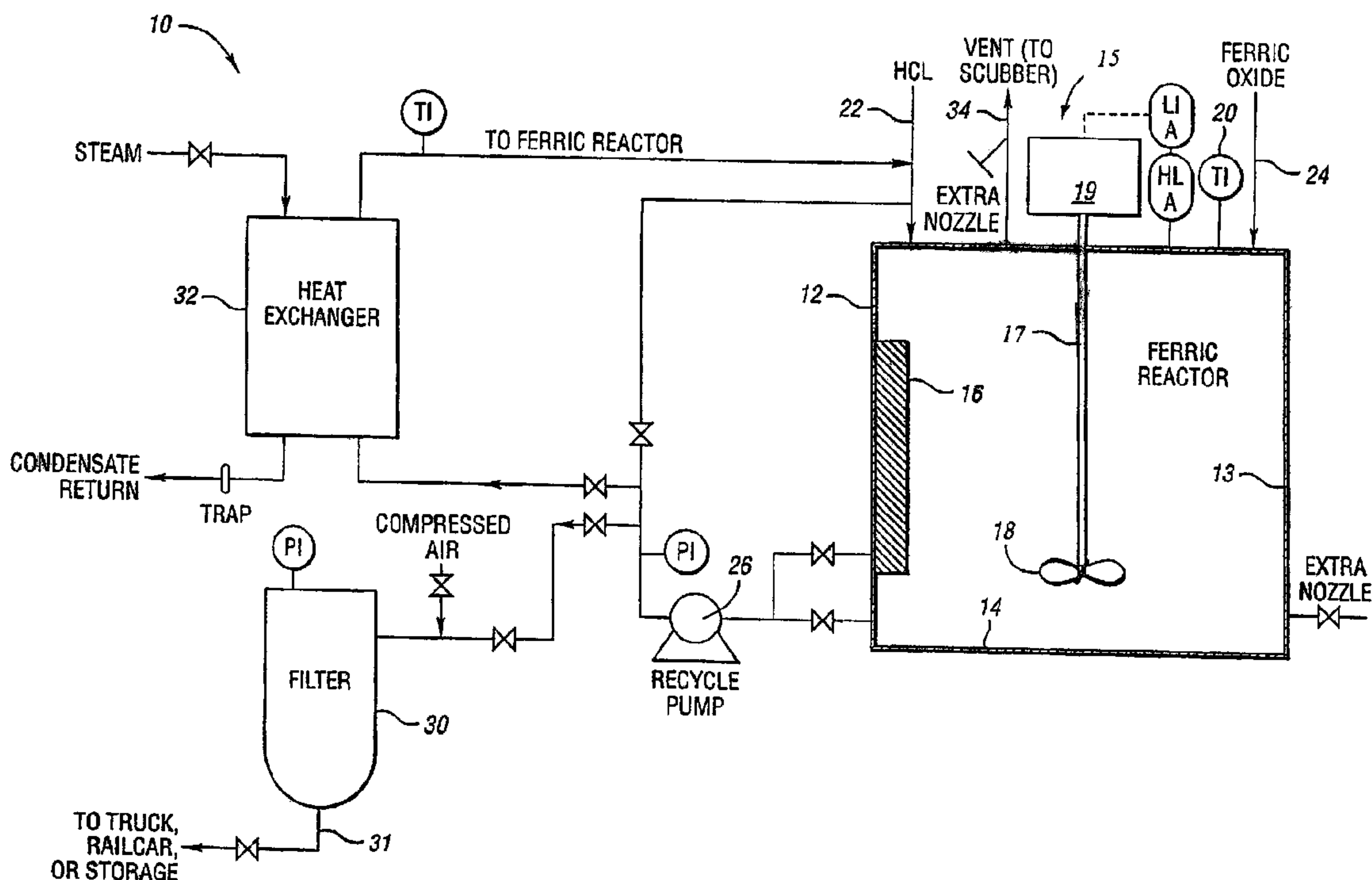




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 REDUITES D'ACIDE CHLORHYDRIQUE A DES FINS DE TRAITEMENT DE L'EAU
 (54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD OF MAKING FERRIC CHLORIDE WITH REDUCED AMOUNTS OF
 HYDROCHLORIC ACID FOR WATER TREATMENT



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

The present invention involves a system and method of making ferric chloride with reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid for water treatment. The method comprises preparing a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid at a predetermined molar ratio. The method further includes mixing the reactant batch with an impeller rotating between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute. The method further includes maintaining the reactant batch at a temperature between about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. The method forms a reaction product including ferric chloride and a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid.



ABSTRACT

The present invention involves a system and method of making ferric chloride with reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid for water treatment. The method comprises preparing a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid at a predetermined molar ratio. The method further includes mixing the reactant batch with an impeller rotating between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute. The method further includes maintaining the reactant batch at a temperature between about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. The method forms a reaction product including ferric chloride and a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid.

SYSTEM AND METHOD OF MAKING FERRIC CHLORIDE WITH REDUCED AMOUNTS OF HYDROCHLORIC ACID FOR WATER TREATMENT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to systems and methods of making ferric chloride with reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid for water treatment.

[0002] Processes of making ferric chloride are known. Ferric chloride has been used in the various industries for many years. For instance, ferric chloride is a component used in water treatment processes. Although current processes of making ferric chloride are adequate, such processes can be improved. For example, many current systems and processes undesirably require chlorine to be reacted with an aqueous solution of ferrous chloride in a recycled aqueous solution of ferric chloride. A number of steps follow which include decompressing and vaporizing a reaction product, recycling the reaction product, and recovering the reaction product. Such process requires numerous process units to make ferric chloride which, in turn, requires costly transportation to a typically remote location.

[0003] Many processes of making ferric chloride produce a product having relatively large amounts of hydrochloric acid. Relatively large amounts of hydrochloric acid are undesirable in water treatment processes. Moreover, in many processes of making ferric chloride, numerous steps are required to reduce the amount of hydrochloric acid from the product. Additionally, in such processes, a relatively large number of process units are required to reduce the hydrochloric acid concentration. Furthermore, in turn, the equipment for these processes require a significant measure of space, more than typically available near water treatment

plants, thus requiring costly means for transporting ferric chloride to subsequent water treatment plants via rail car or trailers.

[0004] Therefore, it is desirable to improve the process of making ferric chloride by reducing the amount of hydrochloric acid concentration from the product to be used in water treatment processes. Moreover, it is further desirable to reduce the number of steps and process units required in making ferric chloride. Furthermore, it is also desirable to reduce the amount of area required to make ferric chloride, thereby eliminating or reducing transportation costs.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] In one embodiment, a method of making ferric chloride comprises preparing a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid at a predetermined molar ratio. The method further includes mixing the reactant batch with an impeller rotating between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute, and maintaining the reactant batch at a temperature between about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. The method forms a reaction product including ferric chloride and a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid.

[0006] In another embodiment, a system for making ferric chloride comprises a batch reactor for receiving a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution at a predetermined molar ratio. The batch reactor has baffles disposed on its inner side walls, and a mixer having a rotating shaft and an impeller disposed adjacent the bottom of the reactor. The batch reactor is configured to mix the reactant batch at an agitation speed between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute and to form a reaction product comprising ferric chloride and a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid. The system further includes a scrubber

in fluid communication with the batch reactor to receive hydrochloric acid vapors vented from the batch reactor, and a filter in fluid communication with the batch reactor for filtering the reaction product.

[0007] Further objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from consideration of the following description and the appended claims when taken in connection with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] Figure 1a depicts a process flow diagram of a first portion of one system for making ferric chloride in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0009] Figure 1b depicts a process flow diagram of a second portion of the system in Figure 1a; and

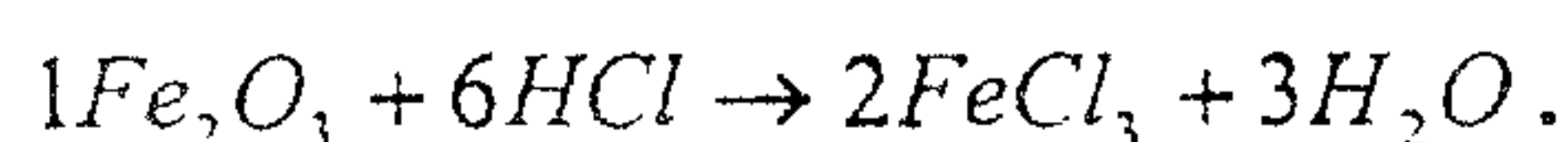
[0010] Figure 2 depicts a flow chart of one method of making ferric chloride in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] Figures 1a and 1b illustrate process flow diagrams of a system 10 for making ferric chloride with reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid for water treatment. As shown, the system 10 includes a relatively reduced number of process units to make ferric chloride, allowing the system to be transportable and occupy a relatively small area, thereby reducing transportation costs and transit time of the ferric chloride to water treatment units. System 10 generally includes a batch reactor 12 for receiving a reactant batch of ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution. As shown in Figure 1a, system 10 includes a pump 26 for recycling the reactant batch components, heating the reactant batch, and drawing reaction

product from the batch reactor 12 to a filter unit 30. System 10 further includes heat exchanger system 32 across which the reactant batch may be pumped for heat transfer to the reactant batch. System 10 may also include a vent 34 to a scrubber system 33 for venting hydrochloric acid vapors from the batch reactor. As shown, the scrubber 33 receives the hydrochloric acid vapors, and exhaust gas is blown to a stack of separation units for further processing of the exhaust gas.

[0012] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, system 10 includes a batch reactor or "ferric reactor" 12 for receiving a reactant batch of ferric oxide (Fe_2O_3) and hydrochloric acid (HCl) at a predetermined molar ratio. Preferably, the molar ratio of ferric oxide to hydrochloric acid in the reactant batch is 3:6. The hydrochloric acid (HCl) and ferric oxide (Fe_2O_3) react to form a reaction product including ferric chloride ($FeCl_3$), water (H_2O), unreacted hydrochloric acid, and residuals. A quantitative relationship of ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid to make ferric chloride may be represented in a chemical reaction as follows:



[0013] In this embodiment, batch reactor 12 has inner side walls 13 and a bottom 14 integral with inner side walls 13. The inner side walls 13 and bottom 14 may have a protective lining (discussed below) to receive the reactant batch. In this embodiment, the batch reactor 12 is configured to receive and mix a reactant batch comprised of ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution. The batch reactor 12 is configured to mix the reactant batch at an agitation speed between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute (rpm) and to form a reaction product

including ferric chloride, water, hydrochloric acid, unreacted ferric oxide, and residuals.

[0014] In particular, the batch reactor 12 is configured to form a reaction product of ferric chloride having reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid, e.g., between about 0.1 and 3 weight percent hydrochloric acid of the reaction product. As described in greater detail below, the batch reactor is configured to mix the reaction batch for about at least 1 hour. Batch reactor 12 further includes a plurality of baffles 16 disposed about inner side walls 13 to enhance mixing.

[0015] In this embodiment, the batch reactor 12 is designed to receive and hold a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution. For example, the batch reactor may be a reactor manufactured by Belding™ Tank Technologies, model CFV-10 being a 5915 filament wound reinforced fiberglass lined tank having a dome top and a flat bottom. The capacity of the batch reactor is preferably at least about 4,000 gallons. In this embodiment, the capacity of the batch reactor is about 5,900 gallons. The batch reactor has dimensions of 120 inches diameter x 120 inches straight side x 140 inches overall height.

[0016] The fiberglass liner of the batch reactor may be comprised of polymeric resins including premium grade Derakane 441™ vinyl ester resins throughout and may include an internal veil of double glass with 200 mil corrosion barrier. The batch reactor may have an external coat of premium grade protective coating with an ultraviolet inhibitor. In this embodiment, the batch reactor is designed for 1.9 specific gravity product and for having a -8" water column vacuum. The batch reactor may have reinforcement ribs on the flat bottom. The reactor may preferably include four

anti-swirl baffles, of a type such as known in the art, substantially evenly spaced out between each other on the inner side walls.

[0017] In this embodiment, batch reactor 12 further includes a mixer 15 having a rotating shaft 17 and an impeller 18 connected to the shaft 17. Blades of the impeller may be located adjacent the bottom 14 of the reactor 12. Impeller 18 enables mixing of reactants within the batch reactor 12 by way of a drive motor 19 connected to the rotating shaft 17. Motor 19 is configured to rotatably drive the shaft 17 thereby rotating the impeller 18 within the batch reactor 12. In this embodiment, the motor 19 has variable speeds at which the impeller may be rotated. Batch reactor 12 also includes a temperature indicator 20 such as known in the art for measuring temperature of a reaction batch during normal operation.

[0018] In this embodiment, the mixer is a GA Braun™ mixer model 4BTO5-70 mixer assembly driven by a five horse power motor having a three phase, 60 cycle, 1750 rpm, 230/460 volt motor geared for 70 rpm output. The impeller is a GA Braun™ A35 single-blade impeller unit with a stabilizer mounted on a 2 ½ inch diameter x 122 inch long shaft. The mixer is mounted on an eight inch, 150 pound ANSI flange with a low pressure stuffing box (15 psig). Wetted parts, e.g., blades of the impeller, are 304 stainless steel, rubber lined with high temperature core butyl.

[0019] As shown, the system 10 further includes a hydrochloric acid input line 22 from a hydrochloric acid source. The hydrochloric acid source may be any suitable source, such as a holding tank for hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution. The system 10 further includes a ferric oxide input line 24 from a ferric oxide source which may be any suitable source including a storage facility for ferric oxide in solid phase.

[0020] At ambient temperatures of about 65° Fahrenheit or greater, it has been determined that a minimum volume or mass of the reactant batch may be used so that the resulting exothermic reaction produces sufficient heat to maintain the reactant batch at a desired temperature range during mixing. In this embodiment, the desired temperature of the reactant batch is between about 70° and 180° Fahrenheit. Thus, at those temperatures and with mixing of between about 60 and 150 rpm, it has been surprisingly found that no heat source or heat exchange system is required to form the reaction product.

[0021] However, it also has been found that when using reactant batch volumes below the minimum volume, the heat generated by the resulting exothermic reaction is insufficient to maintain the reactant batch at the desired temperature range during mixing. In this embodiment, it is preferred that at least 4,000 gallons of reactant batch is used to maintain the reactant batch at the desired temperature range.

[0022] Preferably, hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution is introduced to the batch reactor. Then, ferric oxide in solid form is added to the hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution, defining the reactant batch. In this embodiment, the hydrochloric acid is supplied from a supply tank (not shown) containing between about 32 and 37 weight percent hydrochloric acid and between about 68 and 63 weight percent water. As mentioned, the ferric oxide supply is preferably in solid (powder) form as it is introduced in the batch reactor after the hydrochloric acid is received in the batch reactor. In this embodiment, the ferric oxide supply includes about 99 weight percent of ferric oxide in powder form.

[0023] In this embodiment, the hydrochloric acid concentration in the reactant batch is between about 20 weight percent and 30 weight percent of the reactant batch in aqueous solution, and preferably about 23 weight percent and 27 weight percent of the reactant batch in aqueous solution. The hydrochloric acid concentration is more preferably about 25 weight percent of the reactant batch in aqueous solution.

[0024] In this embodiment, it is preferred that the ferric oxide used in the reactant batch be added in solid phase, e.g., powder form. The concentration of the ferric oxide is between about 10 weight percent and 30 weight percent of the reactant batch, and preferably between about 15 weight percent and 25 weight percent of the reactant batch. The ferric oxide concentration in the reactant batch is more preferably about 20 weight percent.

[0025] At temperatures less than about 65° Fahrenheit, a heat exchange system is used to provide heat to maintain the reactant batch at the desired temperature range. It is to be understood that a heat exchange system is preferably used when the batch reaction time is less than three hours or when the process is at an ambient temperature of less than 65° Fahrenheit.

[0026] As shown, a recycle pump 26 is in fluid communication with the batch reactor 12 to selectively draw product or batch components from the batch reactor. Recycle pump 26 may be used for pumping components of the reactant batch through the heat exchanger 32, drawing product from the batch reactor, or recycling components of the reactant batch within the batch reactor. In this embodiment, the recycle pump is a fiberglass pump 3" (inlet) x 1.5" (outlet) with a 15 horse power variable speed drive.

[0027] A filter unit 30 may be in fluid communication with the recycle pump for filtering unreacted ferric oxide and residuals, such as dirt and sand, from the reaction product. As shown, the filter unit 30 may have an outlet 31 which allows filtered reaction product to be conveyed to transportation vehicles or storage facilities such as trailers, railcars, or storage tanks. In this embodiment, the reaction product generally includes ferric chloride and the reduced amount of hydrochloric acid. In this embodiment, the filter unit 30 has filters which may be cartridge type filters made of polypropylene retained in a housing made of rubber lined steel.

[0028] As shown, system 10 further includes a heat exchanger/boiler system 32 for heating components of the reactant batch or the reaction product to maintain a temperature between about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. The heat exchanger system 32 may be configured to heat the reaction product to be recycled within the batch reactor, the reactant batch, or components of the reactant batch.

[0029] The heat exchanger/boiler system may include any suitable heat exchanger and boiler known in the art. In this embodiment, the heat exchanger is a shell and tube heat exchanger wherein the shell is made of carbon steel and the tubes are made of tantalum. In this embodiment, the heat exchanger requires a minimum surface area of about 60 ft². In this embodiment, the heat exchanger is rated for up to about 100 psig steam pressure. The heat exchange system should operate at a minimum of about 3 million Btu per hour wherein the boiler steam is between about 10 psig and 90 psig.

[0030] As shown, a scrubber unit 33 may be in fluid communication with batch reactor 12 by way of a vent line 34 to receive hydrochloric acid vapors from the batch reactor. In this embodiment, the vent line 34 may converge with vent lines

from other sources such as trucks and storage tanks as shown. As such, a blower 36, located downstream of the scrubber unit 33, may be used to damper the hydrochloric acid to the atmosphere.

[0031] The scrubber unit 33 for the hydrochloric acid vent 34 is configured to be able to pull a vacuum of -3 inches of water column and treat 1,000 cubic feet per minute (cfm) of air flow. In this embodiment, the scrubber unit is made of fiberglass and the vent line is made of any suitable material, e.g., fiberglass or chlorinated polyvinyl chloride (CPVC).

[0032] The system 10 forms a reaction product including a ferric chloride solution having a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid. In this embodiment, the ferric chloride is between about 20 and 50 weight percent, and preferably 28 and 45 weight percent ferric chloride. The reaction product further includes between about 50 and 80 weight percent water, and preferably 55 and 72 weight percent water. The reaction product further includes between about 0.1 and 3 weight percent hydrochloric acid and preferably about 1 weight percent hydrochloric acid. Preferably, the ferric chloride is about 43 weight percent, the water is about 56 weight percent, and the hydrochloric acid is about 1 weight percent of the reaction product.

[0033] Figure 2 is a flow chart depicting one method 110 of making ferric chloride with reduced amounts of hydrochloric acid. As shown, method 110 comprises a step 112 of preparing a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid at a predetermined molar ratio. Preparing the reactant batch may include introducing hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution and then introducing ferric oxide in solid phase, e.g., ferric oxide powder. The predetermined molar ratio of

ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid is at least about 1:6, preferably 3:6. In this embodiment, the ferric oxide is in solid phase (powder) and the hydrochloric acid is in aqueous solution.

[0034] The components of the reactant batch may be preheated by way of the heat exchange system discussed above and shown in Figure 1. This may be accomplished by recycling the component(s) with the recycle pump across the heat exchanger for preheating. In this embodiment, the hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution may be preheated when conditions of the batch reactor have a temperature of equal to or less than 60° Fahrenheit. Optionally, a volume of reactant product may be retained in the batch reactor as the hydrochloric acid and the ferric oxide are introduced into the batch reactor to minimize the concentration of hydrochloric acid in the batch reactor.

[0035] The method further includes a step 114 of mixing the reactant batch with a mixer having an impeller rotating between about 60 and 150 revolutions per minute. In this embodiment, the impeller has a pumping capacity of about 19,000 gallons per minute. During mixing, the reactant batch is mixed with the impeller at turbulent flow. The impeller has a power number of about 6.7 at 1.5 specific gravity and a Reynolds number of 8,150 at 200 cps. Preferably, the impeller rotates at about 70 revolutions per minute (rpm). In this embodiment, mixing is performed for about 1 to 3 hours. During mixing, the hydrochloric acid is sampled and tested by titration about every hour in this embodiment. When the weight percent of hydrochloric acid is determined to be about 3 percent or below, mixing may be stopped.

[0036] In this embodiment, the method 110 further includes a step 116 of maintaining the reactant batch at a desired temperature between about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. Preferably, the reactant batch is maintained at a temperature between about 165° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit. This may be accomplished with the heat exchange system mentioned above or without the heat exchange system so long as the reactant batch is at a minimum volume, e.g., 4000 gallons, and sufficient mixing is provided, e.g., 60 rpm to 150 rpm.

[0037] Thus, the reactant batch may be at a predetermined mass or volume to generate heat from the resulting exothermic reaction to sufficiently maintain the reactant batch at the desired temperature, during mixing, without use of a heat exchange system. In one embodiment, the reactant batch is at a minimum volume of at least 4,000 gallons, and preferably about 5900 gallons, to sufficiently maintain the desired temperature of about 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit during mixing.

[0038] At ambient temperatures of less than 65° Fahrenheit, a heat source is used to heat the reactant batch. This may be accomplished by way of the heat exchange system mentioned above. In this embodiment, the recycle pump draws the reactant batch across the heat exchanger for heat transfer to maintain the reactant batch between about 70° and 180° Fahrenheit. As a result, the reaction product is formed including a ferric chloride solution having a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid.

[0039] Method 110 may further include venting hydrochloric acid vapors from the batch reactor when mixing the reactant batch at the desired temperature. As discussed above, the hydrochloric acid vapors may be vented to a scrubber unit for hydrochloric acid vapor processing. Method 110 further includes drawing the

reaction product from the batch reactor and filtering the reaction product of unreacted ferric oxide and residuals therefrom. As discussed above, this may be accomplished with the recycle pump and the filter unit.

EXAMPLE

[0040] About 3077 gallons of 37 weight percent hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution was added in a 5900 gallon batch reactor tank manufactured by Belding™ Tank Technologies, Model CFV-10. The mixer of the tank was activated to rotate at 70 rpm to mix the ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution. Then, four 2000-pound bags of 99.5 weight percent ferric oxide in powder form were added to the hydrochloric acid in aqueous solution in the batch reactor, defining the reactant batch. The recycle pump was activated to pump the reactant batch across the heat exchange system to heat the reaction batch between about 70 and 180° Fahrenheit. After about 1 hour of mixing and heating, the reactant batch was at a temperature of about 165° Fahrenheit. Mixing and heating continued for a total of 3 hours. After about 3 hours from adding the last bag of ferric oxide to the reactant batch a reaction product was formed.

[0041] The reaction product was analyzed and had about 41 weight percent ferric chloride, 58 weight percent water, and 1 weight percent hydrochloric acid of the reaction product.

[0042] It should be appreciated that the example, method, and system of the present invention are capable of being incorporated in the form of a variety of embodiments, only a few of which have been illustrated and described above. The invention may be embodied in other forms without departing from its spirit or

essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrated and not restrictive, and the scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

CLAIMS:

1. A method of making ferric chloride which contains a low amount of hydrochloric acid for water treatment, the method comprising:
 - preparing a reactant batch comprising ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid added at a predetermined molar ratio;
 - mixing the reactant batch with an impeller rotating between 60 and 150 revolutions per minute;
 - maintaining the reactant batch at a temperature between 70° and 180° Fahrenheit;
 - whereby a reaction product including ferric chloride with a low amount of hydrochloric acid is formed.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined molar ratio of ferric oxide to hydrochloric acid is at least 1:6.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined molar ratio of ferric oxide to hydrochloric acid is at least 3:6.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein preparing the reactant batch includes:
 - introducing the hydrochloric acid in the form of an aqueous solution; and
 - introducing the ferric oxide in the form of a solid phase.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the ferric oxide added is between 10 weight percent to 30 weight percent and the hydrochloric acid is between 20 weight percent to 30 weight percent of the reactant batch in an aqueous solution.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the ferric oxide added is 20 weight percent and the hydrochloric acid is 27 weight percent of the reactant batch in the aqueous solution.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the impeller is a single impeller having a pumping capacity of 19,000 gallons per minute.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein mixing the reactant batch with the impeller is at turbulent flow.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein the impeller has a power number of 6.7 at 1.5 specific gravity and a Reynolds Number of 8,150 at 200 cps.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein the impeller rotates at about 70 revolutions per minute.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein the reactant batch is at a volume of at least 4,000 gallons to substantially maintain a temperature of between 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit during mixing.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein maintaining the reactant batch temperature includes using only the heat from the exothermic reaction of the reactant batch, when the reactant batch exceeds a predetermined volume and the ambient temperature is greater than 65° Fahrenheit.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein the predetermined volume of the reactant batch is at least 4,000 gallons.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein the reactant batch is maintained at a temperature between 165° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein mixing is performed for 1 to 3 hours.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the reaction product includes between 20 and 50 weight percent ferric chloride, between 50 and 80 weight percent water, and between 0.1 and 3 weight percent hydrochloric acid.
17. The method of claim 1 wherein the reaction product includes about 43 weight percent ferric chloride, about 56 weight percent water, and about 1 weight percent hydrochloric acid.
18. The method of claim 1 further comprising heating the reactant batch to a temperature between 70° Fahrenheit to 180° Fahrenheit.
19. The method of claim 1 further comprising filtering the reactant batch of unreacted ferric oxide and residuals from the reaction product.
20. The method of claim 1 wherein the low amount of hydrochloric acid ranges between 0.1 weight percent and 3 weight percent.
21. The method of claim 1 wherein the low amount of hydrochloric acid is less than 3 weight percent.
22. A method of making ferric chloride which contains a low amount of hydrochloric acid for water treatment, the method comprising:
 - introducing ferric oxide into an aqueous solution of hydrochloric acid at a predetermined molar ratio to form a reactant batch;
 - heating the reactant batch to a desired temperature between 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit;
 - mixing the reactant batch with a mixer rotating between 70 and 100 revolutions per minute at the desired temperature; and
 - venting hydrochloric acid vapors from the reactant batch;
 - forming a reaction product including ferric chloride, water, with a low amount of hydrochloric acid; and

filtering the reaction product of unreacted ferric oxide and residuals therefrom.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the predetermined molar ratio of ferric oxide and hydrochloric acid is at least 1:6.
24. The method of claim 22 wherein the predetermined molar ratio of ferric oxide is 3:6.
25. The method of claim 22 wherein the ferric oxide is introduced in the form of a solid.
26. The method of claim 22 wherein the ferric oxide is between 20 weight percent and 25 weight percent and the hydrochloric acid is between 24 weight percent and 27 weight percent of the reactant batch in the aqueous solution.
27. The method of claim 26 wherein the ferric oxide is about 20 weight percent and the hydrochloric acid is about 25 weight percent of the reactant batch in the aqueous solution.
28. The method of claim 22 wherein heating the reactant batch includes generating heat from an exothermic reaction of the reactant batch having a predetermined volume to maintain a temperature at the desired temperature of between 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit.
29. The method of claim 22 wherein the predetermined volume of the reactant batch is at least 4,000 gallons.
30. The method of claim 22 wherein heating the reactant batch includes maintaining the reactant batch at a temperature between 165° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit.
31. The method of claim 22 wherein mixing is performed for 1 to 3 hours.

32. The method of claim 22 wherein the ferric chloride is between 20 and 50 weight percent, the water is between 50 and 80 weight percent, and the hydrochloric acid is between 0.1 and 3 weight percent of the reaction product.

33. Use of an apparatus comprising:

a batch reactor for receiving a reactant batch comprising between 20 weight percent and 25 weight percent ferric oxide added and between 24 weight percent and 27 weight percent hydrochloric acid added of the reactant batch in aqueous solution at a predetermined molar ratio, the batch reactor having inner side walls and a bottom integral with the inner side walls, the batch reactor having baffles disposed on the inner side walls and a mixer having a rotating shaft and an impeller disposed at the bottom of the reactor, the batch reactor having a mixer being configured to mix the reactant batch at an agitation speed between 60 and 150 revolutions per minute and form a reaction product comprising ferric chloride and a reduced amount of hydrochloric acid;

a scrubber in fluid communication with the batch reactor to receive hydrochloric acid vapors vented from the batch reactor for hydrochloric acid processing; and

a filter in fluid communication with the batch reactor for filtering the reaction product;

to make ferric chloride according to the method of any one of claims 1-32.

34. The use of claim 33 wherein the apparatus further comprising a heat exchanger system in fluid communication with the batch reactor for heat transfer to the reactant batch to heat the reactant batch to a temperature of between 70° and 180° Fahrenheit.

35. The use of claim 33 wherein the mixer includes a single impeller having a pumping capacity of about 19,000 gallons per minute.

36. The use of claim 33 wherein the batch reactor is configured to mix the reactant bath is at turbulent flow.

37. The use of claim 33 wherein the mixer has a power number of about 6.7 at 1.5 specific gravity and a Reynolds Number of 8,150 at 200 cps.

38. The use of claim 33 wherein the batch reactor is configured to receive the reactant batch at a volume of at least 4,000 gallons to substantially maintain a temperature between 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit during mixing.

39. The use of claim 33 wherein the batch reactor is configured to receive the reactant batch is at a predetermined volume to produce heat from an exothermic reaction between ferric oxide and hydrochloride acid to maintain the reactant batch temperature between 70° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit.

40. The use of claim 33 wherein the batch reactor is configured to maintain the reactant batch at a temperature between 165° Fahrenheit and 180° Fahrenheit.

41. The use of claim 33 wherein the batch reactor is configured to mix the reactant batch for 1 to 3 hours.

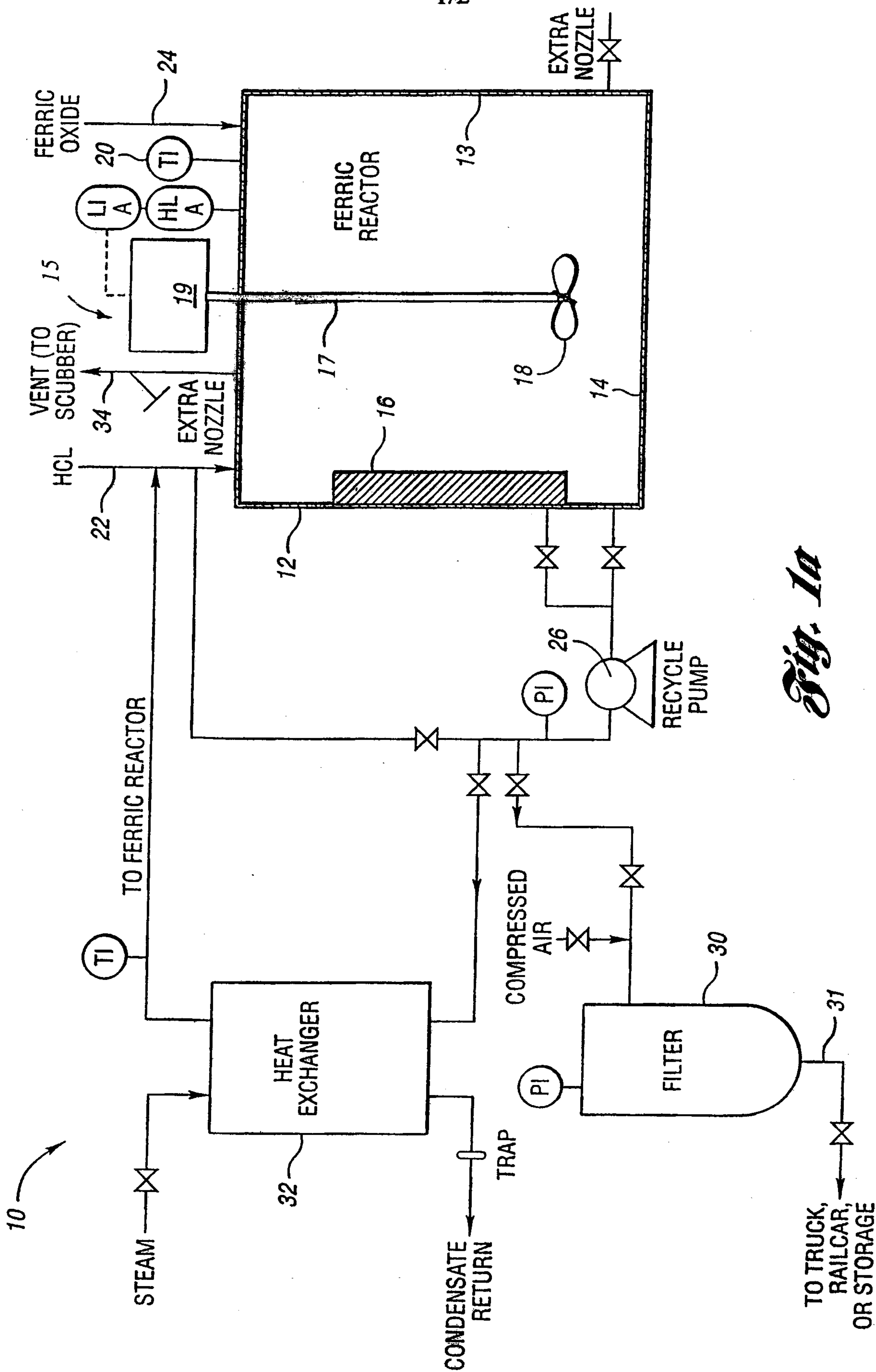


Fig. 1a

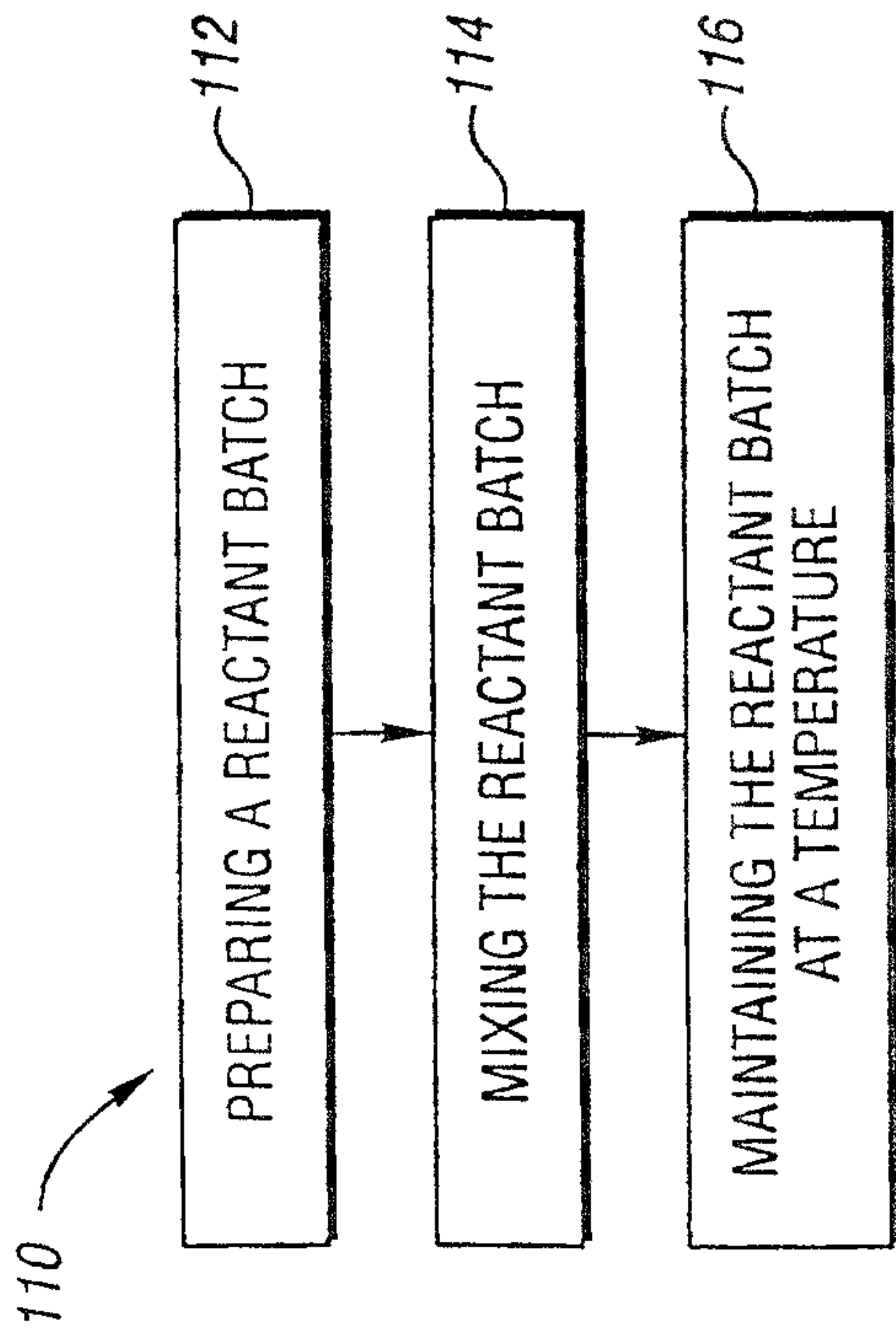


Fig. 2

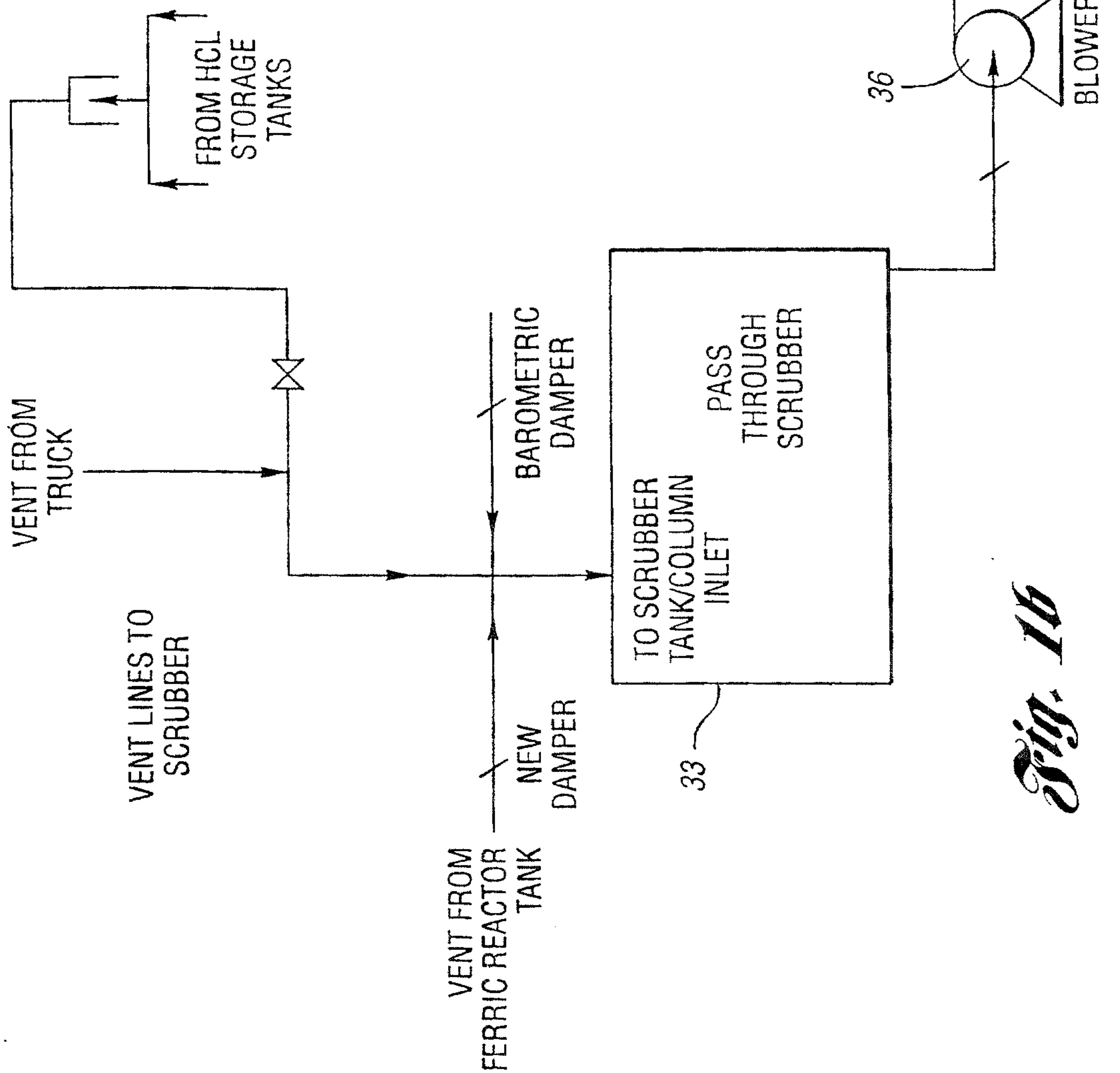


Fig. 1b

