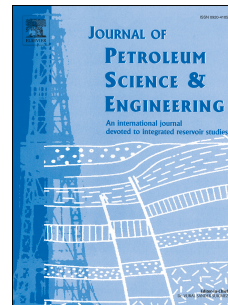


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1 The Effect of Pressure on Wax Deposition from Wax-Solvent Mixtures with
2 Natural Gas

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10 **Abstract**

11 Wax deposition occurs when the temperature of the pipe wall falls below the wax
12 appearance temperature. This deposition reduces the effective flow area of the
13 pipelines, leading to a significant pressure drop, which increases the transportation
14 consumption and leads eventually to complete blockage. Most wax deposition studies
15 have neglected the influence of natural gas, but natural gas is present in the actual
16 pipelines and must be accounted for in field operations.

17 A self-developed cold-finger apparatus was used to investigate the effects of
18 pressure on wax deposition with natural gas (with 89% methane). The wax solvent
19 mixtures consisted of a wax (C₂₂–C₃₇) dissolved in a paraffinic solvent (C₁₁–C₁₅). The
20 wax deposition experiments were performed with 5, 7, and 10 mass percent wax
21 solutions, for pressures ranging from 1–6 MPa. The experimental results indicated
22 that the maximum amount of wax is deposited at ordinary pressure. The amount of
23 wax deposited increased at pressures ranging from 1 MPa to 2 MPa and decreased
24 thereafter (at pressures ranging from 2 MPa to 6 MPa). In addition, the pressure
25 corresponding to the maximum wax deposition varied with the wax content.
26 Furthermore, the wax crystal morphology was observed using a polarizing microscope,
27 and the morphology was quantitatively described via the fractal dimension. The
28 analysis showed that the fractal dimension decreased with increasing pressure.

29 This study confirms that natural gas plays a vital role in wax deposition studies,
30 especially those aimed at predicting the wax deposition in actual pipelines, using a
31 wax deposition model based on the laboratory experiments.

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