The influence of various common ions on the slaking of some South African limes

JH Potgieter1, SS Potgieter2* , CA Strydom3 and O Gheevarhese4

1Department of Chemical & Metallurgical Engineering, Technikon Pretoria, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001, South Africa
2Department of Chemistry & Physics, Technikon Pretoria, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001, South Africa
3Department of Chemistry, University of Pretoria, Pretoria 0001, South Africa
4Department of Chemistry, Medunsa, Pretoria 0204, South Africa

Abstract

The rate of transformation from CaO to Ca(OH)2 during the slaking process is influenced by a number of factors. In this investigation the effects of common ions normally encountered in the slaking water were investigated. It was found that chloride and nitrate ions enhanced the slaking rate, while carbonate, sulphate and phosphate ions retarded the hydration of various limes used in the investigation. The increases and decreases in the degree of hydration correlate with the solubilities of the anions forming more soluble compounds than Ca(OH)2, as well as the solubility constants of the anions that formed less soluble compounds than the hydrated lime. The geological origin of the lime also influenced the slaking of the limes.

Keywords: lime, slaking, geological origin, accelerating anions, decelerating anions

Introduction

Lime is one of the most important industrial chemicals and its slaking from the quicklime (CaO) form to the hydrated lime (Ca(OH)2) species is of importance in a number of practical applications, such as potable water treatment, neutralisation of acidic effluents and flue gas desulphurisation, to name but a few. The rate of transformation from CaO to Ca(OH)2 during the slaking process is influenced by a number of factors, for example the production and storage conditions of the lime (Potgieter et al., 2002) the water and material composition (Gheevarhese et al., 2002; Potgieter et al., 2003a) and calcination temperature (Moropoulou et al., 2001).

Recently the authors described the effect of different agitation methods on the hydration rate of lime (Potgieter et al., 2003b) and concluded that this, together with the geological origin of the lime, greatly affects the amount of slaking occurring in each particular case.

This investigation further explores the influence of common ions, which can be encountered in water used for slaking quicklime, on the hydration rate of various limes. An ultrasonic agitation procedure was employed, as it is a faster way of slaking lime than the mechanical method used in the previous investigations by the group.

Experimental procedure

The experimental detail and set-up have been described comprehensively in previous papers dealing with this topic (Gheevarhese et al., 2002; Potgieter et al., 2003b). In this investigation ultrasonic agitation was used to induce hydration of the various lime samples in the different solutions of interests. The chemical compositions of the various lime samples are given in Table 1. A description of their sources of origin can be found in previous work described in the literature (Gheevarhese et al., 2002). All slaking percentages were normalised to the total amount of available lime contained in each limestone after calcining.

Results and discussion

The effect of a 1 M NaCl and a 1 M NaNO3 addition to the slaking water on the hydration rate of pure lime and three other different natural limes is shown schematically in Figs. 1 to 4. It can clearly be seen from all the curves in Figs. 1 to 4 that the nitrate enhanced the slaking rate in the initial stage of the hydration reaction. However, the degree of hydration becomes practically the same from

---

* To whom all correspondence should be addressed.

ISSN 0378-4738 = Water SA Vol. 29 No. 4 October 2003

Available on website http://www.wrc.org.za
The effect of chloride and nitrate ions on the hydration rate of
pure calcium oxide

The effect of sulphate, carbonate and phosphate ions on the
hydration rate of pure calcium oxide

The effect of chloride and nitrate ions on the hydration rate of
Lime Acres lime

The effect of sulphate, carbonate and phosphate ions on the
hydration rate of Lime Acres lime

The effect of chloride and nitrate ions on the hydration rate of
Beestekraal lime

The effect of sulphate, carbonate and phosphate ions on the
hydration rate of Beestekraal lime

The effect of chloride and nitrate ions on the hydration rate of
Pienaarsriver lime

The effect of sulphate, carbonate and phosphate ions on the
hydration rate of Pienaarsriver lime
If one compares the solubility of CaCl$_2$ and Ca(NO$_3$)$_3$ in standard tables (CRC, 1980), it is evident that calcium nitrate is more soluble than calcium chloride in both cold and hot water. This is in agreement with the trends observed in Figs. 1 to 4.

The effect of additions of solutions containing anions which form sparingly soluble compounds with calcium ions, on the slaking rate of the various limes, is graphically shown in Figs. 5 to 8. In all the cases the additions of Na$_2$CO$_3$, Na$_2$SO$_4$ and Na$_3$PO$_4$ had a retarding influence on the hydration rate of all the limes evaluated. The curves depicted in Figs. 5 to 8 clearly indicate that the retarding effect of the various anions increased in the order SO$_4^{2-} < CO_3^{2-} < PO_4^{3-}$ regardless of the lime evaluated. If one compares this with the solubility products of the different calcium compounds that are formed in each case with the anions present in the slaking water (CRC, 1980; Zoltek, 1974), it can seen that the sequence of retardation correlates with the solubility of the various compounds, with sulphate having the smallest effect of the three ions investigated, and phosphate having the largest effect on the hydration rate of the different limes.

The effect of the geological origin and chemical composition of the lime also play a role in the observed slaking behaviour. This is illustrated in Figs. 9 and 10 for one anion enhancing the slaking rate (NO$_3^-$) and one anion (CO$_3^{2-}$) retarding the slaking rate of each lime. This is in agreement with previous observations by the same authors (Gheevarhese et al., 2002; Potgieter et al., 2003b) that the geological origin and chemical composition of the lime also play a role in the observed slaking behaviour. In this investigation, it was found that the hydration occurred to a greater degree in the sequence:

Pure lime > Pienaarsriver > Lime Acres / Beestekraal

wherever an anion that enhances the solubility of the lime was added to the solution. In cases where the added anion decreased the solubility of the lime, the sequence was generally:

Beestekraal > Pure lime > Lime Acres / Pienaarsriver

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from this investigation:

- The hydration rate of lime is enhanced upon the addition of anions that form more soluble calcium compounds than lime to the slaking water.
- The initial enhancement of the slaking rate of lime is greater for nitrate than for chloride, which is in agreement with the fact that calcium nitrate has a higher solubility in water than calcium chloride.
- The hydration rate of lime is decreased upon the addition of anions that form less soluble calcium compounds than lime to the slaking water.
- The decrease in the degree of hydration increases in the order SO$_4^{2-} < CO_3^{2-} < PO_4^{3-}$, which is in agreement with the decrease in the solubilities of the corresponding calcium compounds with these anions.
- The increase in lime slaking by Cl$^-$ and NO$_3^-$, as well as the decrease caused by SO$_4^{2-}$, CO$_3^{2-}$ and PO$_4^{3-}$ ions have been quantified and this could assist in practical applications of lime in industry.

Acknowledgements

The National Research Foundation (NRF), the Technikon of Pretoria, the University of Pretoria and the Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa) are gratefully acknowledged for financial assistance.

References


