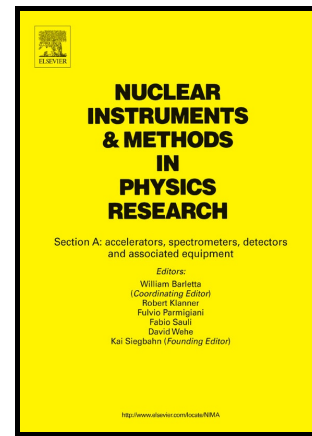


Author's Accepted Manuscript

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www.elsevier.com/locate/nima

PII: S0168-9002(16)30855-5
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nima.2016.08.037>
Reference: NIMA59267

To appear in: *Nuclear Inst. and Methods in Physics Research, A*

Received date: 16 August 2016
Accepted date: 18 August 2016

Cite this article as: Benjamin W. Montag, Philip B. Ugorowski, Kyle A. Nelson Nathaniel S. Edwards and Douglas S. McGregor, Device Fabrication, Characterization, and Thermal Neutron Detection Response of LiZnP and LiZnAs Semiconductor Devices, *Nuclear Inst. and Methods in Physics Research, A*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nima.2016.08.037>

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Benjamin W. Montag, Philip B. Ugorowski, Kyle A. Nelson, Nathaniel S. Edwards, Douglas S. McGregor

Semiconductor Materials and Radiological Technologies (S.M.A.R.T) Laboratory, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, U.S.A.

*Corresponding Author Contact: Benjamin W. Montag. Tel: 785:532:6480. Fax: 785:532:7057. Email: bmontag@ksu.edu

ABSTRACT

Nowotny-Juza compounds continue to be explored as candidates for solid-state neutron detectors. Such a device would have greater efficiency, in a compact form, than present day gas-filled ^3He and $^{10}\text{BF}_3$ detectors. The $^6\text{Li}(n,t)^4\text{He}$ reaction yields a total Q-value of 4.78 MeV, larger than ^{10}B , an energy easily identified above background radiations. Hence, devices fabricated from semiconductor compounds having either natural Li (nominally 7.5% ^6Li) or enriched ^6Li (usually 95% ^6Li) as constituent atoms may provide a material for compact high efficiency neutron detectors. Starting material was synthesized by preparing equimolar portions of Li, Zn, and As sealed under vacuum (10^{-6} Torr) in quartz ampoules lined with boron nitride and subsequently reacted in a compounding furnace [1]. The raw synthesized material indicated the presence high impurity levels (material and electrical property characterizations). A static vacuum sublimation in quartz was performed to help purify the synthesized material [2, 3]. Bulk crystalline samples were grown from the purified material [4, 5]. Samples were cut using a diamond wire saw, and processed into devices. Bulk resistivity was determined from I-V curve measurements, ranging from $10^6 - 10^{11}$ Ω cm. Devices were characterized for sensitivity to 5.48 MeV alpha particles, 337nm laser light, and neutron sensitivity in a thermal neutron diffracted beam at the Kansas State University TRIGA Mark II nuclear reactor. Thermal neutron reaction product charge induction was measured with a LiZnP device, and the reaction product spectral response was observed.

Keywords:

Lithium compounds; Radiation; Neutron Detector; Semiconducting ternary compounds

INTRODUCTION

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