

Description

The present invention relates to additives for improving the low temperature flow properties of hydrocarbon oils. More particularly, the present invention relates to an improved process for preparing additives for improving the flow properties of fuel oil and lubricating oil compositions.

A large variety of additives for improving various properties in hydrocarbon oil compositions are well known, and in fact a large number of these compositions are being used on a commercial level. The various additives are used for a variety of purposes, many of which relate to improving the low temperature (i.e. less than about 30°F or -10°C) flow properties of various types of hydrocarbon oils, including both lubricating oil fractions and other oil fractions including heating oils, diesel oils, middle distillates, and the like. In particular, these flow improvers generally modify the wax crystals in both lubricating oils and other hydrocarbon fractions and crudes so as to impart low temperature handling, pumpability, and/or vehicle operability thereto. These parameters are generally measured by a variety of tests, including pour point, cloud point, mini-rotary viscometry (MRV) and others. Other such additives are used primarily for imparting other properties to these hydrocarbon fractions, including lubricating oil fractions, such as anti-oxidant properties and the like.

Cloud point (ASTM D 2500) is the temperature at which wax crystals first appear as a haze in a hydrocarbon oil upon cooling. Such wax crystals typically have the highest molecular weight of the waxes in the hydrocarbon oil and therefore the lowest solubility. The cloud point of a hydrocarbon oil reflects the temperature at which problems in filtering the oil are encountered. However, the cloud point of a lubricating oil (as opposed to a fuel oil) is of less significance than is its pour point because the filters typically encountered by a lubricating oil (e.g. combustion engine oil filters) have a relatively large pore size, and filter plugging is therefore less of a problem in these environments.

Pour point is the lowest temperature at which a hydrocarbon oil will pour or flow when chilled, without disturbance, under specified conditions. Pour point problems arise through the formation of solid or semisolid waxy particles in a hydrocarbon oil composition under chilled conditions. Thus, as the temperature of the oil is decreased, the distribution of such oil by pumping or siphoning is rendered difficult or impossible when the temperature of this oil is around or below the pour point of the oil. Consequently, when the flow of oil cannot be maintained, equipment can fail to operate.

It has therefore been necessary to develop various additives for the purpose of influencing the cold temperature flow properties of hydrocarbon oils.

The general term "lubricating oil flow improver" (LOFI) covers all those additives which modify the size, number, and growth of wax crystals in lube oils in such a way as to impart improved low temperature handling, pumpability, and/or vehicle operability as measured by such tests as pour point, cloud point, and mini rotary viscometry (MRV). The majority of lubricating oil flow improvers are polymers or contain polymers. These polymers are generally of two types, either backbone or sidechain.

The backbone variety, such as the ethylene-vinyl acetates (EVA), have various lengths of methylene segments randomly distributed in the backbone of the polymer, which associate or cocrystallize with the wax crystals inhibiting further crystal growth due to branches and non-crystallizable segments in the polymer.

The sidechain-type polymers, which are the predominant variety used as LOFIs, have methylene segments as the side chains, preferably as straight side chains. These polymers work similarly to the backbone type except the side chains have been found more effective in treating isoparaffins as well as n-paraffins found in lube oils. More specifically, LOFIs are typically derived from unsaturated carboxylic acids or anhydrides which are esterified to provide pendent ester groups derived from a mixture of alcohols. Most current commercial additives of this type thus require the use of relatively expensive alcohols for their production. Representative examples of this type of side chain LOFI include dialkyl fumarate/vinyl acetate copolymers and esterified styrene/maleic anhydride copolymers.

Irrespective of the large number of additive compositions which have previously been proposed and utilized for altering the various flow properties of hydrocarbon oils and lubricating oil compositions, the search has continued for additional flow improving compositions which cannot only significantly improve the flow characteristics of these various hydrocarbon compositions, but which also can be easily produced on an economical basis.

US-A-5039437 and EP-A-311452 describe alkyl phenol aldehyde condensates respectively and their preparation from alkyl phenols.

The present invention provides a method of producing such condensates having increased capability of improving the low temperature flow properties of hydrocarbon oils which comprise

(1) preparing an alkylated phenol by the reaction in an aprotic polar cosolvent of (a) phenol and (b) linear alpha-olefin having

(i) from 6 to 50 carbon atoms,

(ii) an average carbon number of from 12 to 26; and

(iii) not more than 10 mole % containing less than 12 carbon atoms and not more than 10 mole % containing more than 26 carbon atoms

to form an alkylated phenol comprising at least 80 mole % difunctional alkylated phenol and having greater than 35 mole % of the alkyl groups derived from the linear alpha-olefins as alpha methyl-substituted linear alkyl groups; and

(2) condensing alkylated phenol of step (1) with a C_1 to C_{30} aldehyde so as to produce a condensate of said alkylated phenol and said aldehyde having a number average molecular weight of at least 3,000 as measured by VPO and molecular weight distribution of at least 1.5.

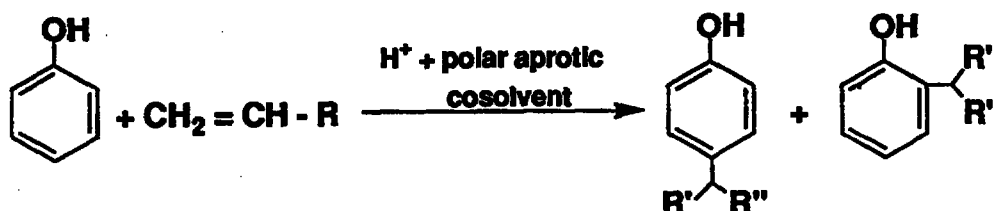
Secondarily, these materials also possess anti-oxidant activity.

In another aspect of the present invention the polymeric compositions may be sulfurized, and preferably have a number average molecular weight of at least about 5,000.

The additive compositions described above in the present invention are prepared by the alkylation of phenol conducted in the presence of at least one polar aprotic cosolvent to minimize the amount of rearrangement and to impart essential linearity to the alkyl group of the alkylate, followed by condensation with an aldehyde such as formaldehyde so as to produce polymers having certain specified molecular weights. More particularly, the use of the specific linear alpha olefins results in superior lubricating oil and fuel oil flow improvers relative to other alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates employed in the prior art. As will be demonstrated, these particular polymers are particularly and unexpectedly superior in terms of their ability to co-crystallize with the wax crystals in these hydrocarbon oils. Furthermore, in accordance with other embodiments of the present invention condensate polymers are produced in a sulfurized and/or more highly branched form, for molecular weight enhancement, and to thus further improve the low temperature flow properties of these various hydrocarbon oils.

Alkylation of the phenol is initially conducted with a linear alpha-olefin or blend of linear alpha-olefins which are terminal olefins, as contrasted to internal olefins. In this manner, it is possible to produce final polymers in which the alkyl group attached to the benzene ring is essentially linear. By "essentially linear" is meant greater than 35, preferably at least 40, and most preferably at least 50 mole % of the alkyl groups derived from the olefin alkylating agent and attached to the aromatic ring of the phenol group (exclusive of the alkyl groups of any tri- or tetrafunctional optional comonomers described hereinafter for molecular weight enhancement) in the alkylated product is linear, except for a methyl group pendant from the carbon attached to that aromatic ring. More specifically, since terminal alpha-olefins are employed for the alkylation of phenol in accordance herewith, the terminal olefins will attach to the aromatic ring at the beta carbon thereof, thereby leaving the alpha carbon as a methyl group pendant from the beta carbon of the original olefin. Thus, expressed differently, "essentially linear" means greater than 50 mole % of the alkyl groups of the alkylated phenol are alpha methyl substituted linear alkyl. The primary alkyl phenol product desired from this alkylation step (after rearrangement as discussed hereinafter) will be linear to at least that extent.

The initial alkylation step itself is an exothermic reaction of phenol with these particular linear terminal alpha-olefins. This reaction can thus be shown as follows:



$$\Delta H \approx -12\text{K cal,}$$

and in which reaction R is linear alkyl, and R' and R'' are linear alkyl groups derived in whole or in part from R. This exothermic reaction is thus a simple cationic reaction resulting in a somewhat complex product. In the ideal reaction the olefin forms a carbonium ion species as a result of the presence of acidic conditions

and temperatures. This cation can then readily react with phenol at either the ortho or para positions. Without rearrangement, the carbonium ion species will attach to the aromatic ring at the beta carbon of the olefin, and R, will thus constitute a pendant methyl group derived from the alpha carbon of the original olefin, with R' constituting the remainder of the linear alkyl chain originally defined by R. In reality, however, many side reactions are possible. Thus, the cation can revert back to the olefin or rearrange further down the linear chain, thereby producing attachment to the aromatic ring at a more internal carbon atom, and causing the length of R' to increase, and R'' to decrease in length correspondingly. It has been found that if these rearrangements are too extensive, they will lead to the production of inferior products which would not suitably interact with the wax crystals of the lubricating oil or fuel oil to which they are eventually added.

It is therefore critical to the present invention to minimize these rearrangements and to maximize the attachment of the alkyl groups at the 2-position (i.e. beta carbon of the original linear olefin). The instant invention presents a novel method of producing alkyl phenols having essentially linear alkyl substituted groups. The present invention describes a method to produce alkyl phenols with less rearrangement, and thereby an alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate with greater pour point depressancy. The method involves conducting the alkylation of phenol in the presence of a polar aprotic cosolvent. The cosolvents of the invention desirably have dielectric constants of greater than 10 and preferably greater than 20 or more preferably a dielectric constant in the range of from 20 to 50. Typical examples of suitable cosolvents are 1,2-dichloroethane ($\epsilon = 10.4$) hexamethylphosphoramide ($\epsilon = 21$), N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone ($\epsilon = 32$), nitrobenzene ($\epsilon = 35$), nitromethane ($\epsilon = 36$), N-N-dimethylformamide ($\epsilon = 37$), acetonitrile ($\epsilon = 36$), sulfolane ($\epsilon = 44$) and dimethyl sulfoxide ($\epsilon = 47$). The use of these polar aprotic cosolvents in the alkylation reaction significantly minimizes the amount of rearrangement by maximizing the attachment of the alkyl groups at the 2-position and thereby increases the pour point depressancy of the resulting alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates. The amount of solvent used is not critical and it would be within the knowledge of one skilled in the art to determine suitable amount without undue experimentation. Generally, amounts of above 50 wt. % of the reactant is considered suitable. Amounts, however, greatly in excess of that stated above would not be considered detrimental, but may present problems with removal and would not be cost effective for the process. The minimum amount would be that necessary to produce the desired product.

Other methods for minimizing such rearrangement are disclosed in US-A-4976882 and 5039437 which are preferably used in combination with the instant invention. The method primarily includes among others carrying out the alkylation process at lower reaction temperatures as opposed to elevated reaction temperatures. Therefore, although the alkylation process itself can generally be conducted at temperatures of between 50 and 200 °C, it was found that to employ alkylation temperatures of at or below 100 °C, preferably at or below 90 °C, e.g. typically between 50 and 100 °C, and preferably between 50 and 90 °C, minimized rearrangement.

It was also observed that rearrangement is more likely to occur at the para position than the ortho position. This is probably a result of a steric factor which permits greater accommodation of rearrangement at the para position to the hydroxyl group.

Accordingly, the definition of "essentially linear" accounts for, and expresses the permissible limits of, the above-discussed autogenous rearrangement in forming the alkylate product. In short, "essentially linear" expresses the maximum degree of acceptable branching in the alkylate product which can be tolerated when starting with linear alpha-olefins. The degree of rearrangement is typically determined by ¹H-NMR and/or by high pressure liquid chromatography.

Another critical aspect in the preparation was found to be the carbon number and carbon number distribution of olefins employed for alkylation.

The particular linear alpha-olefins used in connection with the alkylation step of the present invention was, as indicated above, found to be crucial to the manufacture of the proper additives for use herein. These linear alpha-olefins have the formula $\text{CH}_2 = \text{CH} - \text{R}$, in which R is straight chain alkyl having between 4 and 48 carbon atoms, and in which the specific alpha-olefin or mixture of alpha-olefins used for this alkylation has an average carbon number (on a molar basis for mixtures of olefins) of from 12 to 26 (e.g. 14 to 24), preferably from 16 to 22 (e.g. 17 to 21, or 18 to 19), and most preferably from 18 to 20.

Moreover, the olefin mixture should not contain more than 10 mole %, preferably not more than 5 mole %, and most preferably not more than 2 mole % of alpha-olefins having independently: (a) less than about 12, preferably not less than about 14, and most preferably not less than about 16 carbon atoms; and (b) not more than about 26, preferably not more than about 24, and most preferably not more than about 22 carbon atoms. These proportional requirements are incorporated into, and embodied in, the final condensate polymer.

The particular average carbon number range which was most desirable depended upon the ultimate environment of the alkyl phenol condensate which was produced thereby.

More particularly, it has thus been found that in connection with such fuel oils, including diesel fuels and heating oils, to maximize cloud point reduction an average carbon number of about C_{18} is most desired, while to maximize pour point reduction an average carbon number of about C_{16} was most desired.

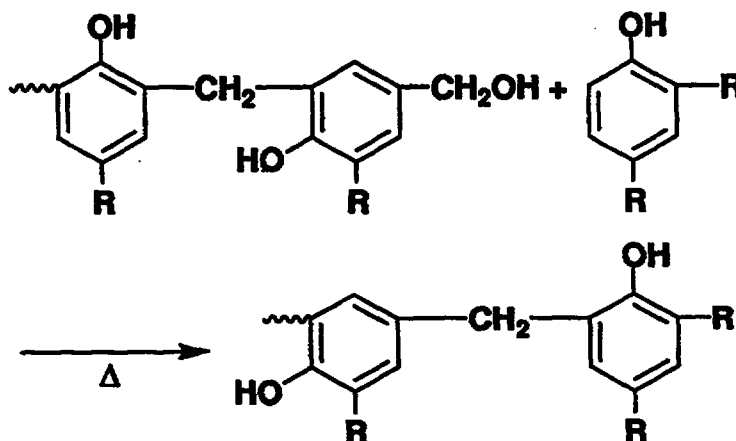
On the other hand, in connection with lubricating oil compositions the average carbon number for maximizing pour point number reduction was an average carbon content of from C_{18} to C_{20} .

Moreover, within each class of hydrocarbon oils, i.e. fuel or lubricating oil, each specific hydrocarbon oil can be associated with an optimum average carbon number for the R group (also referred to herein as the alkylate average carbon number) to achieve maximum cloud point or pour point depressancy relative to the base oil without any additive. Optimum pour depressancy will typically be achieved by an average carbon number that is lower than that needed to achieve optimum cloud point depressancy for a given hydrocarbon oil.

It was further found that while the molecular weight and molecular weight distribution M_w/M_n of the condensate polymer, degree of branching, and concentration of the condensation polymer in the hydrocarbon oil all affect, and are important for achieving low temperature flow performance, the two most dominant factors are the optimum alkylate average carbon number and the essential linearity of the alkyl group.

It was also believed that in any given situation the use of a range of alpha-olefins surrounding the optimum average carbon number was superior to the use of a single alpha-olefin having that number of carbon atoms. In any event, the most preferred alpha-olefins for use will include 1-hexadecene, 1-octadecene, 1-eicosene, 1-docosene, 1-tetracosene, and mixtures thereof.

A further important factor in conducting the alkylation reaction was the minimization of monofunctional alkylation product (e.g. most dialkylate products) and the maximization, relative to monofunctional alkylate, of difunctional alkylate products (e.g. mono alkylates) in the phenol alkylation reaction. As discussed hereinafter, the final alkyl phenol aldehyde condensation product is synthesized to possess certain minimum requirements in terms of molecular weight and molecular weight distribution. If the alkylated phenol product mixture employed for condensation contains too much monofunctional dialkylate, then the final condensation polymer will not meet such requirements. This stems from the fact that when a second alkyl group attaches to the phenol to yield a 2,4- or a 2,6-dialkyl phenol, it results in a monofunctional dialkylate molecule which, if reacted with a growing polymer chain, would terminate chain growth in the following manner:



More specifically, the functionality of the alkylated-phenol reaction product expresses the number of available reactable sites, which remain on the alkylated phenol after alkylation, that can participate in the polymerization reaction through propagation of a growing polymer chain. The only freely reactable sites on an unsubstituted phenol molecule for purposes of polymerization are the 2-, 4-, and 6- carbons of the phenol aromatic ring. Thus, unsubstituted phenol is a trifunctional molecule. If monoalkylation occurs at only one of the 2-, 4-, or 6-positions, the resulting mono-alkylate is said to be difunctional, since one of the reactable sites has been eliminated through substitution of an alkyl group thereon. Similarly, the substitution of alkyl groups at any two of the 2-, 4-, or 6- carbons of the phenol molecule through dialkylation will result in the formation of a monofunctional dialkylate product. Thus, 2,4-dialkyl phenol and 2,6-dialkyl phenol are monofunctional dialkylates which will lead to chain termination, and thereby limit polymer molecular weights. While 2,5-dialkyl phenol and 3,5-dialkyl phenol are difunctional and trifunctional dialkylate monomers, respectively, such monomers do not normally form under typical alkylation conditions, because such

formation would involve reaction at normally unreactive sites.

Consequently, one seeks to minimize dialkylation generally, as most dialkylation leads to the formation of monofunctional monomer. Thus, reference to dialkylation herein as being undesirable is technically a reference only to dialkylation which yields monofunctional dialkylate.

5 An equation relating the maximum degree of polymerization (DP) to the extent of reaction (ρ) and the functionality (f) of the reactants is referred to as the Modified Carothers Equation:

$$DP = 2/(2-\rho f)$$

10 This equation can be used to show that a monofunctional dialkylate monomer severely limits the maximum degree of polymerization in the alkyl phenol-aldehyde condensation reaction.

As was disclosed in US-A-497688 and 5039437, the use of separately synthesized tri- and tetrafunctional comonomers can be employed to increase the molecular weight of the final condensation polymer and/or to compensate for the presence of monofunctional dialkylate monomer.

15 Thus, the target molecular weight as disclosed was suitably achieved by controlling the amount of difunctional (e.g. monoalkylate) monomer to be typically at least 80 mole %, and preferably at least 85 mole %, and most preferably at least 90 mole %, and typically from 80 to 100 mole %, preferably from 85 to 100 mole %, and most preferably from 90 to 100 (e.g. 95 to 100) mole %, based on the total moles of alkylate monomer in the monomer mixture intended for polymerization.

20 Correspondingly, the amount of monofunctional dialkylate monomer which can be tolerated will typically range from 0 to 20 mole %, preferably from 0 to 15 mole %, and most preferably from 0 to 10 (e.g. 0 to 5) mole % based on the moles of monomer in the alkylate monomer mixture.

High functionality monomers, such as the tri- and tetrafunctional comonomers described hereinafter, are typically employed in collective amounts of from 0 to 10 mole %, preferably from 2 to 8 mole %, and most preferably from 3 to 5 mole %, based on the total moles of alkylate monomer in the alkylate monomer mixture.

One way to minimize dialkylation in attempting to meet the condensation polymer molecular weight targets specified hereinafter was to employ excess phenol relative to the olefin for the alkylation reaction. Accordingly, effective molar ratios of phenol to olefin can vary typically from 2:1 to 10:1 (or higher), preferably from 2:1 to 5:1. From a process standpoint, however, too much of an excess of phenol can be disadvantageous because of the need to remove the excess phenol from alkylation product after alkylation is completed.

35 Certain zeolite catalysts permit one to lower the phenol:olefin molar ratio to less than 2:1, preferably between 1.7:1 and 1:1 and still achieve minimization of dialkylation. This low ratio extremely simplifies unreacted phenol recovery.

The alkylation reaction can generally be accomplished, within the above parameters, by a number of techniques known to those skilled in this art. One particularly suitable technique disclosed using the Friedel-Crafts reaction which occurs in the presence of a Lewis acid catalyst, such as boron trifluoride and its complexes with ethers, hydrogen fluoride, etc., aluminum chloride, aluminum bromide, and zinc dichloride, etc. Methods and conditions for carrying out such reactions are well known to those skilled in this art, and reference is made, for example, to the discussion in the article entitled "Alkylation of Phenols", in Kirk Othmer Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology, 2nd Edition, Vol. 1, pp. 894-895, Interscience Publishers, Division of John Wiley and Company, New York, 1963, which is incorporated herein by reference thereto. A particularly preferred catalyst for use in such alkylation reactions is designated Amberlyst 15 by the Rohm and Haas Company. This catalyst is included among the strongly acidic macroreticular resins patented under US-A-4224415. This resin is itself composed of long chains of polystyrene locked together by divinylbenzene crosslinks into a threedimensional, insoluble polymeric phase called a matrix, on which are attached sulfonic acid groups ($-SO_3H$). Amberlyst 15 possesses high acidity (4.7 meq/g), high porosity (32%) and high surface area (45 m²/g).

50 In a highly preferred method for carrying out the alkylation reaction as disclosed herein, a zeolite catalyst is employed for use in the selective production of the desired mono-alkylate. More particularly, acidic crystalline zeolites are used which have high silica to alumina ratios and which have effective pore sizes of between 6 and 8 Angstroms, and include a number of commercial zeolite catalysts, such a LZ-Y82 catalyst manufactured by Union Carbide Corporation. In any event, a general description of these zeolites is set forth in US-A-4283573. In general, these zeolites have a crystal structure which provides access to and egress from the intracrystalline free space of the zeolites by virtue of having channels or networks of pores, the openings of which again preferably have a major dimension, or a free pore diameter, of between 6A and 8A. These zeolites are also characterized by pore apertures of about a size as would be provided by 12-

member rings of silicon and aluminum atoms. The preferred types of zeolites for use in this invention possess a silica to alumina molar ratio of from 3:1 to 6:1.

This ratio represents, as closely as possible, the ratio in the rigid anionic framework of the zeolite crystal. Furthermore, these preferred zeolites will have a high surface area, such as about 625 m²/g. The use of these zeolite catalysts thus permits one to eliminate the expensive and difficult distillation step required to separate the mono-alkylate from the di-alkylate produced with the acid-type catalysts previously utilized.

In connection with the alkylated phenol product, the use of a linear alpha-olefin or a mixture of linear alpha-olefins gives a ratio of ortho to para attachments on the phenol of 2:1. In contrast with the alkylated phenol product of this reaction, the use of a branched internal olefin or a mixture of branched internal olefins gives a ratio of ortho to para attachments on phenol of 1:18. However, essentially linear alkyl groups attached either ortho or para to the hydroxy group perform equally well.

The next step in the preparation of the polymer additives utilizing the essentially linear alkylated phenol prepared as taught herein is the actual polymerization or condensation reaction. The reaction itself is a condensation of the above-described alkyl phenol in the presence of aldehyde or the functional equivalent thereof. The function of the aldehyde is to bridge and link the alkyl phenol monomer. In particular, aliphatic ketones and aldehydes can be used herein to perform the bridging function and include those represented by the formula $R-C(O)R_1$, where R and R₁ are hydrogen or an alkyl group having at least 1 carbon atom, and generally between between 1 and 30 carbon atoms. Most preferably R₁ will be hydrogen, i.e. in the case of the aldehydes, and from a practical standpoint, these aldehydes (or the corresponding ketones) will generally range from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and preferably from 1 to 10 (e.g. 1 to 7) carbon atoms, with formaldehyde being highly preferred. Other aldehydes which can be used herein but which are less preferred than formaldehyde are acetaldehyde, 2-ethylhexanal, and propionaldehyde. In addition, aromatic aldehydes, such as benzaldehyde, may also be utilized. The term formaldehyde as used in connection with this invention includes reactive equivalents of formaldehyde under reaction conditions, a reversible polymer thereof such as paraformaldehyde, trioxane, or the like, and can thus be produced from the decomposition of paraformaldehyde, etc.

The condensation reaction with the alkylated phenol composition is generally carried out at temperatures in the range of from 50°C to 150°C, preferably in the range of from 75°C to 125°C. Temperatures below 50°C are undesirable as the rate of reaction is unduly slow, while temperatures above 250°C can be used, but will normally result in degradation of the materials. The reaction is generally carried out in the presence of an acidic or basic material. The preferred acid catalysts which may be employed include hydrochloric acid, phosphoric acid, acetic acid, oxalic acid, and strong organic acids, such as p-toluenesulfonic acid, etc. While the relative proportions of the ingredients used are not critical, it is generally desirable to use a mole ratio of alkyl phenol to aldehyde in the range of from 2:1 to 1:4, and preferably of 1:1. While the amount of acid or basic catalyst used in the formaldehyde-alkyl phenol condensation reaction is also not critical, it is usually convenient to use 1 to 5 wt. %, based on the amount of formaldehyde used in the reaction.

The reaction between the alkylated phenol and the formaldehyde may be carried out in the absence of a diluent, but it is often convenient to use a suitable diluent, typically a substantially inert organic diluent such as mineral oil or an alcohol, ether, ether alcohol or the like, such as diluents including benzene, toluene, xylenes, paraffins, and the like. Diluents may be advantageous in aiding the maintenance of reaction temperatures and in the removal of water of reaction therefrom.

Furthermore, pressure is also not a critical factor, and can be atmospherical or below up to 1000 psi (7 MPa) or higher. Atmospheric pressure is preferred for convenience, and the pressure should be sufficient to maintain the reactants in the liquid phase.

The reactants, together with the catalyst and any diluent which is employed, can thus be charged to a reactor and reacted under the conditions set forth above. Water of reaction, together with any water that may have been introduced with the initial charge, is removed during the course of the reaction to drive the condensation to completion. This can most conveniently be done by overhead distillation, although other techniques known in the art can also be employed. The condensation is essentially complete when no further water of reaction is eliminated. The crude reaction product mixture can then be cooled, neutralized, waterwashed to remove the catalyst, dried, and then stripped to remove excess reactant, any unreacted materials, and any diluent that may have been used.

The condensation reaction is conducted in a manner and under conditions sufficient to achieve or surpass certain minimum number average and weight average molecular weight targets. Accordingly, the condensation reaction is conducted to impart to the final polymer a number average molecular weight (M_n) as determined by vapor-phase osmometry of at least 3,000 (e.g. at least 4,000), preferably at least 5,000,

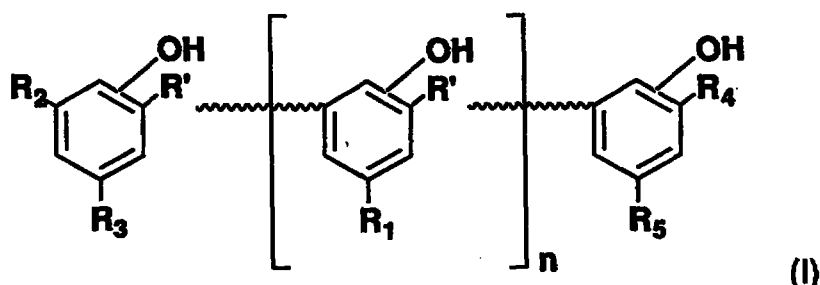
and most preferably at least 7,000, and typically from 3,000 to 60,000 (e.g. 4,000 to 60,000), preferably from 5,000 to 30,000, most preferably from 7,000 to 20,000, and a weight average molecular weight (M_w) as determined by gel permeation chromatography, of at least 4,500 (e.g. at least 5,000), preferably at least 6,000, and typically from 4,500 to 100,000, preferably from 10,000 to 70,000 (e.g. 6,000 to 35,000), and most preferably from 20,000 to 50,000.

The maximum number and weight average molecular weights are limited only by the solubility of the condensate polymer in the particular hydrocarbon basestock in question.

These polymers have a ratio of weight average molecular weight to number average molecular weight (M_w/M_n), commonly referred to as molecular weight distribution, of greater than 1.5, preferably greater than 2.0, and most preferably greater than 2.5, and typically from 1.5 to 34, preferably from 2.0 to 24, and most preferably from 3.0 to 7.0. Generally, the higher the weight average molecular weight, the better suited or more effective these polymers are for improving the flow properties of various hydrocarbon oils in accordance with the present invention.

While number average molecular weight (M_n) can conveniently also be determined by gel permeation chromatography (GPC), it is considered that VPO techniques are more accurate, although the M_n by the GPC technique will typically approximate M_n by VPO within ± 1000 , more typically ± 500 .

In a preferred embodiment, polymers or condensates which are thus produced in accordance with this invention can be represented by the following formula:



in which R' is an alkyl group derived from the ketone or aldehyde reactant having from 1 to 30 carbon atoms, and preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R_1 represents attached essentially linear alkyl groups discussed above derived from the linear alpha-olefin having from 6 to 50 carbon atoms, in which the average number of carbon atoms in all of the groups constituting R_1 is between 12 and 26, preferably between 16 and 22, and most preferably between 18 and 20, and in which no more than about 10 mole % of alkyl groups have less than 12 carbon atoms and no more than about 10 mole % of alkyl groups have more than 26 carbon atoms; R_2 , R_3 , R_4 and R_5 independently can represent hydrogen or alkyl as described in connection with R_1 , with the proviso that at least one of R_2 and R_3 is said alkyl and at least one of R_4 and R_5 is said alkyl. The hydroxy group of the phenol will be located on an aromatic carbon which is adjacent to a carbon on which at least one of the R_i groups is attached. R' is preferably CH_2 .

The value of n is subject to the number average molecular weight targets discussed above, and the minimum value thereof expressed hereinafter will consequently vary depending on the average carbon number of the olefins employed for alkylation and the number of repeating units controlled by n necessary to achieve such M_n values when accounting for said olefin average carbon number.

Accordingly, n is a number which, subject to the above constraints, will typically be at least 5 (e.g. at least 8), preferably at least 10 (e.g. at least 12), and most preferably at least 15, and can vary typically from 5 to 80, preferably from 10 to 60, and most preferably from 15 to 30.

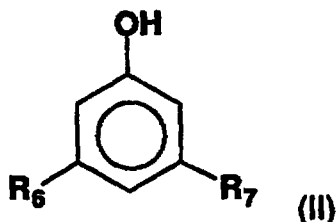
As indicated above, it can be somewhat difficult to increase the molecular weights of the alkylated phenol-aldehyde condensates beyond a certain level because of the propensity of dialkylate monomers to terminate chain growth.

One such way to further increase molecular weight is to form a sulfurized alkylated phenol-aldehyde condensate polymer. Such sulfurization can be carried out by employing a sulfurizing agent, such as elemental sulfur or a sulfur halide such as sulfur monochloride, or preferably sulfur dichloride. The sulfurization reaction itself is typically effected by heating the alkylated phenol-aldehyde reaction product with the sulfurizing agent at temperatures of between 50 and 250 °C, and preferably of at least 160 °C if elemental sulfur is used, and optionally in the presence of a suitable diluent such as those recited above. This is carried out for a period of time sufficient to effect substantial reaction with the sulfurizing agent. It is

generally preferable to incorporate between 5 and 10 wt. % of sulfur into the alkylated phenol-aldehyde product. Particularly in those cases where a sulfur halide is used as the sulfurizing agent, it is frequently preferred to use an acid acceptor such as sodium hydroxide, sodium acetate or the like to react with the hydrogen halide evolved therein. The precise molecular structure of the product formed by sulfurization is believed to be a sulfur and alkylene (e.g. methylene) bridged polyphenol composition. By doing so, the number average molecular weight of these compositions can be increased to greater than 6,000, and the weight average molecular weight, as determined by gel permeation chromatography, to greater than 8,000, and preferably between 10,000 and 100,000 (once again as limited by the solubility of these compositions in the particular basestocks involved). Furthermore, incorporation of sulfur provides anti-oxidant properties for these additives. A less preferred alternative method for achieving sulfurization is to incorporate the sulfurizing agent into the condensation reaction mixture.

There are yet additional and/or alternative methods of increasing the molecular weight of the alkylated phenol-aldehyde condensate flow improvers of the present invention. In one such method, the polymerization step is carried out in the additional presence of trifunctional or tetrafunctional comonomer (functionality being reactable sites) so as to produce an ultimate condensation polymer having a branched backbone rather than linear backbone as shown in formula (I) hereabove, wherein said linear backbones are crosslinked through these tri- and tetrafunctional monomers.

In particular, a trifunctional comonomer having the following formula can be employed:

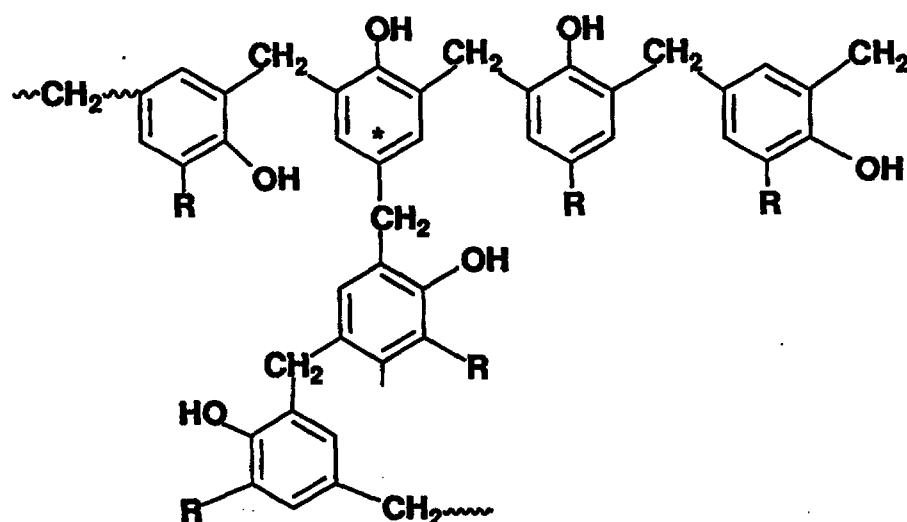


in which R_6 and R_7 can be hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, alkoxy, aryloxy, alkyl mercapto, and halogen. More particularly, it is preferred that R_6 and R_7 include branched or straight chain alkyl groups, preferably straight chain, such as C_1 through C_{30} alkyl, preferably methyl, C_6 through C_{14} aryl, C_1 through C_{22} alkoxy, C_6 through C_{14} aryloxy, C_1 through C_{30} alkyl mercapto, and preferably halogens such as chlorine and bromine.

As discussed above, 3,5-dialkylate is difficult to achieve under normal alkylation conditions. Consequently, a variety of methods well known in the art can be employed to achieve 3,5-dialkylation. One such method involves a thallation reaction wherein, for example, 1,3-dimethyl benzene is contacted with a thallium trifluoro acetate catalyst to cause stereo specific oxidation to 3,5-dimethyl phenol.

Representative examples of trifunctional monomers include phenol, m-cresol, 3,5-xyleneol, m-phenyl phenol, m-methoxyphenol, orcinol, and m-methyl mercapto phenol, while phenol is preferred.

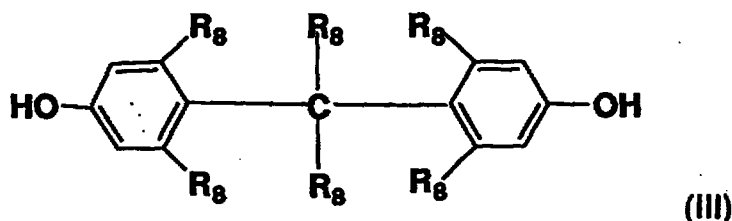
For example, when phenol is employed as the trifunctional monomer, then a portion of the branched backbone can be represented by the following formula with an asterisk indicating the original phenol trifunctional monomer:



It is thus possible in this manner to produce such polymer condensates having weight average molecular weights determined by gel permeation chromatography of greater than 10,000, preferably between 10,000 and 100,000, and most preferably greater than 20,000.

Even further branching is achieved with tetrafunctional monomer, which can crosslink four linear backbones.

The tetrafunctional comonomers which can be used in the polymerization step of the present invention can have the formula:



in which R_8 independently can be the same hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, alkoxy, aryloxy, alkyl mercapto, and halogen components discussed above in connection with the trifunctional comonomers as formula II hereof.

Representative examples of suitable tetrafunctional comonomers include bisphenol A, bisphenol B, methylene-4,4,-bis (3,5-dibutyl phenol), methylene-4,4,-bis (3,5-dimethoxy phenol), and methylene-4,4,-bis (3,5-dimethyl mercapto phenol), with bisphenol A being preferred. Again, in this case it is also possible to produce such polymer condensates having weight average molecular weights determined by gel permeation chromatography of greater than about 10,000, preferably between 10,000 and 100,000, and most preferably greater than about 20,000.

The amount of such trifunctional and/or tetrafunctional comonomer employed in the polymerization or condensation step of the present invention must, however, be limited to a certain extent. That is, the amount of comonomer present should be less than 10 wt. % of a combination of the alkylated phenol and the aldehyde, and preferably less than 8 wt. %. It has thus been found that if too great an amount of the trifunctional and/or tetrafunctional comonomer is present, that material tends to crosslink to the extent that an insoluble mass can be formed thereby. This can be avoided, however, by using the amounts discussed above, and additionally by conducting the polymerization in the presence of small amounts of the trifunctional or tetrafunctional comonomer. Also, this comonomer can be continuously added during the course of polymerization, thereby becoming diluted with the polymerizing alkyl phenol composition to maintain the comonomer as dilute as possible throughout the polymerization reaction.

It is also contemplated, although less preferred, that blends of separately synthesized alkyl phenol condensates meeting the aforescribed requirements can be employed.

For purpose of discussion, when such blends are employed, the overall alkylate average carbon number for each polymer component in the blend in which the alkylate portion thereof is derived from a single alpha-olefin, or single mixture of alpha-olefins, can also be referred to herein as the alkylate intra-molecular carbon average. However, the alkylate intra-molecular carbon average of each polymer component in the blend can then also be averaged on a molar basis to determine what is referred to herein as the alkylate inter-molecular carbon average for the blend.

It has been found that when the optimum alkylate average carbon number (i.e. intra-molecular average carbon number) has been determined for a particular hydrocarbon oil, the best low temperature performance is achieved by a single polymer which possesses this optimum average carbon number value, rather than a blend of polymers wherein each polymer component in the blend possesses a non-optimum alkylate intra-molecular carbon average, but the blend collectively possesses an alkylate inter-molecular carbon average value equal to the value of the optimum intramolecular carbon average.

The polymer additives produced in accordance with the present invention have been found to be useful in fuel oils and lubricating oils. The normally liquid fuel oils are generally derived from petroleum sources, e.g. normally liquid petroleum distillate fuels, though they may include those produced synthetically by the Fischer-Tropsch and related processes, the processing of organic waste material or the processing of coal, lignite or shale rock.

The additives produced using the process of this invention find their primary utility, however, in lubricating oil compositions, which employ a base oil in which the additives are dissolved or dispersed. Such base oils may be natural or a mixture of natural and synthetic oils.

Thus, base oils suitable for use in preparing the lubricating oil compositions of the present invention include those conventionally employed as crankcase lubricating oils for spark-ignited and compression ignited internal combustion engines, such as automobile and truck engines, marine and railroad diesel engines, and the like. Advantageous results are also achieved by employing the additives produced using the process of this invention in base oils conventionally employed in and/or adapted for use as power transmitting fluids such as automatic transmission fluids, tractor fluids, universal tractor fluids and hydraulic fluids, heavy duty hydraulic fluids, power steering fluids and the like. Gear lubricants, industrial oils, pump oils and other lubricating oil compositions can also benefit from the incorporation therein of the additives produced as described herein.

Thus, the additives produced as disclosed herein may be suitably incorporated into mixtures of natural and synthetic base oils provided these mixtures include at least about 80 wt. % of natural base oil. Suitable synthetic base oils for use in these mixtures include alkyl esters of dicarboxylic acids, polyglycols and alcohols; polyalpha-olefins, polybutenes, alkyl benzenes, organic esters of phosphoric acids, polysilicone oils, etc.

The lubricating oil base stock conveniently has a viscosity of typically 2.5 to 12, and preferably 2.5 to 9 cSt. or mm²/s at 100°C.

Thus, the additives of the present invention can be employed in a hydrocarbon oil (i.e. fuel oil or lubricating oil) composition which comprises hydrocarbon oil, typically in a major amount, and the additive, typically in a minor amount, which is effective to impart or enhance one or more of the low temperature flow properties described herein. Additional conventional additives selected to meet the particular requirements of a selected type of hydrocarbon oil composition can be included as desired.

The additives prepared in accordance with this invention are oil soluble, dissolvable in oil with the aid of a suitable solvent, or are stably dispersible materials. Oil soluble, dissolvable, or stably dispersible as that terminology is used herein does not necessarily indicate that the materials are soluble, dissolvable, miscible, or capable of being suspended in oil in all proportions. It does mean, however, that the additives, for instance, are soluble or stably dispersible in oil to an extent sufficient to exert their intended effect in the environment in which the oil is employed. Moreover, the additional incorporation of other additives may also permit incorporation of higher levels of a particular polymer adduct hereof, if desired.

Accordingly, while any effective amount of these additives can be incorporated into the fully formulated hydrocarbon oil composition, it is contemplated that such effective amount be sufficient to provide said hydrocarbon oil composition with an amount of the additive of typically from 0.005 to 10, e.g. 0.01 to 2, and preferably from 0.025 to 0.25 wt. %, based on the weight of said composition.

The additives prepared by the process of this invention can be incorporated into the hydrocarbon oil in any convenient way. Thus, they can be added directly to the oil by dispersing, or dissolving the same in the oil at the desired level of concentration, typically with the aid of a suitable solvent such as toluene, cyclohexane, or tetrahydrofuran. Such blending can occur at room temperature or elevated temperatures. In this form the additive per se is thus being utilized as a 100% active ingredient form which can be added to the oil or fuel formulation by the purchaser. Alternatively, these additives may be blended with a suitable

oil-soluble solvent and/or base oil to form a concentrate, which may then be blended with a hydrocarbon oil base stock to obtain the final formulation. Concentrates will typically contain from 1 to 50%, by weight of the additive, and preferably from 10 to 30% by weight of the additive.

The hydrocarbon oil base stock for the additives of the present invention typically is adapted to perform a selected function by the incorporation of additives therein to form lubricating oil compositions (i.e. formulations).

Representative additives typically present in such formulations include viscosity modifiers, corrosion inhibitors, oxidation inhibitors, friction modifiers, dispersants, anti-foaming agents, anti-wear agents, pour point depressants, detergents, rust inhibitors and the like.

Representative examples of such materials, and their methods of preparation, are found in EP-A-208560.

Compositions when containing these conventional additives are typically blended into the base oil in amounts which are effective to provide their normal attendant function. Representative effective amounts of such additives are illustrated as follows:

Additive	Wt. % a.i. (Broad)	Wt. % a.i. (Preferred)
Viscosity Modifier	0.01-12	0.01-4
Corrosion Inhibitor	0.01-5	0.01-1.5
Oxidation Inhibitor	0.01-5	0.01-1.5
Dispersant	0.1-20	0.1-8
Pour Point Depressant	0.005-10	0.01-2
Anti-Foaming Agents	0.001-3	0.001-0.15
Anti-Wear Agents	0.001-5	0.001-1.5
Friction Modifiers	0.01-5	0.01-1.5
Detergents/Rust Inhibitors	0.01-10	0.01-3
Mineral Oil Base	Balance	Balance

When other additives are employed, it may be desirable, although not necessary, to prepare additive concentrates comprising concentrated solutions or dispersions of the flow improver (in concentrate amounts hereinabove described), together with one or more of said other additives (said concentrate when constituting an additive mixture being referred to herein as an additive package) whereby several additives can be added simultaneously to the base oil to form the hydrocarbon oil composition. Dissolution of the additive concentrate into the hydrocarbon oil may be facilitated by solvents and by mixing accompanied with mild heating, but this is not essential. The concentrate or additive-package will typically be formulated to contain the flow improver additive and optional additional additives in proper amounts to provide the desired concentration in the final formulation when the additive-package is combined with a predetermined amount of base hydrocarbon oil. Thus, the products of the present invention can be added to small amounts of base oil or other compatible solvents along with other desirable additives to form additive-packages containing active ingredients in collective amounts of typically from 2.5 to 90%, and preferably from 5 to 75%, and most preferably from 8 to 50% by weight additives in the appropriate proportions with the remainder being base oil. For safety considerations, the base oil for concentrates is typically a lubricating oil rather than a fuel oil.

The final formulations may employ typically about 10 wt. % of the additive-package with the remainder being base oil.

All of said weight percents expressed herein are based on active ingredient (a.i.) content of the additive, and/or upon the total weight of any additive package, or formulation which will be the sum of the a.i. weight of each additive plus the weight of total oil or diluent.

This invention will be further understood by reference to the following examples, wherein all parts are parts by weight and all molecular weights are either number average molecular weight determined by vapor-phase osmometry or weight average molecular weights determined by gel permeation chromatography as noted unless otherwise specified, and which include preferred embodiments of the invention.

The following examples are given as specific illustrations of the claimed invention. It should be understood, however, that the invention is not limited to the specific details set forth in the examples. All parts and percentages in the examples, as well as in the remainder of the specification, are by weight unless otherwise specified.

EXAMPLE 1 (Comparative)

This example is directed to the preparation of a typical alkylated phenol component using the process disclosed in US-A-5039437 and alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates produced thereby. Octadecyl phenol was prepared by charging into a four-neck, 5-liter round bottom flask equipped with a mechanical stirrer, 933 grams of phenol (9.93 moles) and 286 grams of Amberlyst 15 catalyst. A reflux condenser, a thermometer, an addition funnel, and a nitrogen inlet tube were attached to the flask and the mixture was heated to 70 °C. With stirring under a blanket of nitrogen, 834 grams (3.31 moles) of 1-octadecene was added dropwise over a period of about one hour. The temperature was raised to 90 °C and maintained at this temperature for four hours. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 50 °C and filtered to remove the catalyst. The excess phenol was removed by vacuum distillation. The yield was 1,008 grams, or 88%. The product had a refractive index of 1.4859 at 25 °C, a viscosity of 38.0 cP about .038 Pa's at 40 °C, and a hydroxyl number of 144 mg KOH/g. The infrared spectrum of the product showed absorption bands at 830 and 750 cm⁻¹, which are characteristic of alkyl phenols. The aromatic substitution pattern was determined by ¹³C-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the ortho to para ratio was 2.0:1.0. The alkyl substitution pattern was determined by ¹H-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the product consisted of 50 mole % 2-substituted alkylate and 50 mole % ≥ 3-substituted alkylate.

EXAMPLE 2 (Comparative)

In order to demonstrate the criticality of the linearity of the alkyl group used in the alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates, Example 1 was repeated, except that in this case the mixture was heated to 115 °C instead of 90 °C. The yield of octadecyl phenol was 893 grams, or 78%. The product had a hydroxyl number of 138 mg KOH/g, and its infrared spectrum showed absorptions at 830 and 750 cm⁻¹, which are characteristic of alkyl phenols. The aromatic substitution pattern was determined by ¹³C-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the ortho to para ratio was 1.8:1.0. The alkyl substitution pattern was determined by ¹H-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the product consisted of 35 mole % 2-substituted alkylate and 65 mole % ≥ 3-alkylate. The greater degree of rearrangement in this alkyl phenol was due to the higher reaction temperature.

EXAMPLE 3

In order to demonstrate the method used in the present invention to produce alkyl phenols with a less rearrangement, Example 1 was repeated, except that a polar aprotic cosolvent, nitrobenzene, was added to the reaction mixture. Into a four-neck 1-liter round-bottom flask equipped with a mechanical stirrer, 125 grams of phenol (1.33 moles), 31.5 grams of Amberlyst 15 catalyst, and 164 grams of nitrobenzene were charged. A reflux condenser, a thermometer, an addition funnel and a nitrogen inlet tube were attached to the flask and the mixture was heated to 70 °C. With stirring under a blanket of nitrogen, 109 grams (0.43 moles) of 1-octadecene was added dropwise over a period of about one hour. The temperature was raised to 90 °C and maintained at this temperature for four hours. The reaction mixture was then cooled to 50 °C and filtered to remove the catalyst. The excess phenol and nitrobenzene were removed by vacuum distillation. The yield was 207 grams, or 99%. The infrared spectrum of the product showed absorption bands at 830 and 750 cm⁻¹, which are characteristic of alkyl phenols. The aromatic substitution pattern was determined by ¹³C-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the ortho to para ratio was 1.7:1.0. The alkyl substitution pattern was determined by ¹H-NMR spectroscopy and showed that the product consisted of 59 mole % 2-substituted alkylate and 41 mole % ≥ 3-substituted alkylate, i.e. 18% less rearrangement than the alkylate produced in accordance with Example 1.

EXAMPLE 4 (Comparative)

Into a four-neck, 1-liter round-bottom flask, equipped with a mechanical stirrer, a thermometer, an addition funnel, nitrogen inlet tube, and a Dean-Stark trap with a reflux condenser, were charged 409 grams of octadecyl phenol produced in accordance with Example 1, 38 grams of toluene, and 0.5 grams of p-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate. The mixture was then stirred under a nitrogen blanket and heated to reflux conditions. During reflux, 32 grams of trioxane in 70 grams of toluene were added dropwise over a period of about one hour. When the evolution of water stopped, the reaction mixture was cooled and the toluene was removed in vacuo. The yield of octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate was 420 grams, or 99%. The number-average molecular weight of the dialyzed polymer was measured by vapor pressure

osmometry as 4,110 and its weight-average molecular weight by gel permeation chromatography was 12,000.

EXAMPLE 5 (Comparative)

As another example of the preparation of an alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate polymer, Example 4 was repeated, except that the octadecyl phenol produced in accordance with Example 2 was used. The yield of octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate was 90%, and the number average and weight-average molecular weight by gel permeation chromatography of the dialyzed polymer were 4,100 and 10,900, respectively.

EXAMPLE 6

This is an example of the preparation of an alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate polymer according to the invention. Example 4 was repeated, except that the octadecyl phenol produced in accordance with Example 3 was used. The yield of octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate was 96%, and the number-average and weight-average molecular weights of the dialyzed polymer by gel permeation chromatography were 4,700 and 9,500, respectively.

EXAMPLE 7

In order to demonstrate the criticality of the linearity of the alkyl groups used in the alkyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates, the octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensates produced in accordance with Examples 4-6 were tested for pour point depressancy in a lube basestock (Exxon S150N). Pour points were measured according to ASTM D 97 method, and the results are set forth in Table 1 below. These results demonstrate that: (1) the 15-mole % reduction in alkylate containing a pendant methyl group on the 2-carbon and a corresponding increase in alkylate having substitution on the 3- or higher carbon decreases pour point depressancy significantly (compare runs 1, 2 and 5); (2) the 9-mole % increase in alkylate containing a pendant methyl group on the 2-carbon and a corresponding decrease in the alkylate having substitution on the 3- or higher carbon increases pour point depressancy significantly (compare runs 1, 2 and 8).

The decreased pour point depressancy of the octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate produced in accordance with Example 5, compared with Example 4, is because of the greater degree of rearrangement in the alkylate used, i.e. Example 2. This results from a higher reaction temperature.

The increased pour point depressancy of the octadecyl phenol-formaldehyde condensate produced in accordance with Example 6, compared to Example 4, is because of lesser degree of rearrangement in the alkylate used, i.e. Example 3. This results from the use of the polar aprotic cosolvent, nitrobenzene.

Table 1

Pour Point Depressancy of Octadecyl Phenol-Formaldehyde Condensates with Varying Degrees of Alkylate Rearrangement				
Run	Additive	Additive Conc. (Wt. %)	2-Substituted Alkylate (%)	Pour Point (°F)
1	Nil	0.00	---	+10, +15, +10
2	Example 4	0.05	50	-10, -10, -10
3	Example 4	0.10	50	-20, -25, -25
4	Example 4	0.20	50	35, -35, -35
5	Example 5	0.05	35	+10, +15, +15
6	Example 5	0.10	35	-10, -10, -10
7	Example 5	0.20	35	-25, -25, -30
8	Example 6	0.05	59	-25, -25, -30
9	Example 6	0.10	59	-35, -35, -40
10	Example 6	0.20	59	-35, -40, -40



Claims

1. A method for producing a polymeric additive suitable for improving the low temperature flow properties of hydrocarbon oil which comprises

(1) preparing an alkylated phenol by the reaction in an aprotic polar cosolvent of (a) phenol and (b) linear alpha-olefin having

(i) from 6 to 50 carbon atoms,

(ii) an average carbon number of from 12 to 26; and

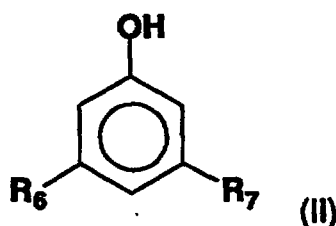
(iii) not more than 10 mole % containing less than 12 carbon atoms and not more than 10 mole % containing more than 26 carbon atoms

to form an alkylated phenol comprising at least 80 mole % difunctional alkylated phenol and having greater than 35 mole % of the alkyl groups derived from the linear alpha-olefins as alpha methyl-substituted linear alkyl groups; and

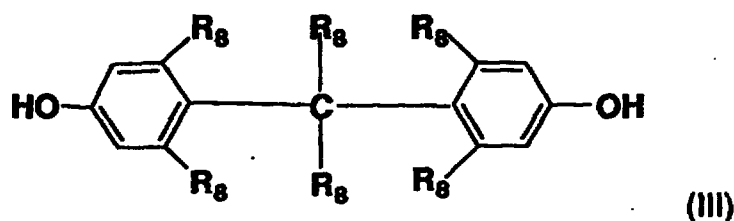
(2) condensing alkylated phenol of step (1) with a C_1 to C_{30} aldehyde so as to produce a condensate of said alkylated phenol and said aldehyde having a number average molecular weight of at least 3,000 as measured by VPO and molecular weight distribution of at least 1.5.

2. The method of claim 1 including sulfurizing said condensate.

3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said condensing step is conducted in the further presence of at least one comonomer of either the formula:



or the formula:



wherein R_6 , R_7 and R_8 are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, alkoxy, aryloxy, alkyl mercapto, and halogen, and wherein said comonomer is present in an amount of less than 10 wt. % of the combination of alkylated phenol and aldehyde.

4. The method of any of claims 1 to 3 wherein said aldehyde comprises formaldehyde.

5. The method of any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the polar-aprotic solvent has a dielectric constant of greater than 10.

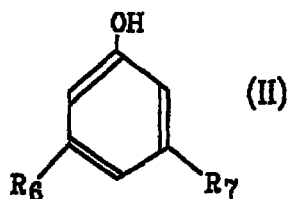
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the polar-aprotic solvent is nitrobenzene, nitromethane, N,N-dimethylformamide, acetonitrile, sulfolane or dimethyl sulfoxide.



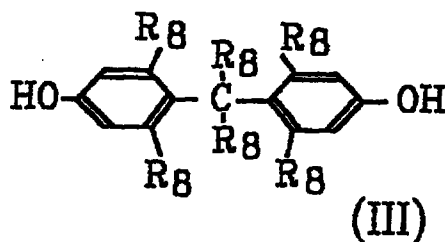
7. The method of any of claims 1 to 6 wherein said alpha-olefins have average carbon atom numbers of from 18 to 20.
8. The method of any of claims 1 to 7 wherein the alkylation is conducted at a temperature of from 50 °C to 200 °C.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein the alkylation is conducted at or below 100 °C.
10. The method of any of claims 1 to 9 wherein the molar ratio of phenol to olefin ranges from 2:1 to 10:1.
11. The method of any of claims 1 to 10 wherein said alkylation is conducted in the presence of an acidic crystalline aluminasilicate zeolite catalyst in order to minimize the production of dialkylate therein.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the zeolite catalyst has a silica to alumina ratio of from 3:1 to 6:1.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein said zeolite catalyst has a free pore diameter of between 6A and 8A.
14. The method of any of claims 1 to 13 wherein said alkylation is conducted using a molar ratio of said phenol to said linear alpha-olefin of less than 3:1.
15. The method of claim 14 wherein said alkylation is conducted using a molar ratio of said phenol to said linear alpha-olefin of between 1.7:1 and 1:1.
16. The use of an alkylated phenol comprising at least 80 mole % difunctional alkylated phenol and having greater than 35 mole % of the alkyl groups derived from the linear alpha-olefins as alpha methyl-substituted linear alkyl groups prepared by the reaction in an aprotic polar cosolvent of (a) phenol and (b) linear alpha-olefin having
 - (i) from 6 to 50 carbon atoms,
 - (ii) an average carbon number of from 12 to 26; and
 - (iii) not more than 10 mole % containing less than 12 carbon atoms and not more than 10 mole % containing more than 26 carbon atoms
 to form a condensate of said alkylated phenol and a C₁ to C₃₀ aldehyde said condensate having a number average molecular weight of at least 3,000 as measured by VPO and molecular weight distribution of at least 1.5.

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zur Herstellung eines polymeren Additivs, das zur Verbesserung der Tieftemperaturfließigenschaften von Kohlenwasserstofföl geeignet ist, bei dem
 - (1) ein alkyliertes Phenol durch Umsetzung von (a) Phenol und (b) linearem α -Olefin, das
 - (i) 6 bis 50 Kohlenstoffatome aufweist
 - (ii) eine durchschnittliche Kohlenstoffzahl von 12 bis 26 aufweist, und
 - (iii) von dem nicht mehr als 10 Mol.% weniger als 12 Kohlenstoffatome enthalten und nicht mehr als 10 Mol.% mehr als 26 Kohlenstoffatome enthalten,
 in einem aprotischen polaren Lösungsmittel hergestellt wird, um ein alkyliertes Phenol zu bilden, das mindestens 80 Mol.% difunktionelles alkyliertes Phenol umfaßt, und bei dem mehr als 35 Mol.% der von den linearen α -Olefinen abgeleiteten Alkylgruppen als α -methylsubstituierte lineare Alkylgruppen vorliegen, und
 - (2) das alkylierte Phenol aus Stufe (1) mit einem C₁- bis C₃₀-Aldehyd kondensiert wird, um so ein Kondensat aus dem alkylierten Phenol und dem Aldehyd herzustellen, das ein durchschnittliches Molekulargewicht (Zahlenmittel) von mindestens 3 000, gemessen durch VPO (Gasphasenosmometrie), und eine Molekulargewichtsverteilung von mindestens 1,5 aufweist.
2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, das die Sulfurierung des Kondensats einschließt.
3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, bei dem die Kondensationsstufe außerdem in Gegenwart von mindestens einem Comonomer mit entweder der Formel



10 oder der Formel



durchgeführt wird, wobei R_6 , R_7 und R_8 jeweils unabhängig ausgewählt sind aus der Gruppe bestehend aus Wasserstoff, Alkyl, Aryl, Alkoxy, Aryloxy, Alkylmercapto und Halogen, und bei dem das Comonomer in einer Menge von weniger als 10 Gew.% der Kombination aus alkyliertem Phenol und Aldehyd vorhanden ist.

4. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, bei dem der Aldehyd Formaldehyd umfaßt.
5. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4, bei dem das polar-aprotische Lösungsmittel eine Dielektrizitätskonstante von mehr als 10 hat.
6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 5, bei dem das polar-aprotische Lösungsmittel Nitrobenzol, Nitromethan, N,N-Dimethylformamid, Acetonitril, Sulfolan oder Dimethylsulfoxid ist.
7. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, bei dem die α -Olefine durchschnittliche Kohlenstoffatomzahlen von 18 bis 20 aufweisen.
8. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 7, bei dem die Alkylierung bei einer Temperatur von 50 °C bis 200 °C durchgeführt wird.
9. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, bei dem die Alkylierung bei oder unterhalb von 100 °C durchgeführt wird.
10. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 9, bei dem das Molverhältnis von Phenol zu Olefin im Bereich von 2:1 bis 10:1 liegt.
11. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 10, bei dem die Alkylierung in Gegenwart eines sauren kristallinen Aluminiumoxid/Silikat-Zeolithkatalysators durchgeführt wird, um die Produktion von Dialkylat zu minimieren.
12. Verfahren nach Anspruch 11, bei dem der Zeolithkatalysator ein Siliciumdioxid-zu-Aluminiumoxidverhältnis von 3:1 bis 6:1 aufweist.
13. Verfahren nach Anspruch 12, bei dem der Zeolithkatalysator einen freien Porendurchmesser zwischen 6 Å und 8 Å aufweist.
14. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 13, bei dem die Alkylierung unter Verwendung von einem Molverhältnis von dem Phenol zu dem linearen α -Olefin von weniger als 3:1 durchgeführt wird.



15. Verfahren nach Anspruch 14, bei dem die Alkylierung unter Verwendung von einem Molverhältnis von dem Phenol zu dem linearen α -Olefin zwischen 1,7:1 und 1:1 durchgeführt wird.

16. Verwendung eines alkylierten Phenols, das mindestens 80 Mol.% difunktionelles alkyliertes Phenol umfaßt, und bei dem mehr als 35 Mol.% der von den linearen α -Olefinen abgeleiteten Alkylgruppen als α -methylsubstituierte lineare Alkylgruppen vorliegen, und das durch die Umsetzung von (a) Phenol und (b) linearem α -Olefin, das

(i) 6 bis 50 Kohlenstoffatome aufweist

(ii) eine durchschnittliche Kohlenstoffzahl von 12 bis 26 aufweist, und

(iii) von dem nicht mehr als 10 Mol.% weniger als 12 Kohlenstoffatome enthalten und nicht mehr als 10 Mol.% mehr als 26 Kohlenstoffatome enthalten,

in einem aprotischen polaren Lösungsmittel hergestellt wird, zur Bildung eines Kondensats aus dem alkylierten Phenol und einem C_1 - bis C_{30} -Aldehyd, wobei das Kondensat ein durchschnittliches Molekulargewicht (Zahlenmittel) von mindestens 3 000, gemessen durch VPO (Gasphasenosmometrie), und eine Molekulargewichtsverteilung von mindestens 1,5 aufweist.

Revendications

1. Procédé de production d'un additif polymérique apte à améliorer les propriétés d'écoulement à basse température d'une huile hydrocarbonée, qui comprend

(1) la préparation d'un phénol alkylé par réaction, dans un cosolvant polaire aprotique, (a) de phénol et (b) d'une alpha-oléfine linéaire ayant

(i) 6 à 50 atomes de carbone,

(ii) un nombre moyen d'atomes de carbone de 12 à 26 ; et

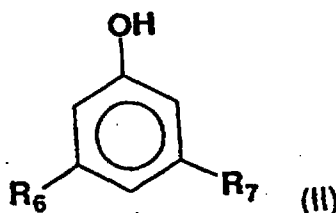
(iii) pas plus de 10 moles % de molécules de moins de 12 atomes de carbone et pas plus de 10 moles % de molécules de plus de 26 atomes de carbone

pour former un phénol alkylé comprenant au moins 80 moles % d'un phénol alkylé difonctionnel et possédant plus de 35 moles % des groupes alkyle dérivés des alpha-oléfines linéaires sous forme de groupes alkyle linéaires alpha-méthyl-substitués ; et

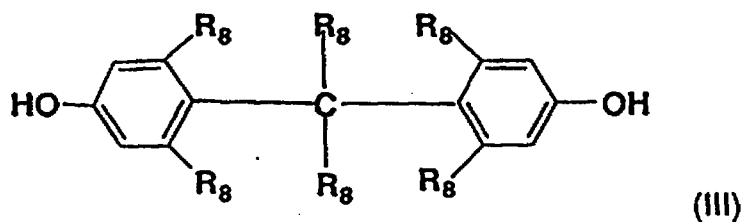
(2) la condensation du phénol alkylé de l'étape (1) avec un aldéhyde en C_1 à C_{30} de manière à obtenir un produit de condensation dudit phénol alkylé et dudit aldéhyde, ayant une moyenne numérique du poids moléculaire d'au moins 3000, mesurée par OPV et une distribution des poids moléculaires d'au moins 1,5.

2. Procédé suivant la revendication 1, comprenant la sulfuration du produit de condensation.

3. Procédé suivant la revendication 1 ou la revendication 2, dans lequel l'étape de condensation est mise en oeuvre en la présence supplémentaire d'au moins un comonomère de formule :



ou de formule :



10 formules dans lesquelles R_6 , R_7 et R_8 sont choisis chaun indépendamment dans le groupe consistant en l'hydrogène, un groupe alkyle, un groupe aryle, un groupe alkoxy, un groupe aryloxy, un groupe alkylmercapto et un halogène,

15 et dans lequel ledit comonomère est présent en une quantité inférieure à 10 % en poids de l'association de phénol alkylé et d'aldéhyde.

4. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, dans lequel l'aldéhyde comprend le formaldéhyde.
- 20 5. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 4, dans lequel le solvant aprotique polaire possède une constante diélectrique supérieure à 10.
6. Procédé suivant la revendication 5, dans lequel le solvant aprotique polaire est le nitrobenzène, le nitrométhane, le N,N-diméthylformamide, l'acétonitrile, le sulfolane ou le diméthylsulfoxyde.
- 25 7. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6, dans lequel les alpha-oléfines possèdent des nombres moyens d'atomes de carbone de 18 à 20.
8. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 7, dans lequel l'alkylation est effectuée à une température de 50 °C à 200 °C.
- 30 9. Procédé suivant la revendication 8, dans lequel l'alkylation est effectuée à une température égale ou inférieure à 100 °C.
- 35 10. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 9, dans lequel le rapport molaire de phénol à l'oléfine est compris dans l'intervalle de 2:1 à 10:1.
11. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 10, dans lequel l'alkylation est effectuée en présence d'un catalyseur zéolitique du type aluminosilicate cristallin acide afin de réduire au minimum dans cette alkylation l'obtention d'un produit de dialkylation.
- 40 12. Procédé suivant la revendication 11, dans lequel le catalyseur zéolitique possède un rapport de la silice à l'alumine de 3:1 à 6:1.
- 45 13. Procédé suivant la revendication 12, dans lequel le catalyseur zéolitique possède un diamètre des pores libres de 6 Å à 8 Å.
14. Procédé suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 13, dans lequel l'alkylation est effectuée en utilisant un rapport molaire du phénol à l'alpha-oléfine linéaire inférieur à 3:1.
- 50 15. Procédé suivant la revendication 14, dans lequel l'alkylation est effectuée en utilisant un rapport molaire du phénol à l'alpha-oléfine linéaire de 1,7:1 à 1:1.
- 55 16. Utilisation d'un phénol alkylé comprenant au moins 80 moles % d'un phénol alkylé difonctionnel et possédant plus de 35 moles % des groupes alkyle dérivés des alpha-oléfines linéaires sous forme de groupes alkyle linéaire alpha-méthyl-substitués, préparé par réaction, dans un cosolvant polaire aprotique, (a) de phénol et (b) d'une alpha-oléfine linéaire ayant
(i) 6 à 50 atomes de carbone,



(ii) un nombre moyen d'atomes de carbone de 12 à 26 ; et
(iii) pas plus de 10 moles % des molécules contenant moins de 12 atomes de carbone, et pas plus de 10 moles % des molécules contenant plus de 26 atomes de carbone
pour former un produit de condensation dudit phénol alkylé et d'un aldéhyde en C_1 à C_{30} , ledit produit de condensation ayant une moyenne numérique du poids moléculaire d'au moins 3000, telle qu'elle est mesurée par OPV, et une distribution des poids moléculaires d'au moins 1,5.

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