

96-0308

Thermal cracking of a hydrocarbon feed comprising heating the feed in a furnace (1); supplying the feed to a reaction chamber (15); separating the stream from the reaction chamber (15) into a light products stream and into a heavy products stream; and supplying the heavy products stream to a vacuum distillation column (30) to separate the heavy products stream into fractions, wherein supplying the heavy products stream to the vacuum distillation column comprises passing the heavy product stream through a flow control valve(36), passing the heavy products stream upwards through a stand-pipe (38) having such a length that the fluid pressure at the end of the stand-pipe (38) is such that vaporization at its bottom end is suppressed, and subsequently passing the heavy products stream through a transfer conduit (40) into the vacuum distillation column (30), the transfer conduit (40) having such a configuration that the fluid pressure at its outlet matches the fluid pressure in the vacuum distillation column (30).

Claims: 4

Fig.: 2