtha over 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5
 10 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 30

As a control procedure, conversion of a light naphtha was demonstrated in the presence of a previously known pentasil zeolite, 1 weight percent phosphorus on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum ratio equal to 30. The most important components of a typical naphtha feed, employed in this Example 1, are
 15 shown below in Table 2.

Table 2
Naphtha Feed Composition
(weight percent)

hydrogen	0.00	2, 2-dimethylbutane	2.83
methane	0.00	2, 3-dimethylbutane	3.50
ethylene (C ₂ H ₄)	0.00	cyclohexane	0.52
ethane	0.00	2, 2-dimethylpentane	1.38
propylene (C ₃ H ₆)	0.00	2, 4-dimethylpentane	1.65
propane	0.00	3, 3-dimethylpentane	1.53
butylene (C ₄ H ₈)	0.05	2, 3-dimethylpentane	2.74
i-butane	0.08	2-methylhexane	11.87
n-butane	0.12	3-methylhexane	12.07
pentane	0.10	3-ethylpentane	1.74
cyclopentane	1.36	n-heptane	0.65
i-pentane	2.51	methylcyclohexane	0.46
n-pentane	1.28	benzene	0.96
hexene	0.70	toluene	0.19

n-hexane	4.82	ethylbenzene	0.00
2-methylpentane	20.41	(p + m) xylenes	0.00
3-methylpentane	16.34	o-Xylene	0.00
methylcyclopentane	8.40	C8+ aromatics	0.00

The 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite was obtained from $\text{NH}_4\text{-ZSM-5}$ zeolite by means of an incipient wetness impregnation technique with orthophosphoric acid. More specifically, $\text{NH}_4\text{-ZSM-5}$ zeolite was intimately
5 contacted with a solution including distilled water and orthophosphoric acid of chemical formula H_3PO_4 , and then dried. The resulting 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite had a surface silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of 30.

The 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30 so obtained was utilised as a catalyst in the conversion of naphtha
10 in a reactor at 540°C and 1.05 bar absolute. The partial pressure of the naphtha at the inlet of the reactor was set at 0.25 bar absolute by diluting the feed naphtha with nitrogen. The fraction of feed naphtha converted was controlled by varying space time in the reactor.

Ethylene yields observed with 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of
15 silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30, represented by dark-colored square-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 1. Propylene yields observed with 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5, represented by dark-colored square-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 2. Aromatic yields observed with 1 weight percent P on
20 HZSM-5, represented by dark-colored square-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 3. Additionally, the weight ratio of C_1 through C_3 paraffins produced to C_2 through C_3 olefins produced over the catalyst, represented by dark-colored square-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 4.

Example 2. Conversion of naphtha over 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 30

An experiment was performed, and is now described in this Example 2, which demonstrates that a naphtha conversion catalyst including 1 weight percent gallium, and also including 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 pentasil zeolite, produces a relative increase in light olefin production, while suppressing the production of aromatics and methane. In the experiment, gallium was impregnated on a sample of 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite, which was obtained substantially as described above in Example 1. More specifically, gallium oxide (Ga_2O_3) was dissolved in an aqueous solution of ammonia having an alkalinity of more than 13 pH to produce a solution. The solution was brought into intimate contact with 1 weight percent P-NH₄-ZSM-5 zeolite. The mixture was dried and calcined in air for twelve hours at 540 degrees C. to produce 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30.

The calcined 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite was subsequently utilised to convert naphtha having the composition shown above in Table 2 at substantially the same conditions which are described above in Example 1. Again, naphtha conversion was controlled by varying space time in the reactor. Ethylene, propylene and aromatics yields observed with 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 30, represented by dark-colored circle-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 1 Fig. 2 and Fig. 3, respectively. Additionally, the weight ratio of C₁ through C₃ paraffins produced to C₂ through C₄ olefins produced in the presence of the catalyst, represented by dark-colored circle-shaped symbols, is depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 4.

Inspection of the data depicted in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 reveals that a catalyst utilised in a process in accordance with the present invention, namely the 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio 30, was more selective towards ethylene and towards propylene, as compared to a previously known catalyst, which is 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio 30. Also, it can be seen from comparing these figures with Figure 3 that, by modifying the 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite with gallium, the production of aromatics was diminished.

Surprisingly, the data of Fig. 4 indicates that the above described advantages regarding ethylene, propylene and aromatics yields are accompanied by a relative decrease in the production of commercially less valuable light paraffins. For example, Fig. 4 indicates that the weight ratio of C₁ through C₃ paraffins produced to C₂ through C₃ olefins produced was 72 percent for the catalyst containing gallium at 89.5 percent naphtha conversion, as compared to 92 percent at 91.8 percent conversion for the previously known catalyst without gallium.

Examples 3 through 6: Gallium, Phosphorus and Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio in Ga-P on HZSM-5

Employing incipient wetness procedures substantially similar to the procedures described above in Example 1 and Example 2, a series of four Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite catalysts were prepared from NH₄-ZSM-5 zeolite with silicon to aluminum atomic ratios in the range of 30 to 180. The Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite catalysts so prepared included gallium in the range of 0.33 to 2 weight percent and phosphorus in the range of 0.33 to 2 weight percent, based on the total weight of the catalyst. The Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite catalysts were

placed in a reactor at 540 degrees C. in which naphtha was converted to olefins, aromatics and paraffins.

Feed rate through the reactor was varied. Operating periods of approximately equal feed conversion by weight at space times of 175.6, 87.9, 43.9, and 22.0 grams of catalyst per mol per hour of feed rate, respectively, are reported in descending order from top to bottom in Table 3, below. During such operating periods, naphtha conversion was in the range of 83.3 to 89.6 weight percent. Ethylene yield, propylene yield, butylene yield, aromatic yield and methane yield expressed in weight percent based on the total weight of the feed during such operating periods are reported below in Table 3.

Table 3

Example	Ga weight percent	P weight percent	Si /Al atomic ratio	Feed Conversion	C2H4 Yield	C3H6 Yield	C4H8 Yield	Aromatic Yield	Methane Yield
3	0.33	0.33	180	87.2	12.4	20.5	9.3	8.1	3.2
4	1	2	30	89.6	12.7	19.1	8.8	11.4	3.6
5	1	1	30	89.5	12.5	19.4	8.8	11.0	3.4
6	2	1	30	83.3	10.7	17.8	8.2	10.9	3.3

Inspection of the data presented in Table 3 indicates that catalysts of the present invention having silicon to aluminum atomic ratios in the range of about 30 to about 180 are desirably active and, also, that the Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite catalysts having lower silicon to aluminum atomic ratios are more catalytically

active for naphtha conversion. Moreover, it is apparent that Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite catalysts having more phosphorus tend to exhibit less activity.

The data in Table 3 indicates that increasing the weight ratio of phosphorus to gallium increases yields of ethylene, propylene and butylenes

5 The data in Table 3 also indicates that increasing this weight ratio inhibits aromatic and methane production. Therefore, it is preferred that the weight ratio of phosphorus to gallium is in the range of about 1:1 to about 5:1, more preferably about 2:1 to about 3:1.

Example 7: Conversion of Naphtha over 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5

10 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 60

As another control procedure, conversion of a light naphtha was demonstrated in the presence of a previously known pentasil zeolite, 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite having a surface of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60. The 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio 60 was obtained from
 15 NH_4 -ZSM-5 zeolite by substantially the same procedure as described above in Example 1, except that a relatively more concentrated orthophosphoric acid was employed for the incipient wetness impregnation. Specifically, 10 grams of NH_4 -ZSM-5 zeolite were contacted with 5 millilitres of twice distilled water blended with 0.38 gram of orthophosphoric acid. The composition of the naphtha feed employed in this Example,
 20 and the naphtha conversion process utilised in this Example, are substantially the same as described above in Example 1.

Ethylene, propylene and aromatics yields observed with 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, represented by light-colored square-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function
 25 of naphtha conversion in Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, respectively. Additionally, the weight ratio of C_1 through C_3 paraffins produced to C_2 through C_3 olefins

produced in the presence of the catalyst, represented by light-colored square-shaped symbols, is depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 8

Example 8: Conversion of naphtha over 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 60

A catalyst consisting of 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 was subsequently prepared by impregnating gallium onto a 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, which had been prepared by the method described above in Example 7. This catalyst was used to convert naphtha having the composition shown above in Table 2 at substantially the same conditions described above in Example 1. Again, naphtha conversion was controlled by varying space time in the reactor.

Ethylene, propylene and aromatics yields observed with 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, represented by light-colored circle-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, respectively. Additionally, the weight ratio of C_1 through C_3 paraffins produced to C_2 through C_3 olefins produced over the catalyst, represented by light-colored circle-shaped symbols, is depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 8.

Example 9: Conversion of naphtha over 1 weight percent Sn-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 60

An incipient wetness impregnation procedure was performed which is substantially similar to the procedure described above in Example 7, except that tin chloride (SnCl_2) was dissolved in acetone to produce an impregnating solution, rather than gallium oxide (Ga_2O_3) being dissolved in an aqueous

solution of ammonia. An appropriate amount of the tin chloride-acetone solution was brought into intimate contact with 1 weight percent P-NH₄-ZSM-5 zeolite having a silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of 60. The resulting mixture was dried and reduced in hydrogen at elevated temperature to produce 1 weight percent Sn-
5 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite.

The 1 weight percent Sn-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite was utilised as a catalyst to promote the conversion of naphtha having the composition set forth above in Table 2, in a reactor maintained at substantially the conditions described above in Example 1. Ethylene, propylene and aromatics
10 yields observed with 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, represented by light-colored triangle-shaped symbols, are depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, respectively. Additionally, the weight ratio of C₁ through C₄ paraffins produced to C₂ through C₃ olefins produced over the catalyst,
15 represented by light-colored triangle-shaped symbols, is depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 8.

Inspection of the data depicted in Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 reveals that the 1 weight percent Sn-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, which zeolite is a catalyst in accordance with the present
20 invention, was about as selective towards ethylene and towards propylene, as compared to the previously known 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60. It can be seen from these figures and from Fig. 7 that, by modifying the 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite with tin, the production of aromatics was increased. However, inspection of
25 Figure 8 indicates that the tin containing zeolite produced much less methane, ethane and propane, as compared to the previously known catalyst.

Example 10. Conversion of naphtha over 0.75 weight percent Ge-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of Silicon to Aluminum Atomic Ratio 60

An incipient wetness impregnation procedure, similar to the procedure described above in Example 4, was performed in which germanium was
 5 impregnated on 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 having a silicon to aluminum atomic ratio of 60, calcined and reduced to produce 0.75 weight percent Ge-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio 60. The 0.75 weight percent Ge-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite was utilised as a catalyst to promote the conversion of naphtha having the composition set
 10 forth above in Table 2, in a reactor maintained at substantially the conditions described above in Example 1.

Ethylene, propylene and aromatics yields observed with 0.75 weight percent Ge -1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, represented by light-colored diamond-shaped symbols, are depicted
 15 as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, respectively. Additionally, the weight ratio of C₁ through C₃ paraffins produced to C₂ through C₃ olefins produced in the presence of the catalyst, represented by light-colored diamond-shaped symbols, is depicted as a function of naphtha conversion in Fig 8.

Inspection of the data depicted in Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 reveals that the 0.75
 20 weight percent Ge-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, which zeolite is a catalyst in accordance with the present invention, was about as selective towards ethylene and towards propylene, as was the 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to
 25 aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60, which was described above in Example 5. It can be seen from these figures and from Fig. 7 that modifying the 1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite with 0.75 weight percent germanium provided a

catalyst which produced aromatics in about the same proportion as did the 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of Example 5. Moreover, inspection of Figure 8 indicates that the 0.75 weight percent Ge-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio 60 described in this Example, produced about the same amounts of methane, ethane and propane, as did the 1 weight percent Ga-1 weight percent P on HZSM-5 zeolite of silicon to aluminum atomic ratio equal to 60 described in Example 5.

Based on the data illustrated in Fig. 1 through Fig. 8, it may be concluded that the Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite, the Sn-P on HZSM-5 zeolite and the 0.75 Ge-P on HZSM-5 zeolite are all effective catalysts for ethylene and propylene manufacturing by naphtha conversion. Moreover, the Sn-P on HZSM-5 zeolite is especially appropriate when low selectivities toward light paraffins are desired. When aromatics are not a primarily desired product, as in propylene manufacturing, the Ga-P on HZSM-5 zeolite is recommended because the zeolite suppresses aromatization while providing a relatively high yield of ethylene and propylene.

The above examples and hypotheses are intended to better communicate the invention. These examples and hypotheses do not limit the scope of the invention which is defined by the claims presented below.

CLAIMS

1. A process for producing at least one light olefin and relatively less aromatic products, comprising: contacting at a temperature of 400-600°C and a pressure of 1-3 atmospheres, a feedstock comprising a volatile hydrocarbon mixture which is liquid at room temperature and pressure, in a reactor with a catalyst comprising a pentasil zeolite catalyst which contains about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent phosphorus and about 0.1 to about 10 weight percent of a promoter metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, germanium, tin and mixtures thereof, based on the total weight of the catalyst, under effective reaction conditions to produce at least one olefin having two to about three carbon atoms per molecule.
2. The process of Claim 1 wherein the feedstock enters the reactor with a heat conducting diluent composed of nitrogen, steam and/or a relatively refractory hydrocarbon, and wherein the molar ratio of the diluent to feedstock is about 9 to about 0.1.
3. The process of Claim 1 wherein the feedstock enters the reactor with a co-feed composed substantially of propane, and wherein the molar ratio of co-feed propane to feedstock is about 6 to about 1.
4. The process of Claim 1 wherein the light olefin is propylene.
5. The process of Claim 1 wherein the catalyst has a silicon to aluminum atomic ratio in the range of about 10 to about 400, and the volatile hydrocarbon mixture exhibits an atmospheric volumetric average boiling point in the range of about negative 22 to about 466 degrees C.

6. The process of Claim 1 wherein the reactor is maintained at a temperature of about 400 to about 650 degrees C and a total pressure of about one to about two atmospheres, absolute, and the volatile hydrocarbon mixture exhibits an atmospheric volumetric average boiling point in the range of about negative 1 to about 204 degrees C.

7. The process of Claim 1 wherein the promoter metal is gallium at a weight ratio of phosphorus to gallium in the range of about 1:1 to about 5:1.

8. The process of Claim 1 wherein the promoter metal is germanium.

9. The process of Claim 1 wherein the promoter metal is tin.