

ABSTRACT
Process Economics Program Report 36C
LINEAR LOW-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE
(February 1993)

This report updates and supplements information in PEP Report 36B on technologies and costs for the production of LLDPE.

In our report we present two processes that are practiced commercially and one that is being developed. We evaluate a gas-phase process, a solution process, and a new process that combines slurry and gas technology. We evaluate the production economics of one nameplate grade for each process.

In addition to the process evaluations, this report contains summaries of patents relating to the processes we have covered. Also included is a section on the present status of the LLDPE industry with a list of estimated plant capacities.

This report should prove useful to those interested in the comparative economics of various technologies for the production of LLDPE (e.g., producers and those contemplating getting into the polyethylene business).

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1-1
2 SUMMARY	2-1
INDUSTRY STATUS	2-1
TECHNICAL ASPECTS	2-1
Process Summaries	2-1
LLDPE by a Low-Pressure Solution Process (Mitsui)	2-2
LLDPE by a Himont-Type Process	2-2
LLDPE by a Fluidized-Bed Process (Union Carbide)	2-2
CAPITAL AND PRODUCTION COSTS	2-2
3 INDUSTRY STATUS	3-1
MARKET AND PRODUCTION DATA	3-1
PRICES (SEPTEMBER 1992)	3-3
4 LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS	4-1
PROCESS REVIEW	4-1
PROCESS DESCRIPTION	4-2
PROCESS DISCUSSION	4-11
Catalyst	4-11
Reaction	4-11
Solvent Recovery	4-11
Materials of Construction	4-11
CAPITAL AND PRODUCTION COSTS	4-12
5 LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS	5-1
PROCESS REVIEW	5-1
PROCESS DESCRIPTION	5-1
PROCESS DISCUSSION	5-7
Catalyst	5-7
Reaction	5-7
Product Finishing	5-7
Materials of Construction	5-7
CAPITAL AND PRODUCTION COSTS	5-8

CONTENTS (Concluded)

6 LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS	6-1
PROCESS REVIEW	6-1
PROCESS DESCRIPTION	6-1
PROCESS DISCUSSION	6-7
Catalyst	6-7
Design Bases	6-7
Product Finishing	6-7
CAPITAL AND PRODUCTION COSTS	6-8
APPENDIX A: PATENT SUMMARY TABLES	A-1
APPENDIX B: DESIGN AND COST BASES	B-1
APPENDIX C: CITED REFERENCES	C-1
APPENDIX D: PATENT REFERENCES BY COMPANY	D-1
APPENDIX E: PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAMS	E-1

ILLUSTRATIONS

4.1	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM	E-3
4.2	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS PRODUCT VALUE AS A FUNCTION OF ETHYLENE PRICE	4-18
5.1	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM	E-9
5.2	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS PRODUCT VALUE AS A FUNCTION OF ETHYLENE PRICE	5-14
6.1	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM	E-11
6.2	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY PRODUCT VALUE AS A FUNCTION OF ETHYLENE PRICE	6-14

TABLES

2.1	SUMMARY OF CAPITAL AND PRODUCTION COSTS	2-4
3.1	LLDPE PLANT CAPACITIES AS OF MID-1992	3-4
4.1	LLDPE BY THE MITSUI SOLUTION PHASE PROCESS PATENTS BY MITSUI PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES PATENT SUMMARY	A-3
4.2	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS DESIGN BASES AND ASSUMPTIONS	4-3
4.3	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS MAJOR EQUIPMENT	4-5
4.4	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS UTILITIES SUMMARY	4-7
4.5	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS STREAM FLOWS	4-8
4.6	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT	4-13
4.7	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT	4-14
4.8	LLDPE BY A LOW-PRESSURE SOLUTION PROCESS PRODUCTION COST	4-16
5.1	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS PATENT SUMMARY	A-8
5.2	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS DESIGN BASES AND ASSUMPTIONS	5-3
5.3	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS MAJOR EQUIPMENT	5-4
5.4	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS UTILITIES SUMMARY	5-5
5.5	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-PROCESS STREAM FLOWS	5-6
5.6	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT	5-9

TABLES (Concluded)

5.7	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS CAPITAL INVESTMENT BY SECTION	5-10
5.8	LLDPE BY A HIMONT-TYPE PROCESS PRODUCTION COSTS	5-12
6.1	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS PATENTS BY UNION CARBIDE PATENT SUMMARY	A-14
6.2	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY DESIGN BASES AND ASSUMPTIONS	6-3
6.3	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY MAJOR EQUIPMENT	6-4
6.4	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY UTILITIES SUMMARY	6-5
6.5	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY STREAM FLOWS	6-6
6.6	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT	6-9
6.7	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY CAPITAL INVESTMENT BY SECTION	6-10
6.8	LLDPE BY A FLUIDIZED-BED PROCESS UNION CARBIDE TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTION COST	6-12