

## WASTEWATER TREATMENT BY FLOTATION

**Romulus Sarbu, Toth Lorand**

*University of Petrosani, Romania*

**ABSTRACT.** The flotation is successfully applied as cleaning method of the wastewaters refineries, textile fabrics (tissues), food industry, paper plants, oils plants, etc. In the flotation process with air released, first of all the water is saturated with air compressed at pressures between 0,3 – 3 bar, followed by the relaxed phenomenon of the air-water solution, in a flotation cell with slowly flowing. The super saturation condition could be applied on the wastewaters treatment. In this case the wastewaters which is in atmospheric equilibrium is introduced in a closed space where the depression is 0,3 – 0,5 bar. Our paper presents the hypo baric flotation cell and the technological flow of the cleaning the domestic wastewaters.

### ФЛОТАЦИОННО ПРЕЧИСТВАНЕ НА ОТПАДНИ ВОДИ

**Ромулас Сърбу, Тот Лоранд**

*Петрошански университет, Петрошани, Румъния*

**РЕЗЮМЕ.** Един от най-успешно използваните методи за почистване на отпадни води от нефтопреработвателата, текстилната, хартиена и хранително-вкусова промишленост, е флотацията. При въздушната флотация първоначално водата се насища със състен въздух под налягане 0,3 – 3 бара, последвано от релаксиращия природен феномен на въздушно-водния разтвор във флотационната клетка с бавно протичане на процеса. При пречистването на отпадни води може да бъде приложена схемата на пълно въздушно насищане. В този случай отпадните води са поставени в условия на атмосферно равновесие в затворено пространство и налягането е намалено до 0,3 – 0,5 бара. Нашият доклад представя модел на хипобарна флотационна клетка и технологичния поток на пречистване на битови отпадни води.

### Introduction

In practice, the normal (natural) flotation process is different by the flotation with air. In the first case, the material particles lighter than the water (oils, greases) eventually associated with gas bubbles have the tendency to raise to the liquid stationary surface. In the flotation process with air, the material particles heavier than the water are transported to the liquid surface by attaching them with air bubbles.

In this case, the air could be introduced in water likes a very fine bubbles by porous surfaces or by mechanical agitation (flotation with dispersed air); a second modality to obtain the gaseous phase is by the releasing of the solved air in water, as a consequence of abrupt decreasing of the gas pressure lied in equilibrium with the water, case when the became supersaturated with gaseous phase [1].

The main advantages of the aerating system with air released from pulp are:

- the gas micro bubbles are formed directly on the solid hydrophobic particles surfaces; this aspect excludes the necessity of the collision between the particles and bubbles without negative effect on the selectivity of the process;
- the micro bubbles are in a high number offering a liquid-gas surface greatest than the normal bubbles dimension, in correlation with the specific surface of very fine particles from pulp [2].

We can appreciate that the bubbles from the floater device after a pressurization of the wastewater at 2-5 atm is between 30 – 120 microns.

The ascension velocity follows the Stokes law and the elevating velocity of the complex bubble-particle is between  $(0,4 - 2)10^{-3}$  m/s, but this velocity increases with air/suspensions report. [4].

The air releasing takes place in reverse condition those which determines the air solving in liquid phase; if a pressure increasing of the pressure from  $p_1$  to  $p_2$ , the air quantity solved in the water will be in accordance with the Henry law:

$$q = k_h(p_2 - p_1)$$

to a decreasing of the pressure under the  $p_2$  value, will takes place a releasing of an adequate quantity of air.

Rays pointed out that the saturation degree is in correlation with the type (shape) of the pressurization container. So, the static containers conduct to a saturation rate about 50 %, but the using of agitation system increases the air solubility to the 90 % comparatively with the conventional retention time.

The air quantity released theoretically from pulp when the pressure will be reduced from  $p_2$  to  $p_1$ , can be calculated with the relation:

$$q' = q_a [fp_2 / p_1 - 1]$$

where:  $q_a$  –the water saturation with air to the atmospheric pressure,  $\text{cm}^3/\text{dm}^3$

$f$  –the saturation fraction in the pressurization container [4].

The influence parameters of the process are: the pressure difference, the expansion duration and the solid concentration.

The suspension concentration is in correlation with the air/suspensions report (A/S). When it is used recycling water for pressurization, A/S report is calculated with the formula:

$$A/S = 1.3R(p_2 - p_1) / p_1 \cdot Q \cdot c$$

where:  $R$  is the volume of recycling water pressurized,  $\text{dm}^3$

$Q$  is wastewater flow,  $\text{dm}^3$

$c$  is the suspensions concentration from feeding,  $\text{mg}/\text{dm}^3$

To increase the separation efficiency often is necessary to add flocculation agents in feeding, before their mixing with the recycling water.

## The design and the functioning of the hypobaric flotation cell

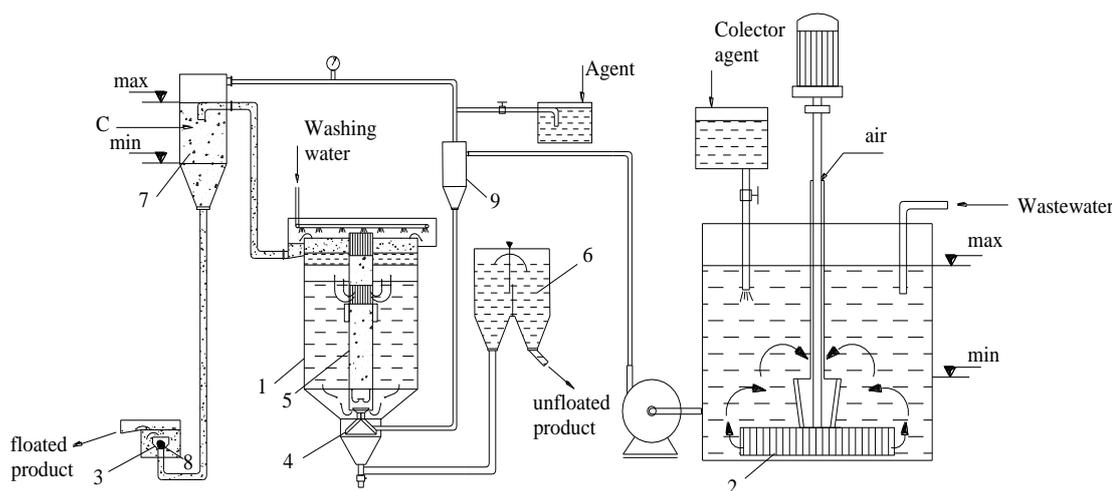
The hypo baric cell flotation cell is an installation with depression, with two novelty elements e.g. a hypo baric static cell and a hydroairator (a special device) which realize the necessary depression above the water mirror and on the other hand, enriching with air of the recycling water.

In the technical references there are some types of vacuum flotation cells whose functioning principle consists of the saturation of pulp with air followed by their introducing in a closed space with lower air pressure. To a decreasing of air pressure a part of solved air releases under micro bubbles form and in their elevating will rally in the froth layer the hydrophobic particles. In order to assure the resistance of bubbles, in the pulp is added frothing agents.

The main disadvantages of these installations are in connection with the products evacuation, because the flotation cells are disposed in vacuum spaces, great energy consumptions and moving parts of installation.

The hypo baric flotation installation presented in figure 1 eliminates these disadvantages, having in component part a flotation cell (1) with hydroairator (9), hermetically closed and with any part in moving. The feeding saturated with air by agitating in the agitator (2), assures the depression necessary to the air releasing and to the froth elevating in the separation basin (7). In this basin, the pulp weight containing the floated product is greater than the ball weight with role of valve of the evacuation hydraulic device (8).

The unfloated product is evacuated to the bottom of cell by the device (6). A part of this product is the recycling water, which feed the hydroairator (9). The emulsion water-air fed tangentially in the accelerating device (4) is interfered with the pulp feeding in floatator device (5), which has oblique slits trough to go out the mineralized bubbles. The floated product is evacuated by the cell overflow in the basin (7). This product that is rich in organic matter can be used in future agricultural activities, like fertilizer agent. The rest of unfloated product can be used in another domains or can be treated in a secondary cleaning phase. [3]



HYPOBARIC FLOTATION CELL

- |                           |                              |                       |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 - flotation cell        | 4 - Accelerating device      | 7 - Separation device |
| 2 - Agitator              | 5 - Flotator device          | 8 - Hydraulic device  |
| 3 - Floated product basin | 6 - Unfloated product device | 9 - Hydroairator      |

## Experiments and results

The research to the laboratory scale was carried out on domestic wastewaters from Danutoni station and the aim of these researches was to eliminate the organic matter (CCO) and the suspensions from waters. The technological parameters were: the agitation time; the recycling report; the temperature and the separation time.

The simple flotation (without flocculant reagents adding), at recycling reports between 10 – 30 % pointed out the experience of a linear correlation between the process efficiency (the organic matter removal) and the recycling report. To a conditioning time about 3 minutes, the efficiency process of the suspensions removal was in the domain 60 – 80 % and for the organic matter removal, between 45 – 75 %. An increasing of the conditioning time by agitating had a low influence on the flotation efficiency.

## Conclusions

This new hypo baric flotation installation presents some advantages such as:

- A higher efficiency of collision between the solid suspensions and the released bubbles gas;
- The flotation machine has no moving part and the novelty character is absolutely by the fact that whole process (aerating, adhesion, internal circulation, the products evacuation) is a consequence of a synergism between the gravimetric and centrifugal field;
- The obtained results justify the continuation of the research on other wastewaters types.

## References

1. Haneş N., Sârbu R., Bădulescu C. – Protecția mediului și a muncii în procesarea resurselor minerale, Ed. Infomin, Deva, 1999.
2. Sârbu R. – Instalație de flotație hipobarică, Brevet OSIM, 199992 / 30. 08. 2006
  - a. Medaille d'or, Brussels 2003
3. Krausz S. – Teoria și tehnologia flotației, Ed. Matrix, București, 2001.

Recommended for publication by the Editorial board