Accepted Manuscript

Title: The toxicity of cationic surfactant HDTMA-Br, desorbed from Surfactant Modified Zeolite, towards faecal indicator and environmental microorganisms

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PII: \$0304-3894(17)30443-0

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.jhazmat.2017.06.022

Reference: HAZMAT 18643

To appear in: Journal of Hazardous Materials

Received date: 3-2-2017 Revised date: 1-5-2017 Accepted date: 12-6-2017

Please cite this article as: Peter J.Reeve, Howard J.Fallowfield, The toxicity of cationic surfactant HDTMA-Br, desorbed from Surfactant Modified Zeolite, towards faecal indicator and environmental microorganisms, Journal of Hazardous Materialshttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhazmat.2017.06.022

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

The toxicity of cationic surfactant HDTMA-Br, desorbed from Surfactant Modified Zeolite, towards faecal indicator and environmental microorganisms

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Highlights

- Surfactant (HDTMA-Br) desorption from two SMZ's was quantified by E. coli bioassay.
- HDTMA-Br was toxic to the faecal indicators, bacteriophage MS2 and E. coli.
- HDTMA-Br toxic to soil bacterium B. subtilis but not general soil microflora.
- Desorbed surfactant may not be environmentally benign.

Abstract

Surfactant Modified Zeolite (SMZ) represents a versatile, cost-effective permeable reactive material, capable of treating multiple classes of contaminants. The potential for HDTMA-Br, a cationic surfactant commonly used to modify zeolite, to desorb from the zeolite surface has been identified as a potential issue for the ongoing use of SMZ in water remediation contexts. This paper investigates the toxicity of HDTMA-Br to enteric virus surrogates, F-RNA bacteriophage MS2 and E. coli, Bacillus subtilis, and soil microflora. The concentration of surfactant desorbing from SMZ was quantified through a bioassay using E. coli.

Results showed HDTMA-Br concentrations of \geq 10-5 M were toxic to MS2, \geq 10-4 M were toxic to E. coli and \geq 10-6 M were toxic to B. subtilis. No toxic relationship was established between HDTMA-Br and soil microflora. Desorption of \geq 10-4 M of HDTMA-Br was shown for the two SMZ samples under the mixing conditions used. Effects of this surfactant on total soil microflora were ambiguous since no toxic relationship could be established, however, HDTMA-Br, at concentrations desorbing from SMZ, were shown to impact the soil bacterium

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