To avoid using halides, SiO_2 ALD has been attempted using a variety of reactants such as alkoxysilanes, aminosilanes and isocyanates, using a variety of different catalysts and reaction conditions. These methods suffer from a number of disadvantages, such as requiring large reactant exposures, long deposition times or resulting in contamination of the deposited film.

SUMMARY

A class of organometallic compounds is provided. The compounds correspond in structure to Formula 1:

$$(A)_x\text{-}M\text{-}(OR^3)_{4-x}$$

wherein:

A is selected from the group consisting of $-NR^1R^2$, $-N(R^4)(CH_2)_nN(R^5R^6)$,

$-N{=}C(NR^4R^5)(NR^6R^7)$, $OCOR^1$, halo and Y;

R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H and a cyclic or acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 8 carbon atoms, with the proviso that at least one of R^1 and R^2 must be other than H;

R^4, R^5, R^6 and R^7 are independently selected from the group consisting of H and an acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms;

Y is selected from the group consisting of a 3- to 13-membered heterocyclic radical containing at least one nitrogen atom;

R^3 is a cyclic or acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms;

M is selected from the group consisting of Si, Ge, Sn, Ti, Zr and Hf;

x is an integer from 1 to 3; and

n is an integer from 1 to 4.

In an aspect, there is provided an organometallic compound of Formula 1:

$$(A)_x\text{-}M\text{-}(OR^3)_{4-x}$$

wherein:

A is selected from the group consisting of $-N(R^4)(CH_2)_nN(R^5R^6)$,
$-N{=}C(NR^4R^5)(NR^6R^7)$, $OCOR^1$, halo and Y;

R^1 is an alkyl group having from 1 to 8 carbon atoms;

R^4, R^5, R^6 and R^7 are independently selected from the group consisting of H and an acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms;

Y is selected from the group consisting of a 3- to 13-membered heterocyclic radical containing at least one nitrogen atom;

R^3 is a cyclic or acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms;

M is selected from the group consisting of Si, Ge, Sn, Ti, Zr and Hf, preferably Si, Ge and Sn, more preferably Si;

x is an integer from 1 to 3; and

n is an integer from 1 to 4;

with the provisos that x cannot be 3 when A is halo, and that the compound of Formula 1 is not diacetoxy-ditbutoxysilane.

In another aspect, there is provided a method for forming a metal oxide film by a vapour deposition process, the method comprising the steps of:

a. Providing at least one substrate having functional O-H groups covering the surface,
b. delivering to said substrate at least one compound of Formula 1 in the gaseous phase:

$$(A)_x\text{-}M\text{-}(OR^3)_{4-x}$$

wherein:

A is selected from the group consisting of $-NR^1R^2$, $-N(R^4)(CH_2)_nN(R^5R^6)$,

$-N{=}C(NR^4R^5)(NR^6R^7)$, $OCOR^1$, halo and Y;

R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H and a cyclic or acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 8 carbon atoms, with the proviso that at least one of R^1 and R^2 must be other than H;

R^4, R^5, R^6 and R^7 are independently selected from the group consisting of H and an acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms;

Y is selected from the group consisting of a 3- to 13-membered heterocyclic radical containing at least one nitrogen atom;

R^3 is a cyclic or acyclic alkyl group having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms;

M is selected from the group consisting of Si, Ge, Sn, Ti, Zr and Hf, preferably Si, Ge and Sn, more preferably Si;

x is an integer from 1 to 3; and

n is an integer from 1 to 4;

c. purging the substrate with purge gas,
d. delivering to said substrate an oxygen source in the gaseous phase,
e. purging the substrate with purge gas,
f. repeating steps b) through e) until a desired thickness of metal oxide has been deposited.

Such compounds may be useful as precursors for metal oxide vapour phase deposition. The compounds as defined above comprise one or more ligands which are strong Lewis bases. Exemplary bases comprise acetates, halides and neutral, nitrogen-containing species with high proton affinity such as phosphazenes, amidines and guanidines.