

LOW TOXICITY SOLVENT SYSTEM FOR POLYAMIDEIMIDE RESINS AND SOLVENT SYSTEM MANUFACTURE

PRIORITY

[0001] The present patent application claims priority to and incorporates by reference the corresponding provisional patent application serial no. 61/576,247, titled, "Low Toxicity Solvent System for Polyamidimide Resins and Solvent System Manufacture," filed on December 15, 2011.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Embodiments of the present invention relate to the field of solvents; more particularly, embodiments of the present invention relate to solvents and their use in producing polyamideimide.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Polyamideimide (PAI) polymers are used for many high performance coating applications due to their excellent temperature resistance and high strength. The primary route to synthesizing polyamideimide polymers in a form that is convenient for the manufacture of coatings is by reacting diisocyanate, often 4,4'-methylene diphenyldiisocyanate (MDI) with trimellitic anhydride (TMA). In this process, PAI polymers are typically synthesized in polar aprotic solvents such as N-methyl amide compounds including dimethylformamide, dimethylacetamide, N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP), N-ethylpyrrolidone. See for example US Patent Nos. 2,421,021; 3,260,691; 3,471,444; 3,518,230; 3,817,926; and 3,847,878. The typical polymer solids level achieved in this synthetic route is 35-45% which may be diluted further with diluents depending on the end-use coating application.

[0004] Alternate solvents such as tetrahydrofuran, methyl ethyl ketone, gamma-butyrolactone, or dimethyl sulfoxide have drawbacks such as too low a boiling point for use as reaction solvent, low polymer solubility, or poor storage stability, which may change the application performance of the polymer resin.

[0005] US Patent Nos. 4,950,700 and 5,095,070 recite examples of gamma-butyrolactone with N-methylamide co-solvents and dimethylol ethylene urea as replacement solvents to synthesize PAI resin. However gamma-butyrolactone has neurological properties that make it subject to regulation and unsuitable for general use in formulations. Dimethylol ethylene urea has not had extensive toxicological studies performed and contains an N-methylamide

functionality suspected of negative environmental and health impacts. New solvents, such as those described in US Patent Application Publication No. 20100076223A1, for example 3-methoxy-N, N-dimethylpropionamide, may be too expensive or have not been fully tested for long term toxicity.

[0006] In addition, protic solvents such as ethyl lactate and propylene glycol are not suitable for use as PAI reaction media.

[0007] On a practical level, these solvents known in the art, while they may be useful for manufacturing PAI or effective for other organic synthetic reactions, are also recognized for having toxicity concerns. Thus it is an advantage to produce polyamideimide polymers using a synthetic method with minimal health and safety impact.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] A process for producing polyamideimide is disclosed. In one embodiment, the process comprises using at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

[0009] In an effort to achieve safer alternatives, in particular a synthesis route free of the commonly-used N-methyl amide solvents, alternative lower toxicity solvents are necessary. Acetamides are of interest due to their relatively low toxicity and easy preparation from industrially available dialkyl amines, with a long history of low chronic toxicity. In particular, dialkylamides are useful. N-acetyl morpholine (NAM), which is a solvent of low toxicity has been found to be suitable for use in making polyamideimide resins. Other useful and low toxicity solvents of the invention are diethyl acetamide (DEAc), di-n-propyl acetamide, N-formyl morpholine, diacetylpiperazine, N,N-diisopropylacetamide (DIPAc), di-n-butylacetamide (DIBAc), di-n-propylacetamide (DIPA), and N-propionyl morpholine (NPM). To achieve a lower toxicity process, it has now been found that the synthesis of PAI can be accomplished by the use of aprotic dialkylamide solvents of the invention, either alone, in combination with each other, or with the use of a co-solvent to provide a unique solvent system. The use of a combination of solvents may be required, for example for various industrial applications of PAI, where a viscosity within a specific range is desired. These solvents then can also act as diluents. To achieve this, a combination of dialkylamide solvents may be used to obtain the desired viscosity. Other preferred co-solvents of low toxicity that can be used either for the synthesis of, or as diluents for dissolution of, PAI resin are: water, o-xylene, triethylamine,

dimethylethanolamine, morpholine, N-methylmorpholine, acetone, trimethylamine, tripropylamine, diethylamine, diisopropylamine, and caprolactam.

[0010] It has also been found that a further advantage of embodiments of the invention is that, by using one or more aprotic dialkylamides in the synthetic process, a single pot, two-step reaction is possible.

[0011] Further, use of prior art solvents for synthesis of PAI resin, such as N-methyl amides, is avoided due to the toxicity of these compounds

[0012] Specifically, the preferred molar ratios of aprotic dialkylamide to other process co-solvents are from about 19:1 to about 1:1. More preferred is a ratio of from about 80:20 to about 70:30. Most preferred is a ratio of about 78:22.

Examples:

[0013] Example 1—method to synthesize co-solvent system: To a 1L 4-neck flask equipped with thermometer, condenser, and mechanical stirring, add 200 g diethylamine. Add 279.16 g acetic anhydride while keeping the temperature below 55°C. This is followed by the addition of 250.15 g morpholine. The reaction is heated to ~130°C until the acetic acid is consumed (~8 h). Conversion is enhanced by the distillation of water/excess morpholine.

[0014] Example 2 (KM-1145): Charge 51 g. N-acetyl morpholine (NAM), 0.85 g. caprolactam, 19.8 g. MDI, 15.65 g. TMA and heat to 100°C. In solution at 96°C, hold 1.5 hours. Temperature reduced to 70°C overnight, then heated to 130°C for 1.25 hrs. Viscosity too high; add 12.2 g. NAM co-solvent from Example 1.

% Solids = 33.82 %, Viscosity (DVII, 23°C) = 63,000 cps.

[0015] Example 3 (JES-3-29): Charge 1.68 g. caprolactam, 31.49 g. TMA, 39.66 g. MDI and 102.12 g. NAM co-solvent from Example 1 and heat to 110°C over 1.5 hours. Heat to 130°C and monitor viscosity until it is >2,000 cps / 120°C (~7 hours). Cool to <80°C, add NAM co-solvent from Example 1 to maintain stirring. Add TEA slowly keeping temperature under 90°C. Hold >60°C for 1 – 2 hours. Add water to adjust to ~28 % solids. Heat and hold at 85°C and adjust pH > 8 with TEA and water as needed to achieve homogeneity.

[0016] Example 4 (KM277): A 250 mL round bottom flask equipped with mechanical stirrer, condenser, and nitrogen bubbler was charged with: 57.6 g n-acetyl morpholine, 18.9 g o-xylene, 1.3 g caprolactam, 29.7 g methylene diphenyl diisocyanate, and 23.5 g trimellitic anhydride. The reaction was heated to 90 °C for 2 hours. The reaction temperature was then heated to 130 °C for 5 hours and then 14.7 g n-acetyl morpholine and 3.68 g o-xylene was added

and the reactor was cooled to room temperature. Final viscosity was 13,834 cps at 23 °C using a DVII Brookfield viscometer.

[0017] Example 5 (MP-2-11): A 250 mL round bottom flask equipped with mechanical stirrer, condenser, and nitrogen bubbler was charged with: 49 g n-acetyl morpholine, 18.9 g diethylacetamide, 1.3 g o-xylene, 29.7 g methylene diphenyl diisocyanate, and 23.6 g trimellitic anhydride. The reaction was heated to 90 °C for 2 hours. The reaction temperature was then heated to 130 °C for 3 hours and then 3.74 g n-acetyl morpholine was added and the reactor was cooled to 60 °C. Then 14.7 g acetone was added dropwise, and the reactor was cooled to room temperature. Final viscosity was 3,076 cps at 23 °C using a DVII Brookfield viscometer.

[0018] Example 6 (KM38): A 500 mL round bottom flask equipped with mechanical stirrer, condenser, and nitrogen bubbler was charged with: 121 g n-acetyl morpholine, 52.9 g methylene diphenyl diisocyanate, and 40.92 g trimellitic anhydride. The reaction was heated to 88 °C for 3 hours. The reaction temperature was then heated to 120 °C until the quench viscosity reached 1680 cps (about 2.5 hours) and then 41.81 g n-formyl morpholine and 41.81 g o-xylene was added to quench the reaction. The reactor was cooled to room temperature. Final viscosity was 8573 cps at 23 °C using a DVII Brookfield viscometer.

[0019] Example 7 (JES-4-21): 50.27 g methylene diphenyl diisocyanate, 38.62 g trimellitic anhydride, and 206.56 g n-formyl morpholine were charged to a 400 mL beaker. The reaction mixture was heated to 80°C until approximately 1 equivalent of CO₂, by weight loss, was evolved. The reaction was then heated to 130°C until the quench viscosity reached 730 cps and then 41.51 g. additional n-formyl morpholine was added to quench the reaction. The reactor was cooled to room temperature. Final solids content was analyzed to be 26.02 % and final viscosity was 10264 cps (using a DVII Brookfield viscometer).

[0020] Whereas many alterations and modifications of the present invention will no doubt become apparent to a person of ordinary skill in the art after having read the foregoing description, it is to be understood that any particular embodiment shown and described by way of illustration is in no way intended to be considered limiting. Therefore, references to details of various embodiments are not intended to limit the scope of the claims which in themselves recite only those features regarded as essential to the invention.

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A process for producing polyamideimide comprising using at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent, wherein the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent includes N-acetyl morpholine, diethyl acetamide, di-N-propyl acetamide, N-formyl morpholine, diacetylpiperazine, N,N-diisopropylacetamide, di-N-butylacetamide or N-propionyl morpholine;
wherein a ratio of the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent to other process co-solvents is between 19:1 and 1:1; and
wherein the other process co-solvents are selected from the group consisting of water, o-xylene, triethylamine, dimethylethanolamine, morpholine, Nmethyldmorpholine, acetone, trimethylamine, tripropylamine, diethylamine, diisopropylamine, and caprolactam.
2. The process of Claim 1 wherein the ratio of the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent to the other process co-solvents is between 80:20 and 70:30.
3. The process of Claim 1 wherein a molar ratio of the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent to the other process co-solvents is 78:22.
4. The process of Claim 1, comprising: reacting a methylene diphenyl diisocyanate with a trimellitic anhydride (TMA) in the presence of the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent.
5. The process of Claim 4, wherein reacting the methylene diphenyl diisocyanate with the TMA comprises using a molar ratio of a total amount of the at least one aprotic dialkylamide solvent to a total amount of the other process co-solvents that is 78:22.
6. The process of Claim 4, wherein the methylene diphenyl diisocyanate is 4,4'-methylene diphenyldiisocyanate (MDI).
7. The polyamideimide product produced by the process of claims 1 through 6.