CLAIMS

1. An etching composition comprising:
potassium hydroxide;
one or more than one additional alkaline compounds selected from the group consisting of tetraethylammonium hydroxide (TEAH), tetramethylammonium fluoride (TMAF) and NH_4OH; and
water in an amount of from 70 to 99 wt% based on the total weight of the composition;
wherein the composition preferentially etches silicon present on a substrate as compared to silicon dioxide present on said substrate.

2. An etching composition comprising:
two or more inorganic alkali basic hydroxides selected from the group consisting of potassium hydroxide, cesium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, rubidium hydroxide, or lithium hydroxide wherein the two or more inorganic alkali basic hydroxides comprise potassium hydroxide and cesium hydroxide,
optionally one or more than one additional alkaline compounds;
optionally one or more corrosion inhibitors; and
water in an amount of from 70 to 99 wt% based on the total weight of the composition;
wherein the composition preferentially etches silicon present on a substrate as compared to silicon dioxide present on said substrate.

3. The etchant composition of claim 2 wherein said inorganic alkali basic hydroxides are present in a total amount of from 0.5 to 25 wt % of the total composition.

4. The etchant composition of claim 2 wherein the two or more inorganic alkali basic hydroxides further comprise lithium hydroxide.

5. The etchant composition of claim 2 wherein the one or more than one additional alkaline compounds are present in the composition and are selected from the group consisting of one or more quaternary ammonium hydroxides, quaternary ammonium fluorides or ammonium hydroxide (NH_4OH).