

ORGANOMETALLICS

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Editor's Page

Our first three cover molecules were ones that were important in the development of organometallic chemistry, but they were molecules that have had no (or at best, limited) large-scale applications. The present cover molecule, dimethyldichlorosilane, is a very important one that made it very quickly from the test tube to the tank car, now with an annual worldwide production of around 1.4 million metric tons. This molecule and, more importantly, the "direct synthesis" process which allows it to be produced economically and selectively on an industrial scale have provided the basis for the silicone industry that produces the useful silicone polymers and the many silicone-derived products that have become important in industry and commerce and in our daily lives. The direct synthesis of dimethyldichlorosilane and the other methylchlorosilanes by the reaction of methyl chloride with silicon/copper alloy was developed by Eugene G. Rochow in the Research Laboratory of the General Electric Co. in May 1940. He was 30 years old then; he celebrated his 92nd birthday this year on October 4. This essay, which brings the story of *his* molecule, is dedicated to him as a little birthday present as a token of my respect, admiration, and affection, and with all best wishes.

Dietmar Seyferth
Editor

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