

Aerogel as a non-ideal gas of impurities in superfluid ^3He

I.A. Fomin and E.V. Surovtsev

P.L. Kapitza Institute for Physical Problems, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia

The standard theory of superconducting alloys disregards possible correlations between impurities. Such idealization is not sufficient when impurities form a random network, like aerogel in superfluid ^3He . That creates discrepancies in the observed properties of this physical object with predictions of the standard theory. As a step to a better approximation we consider a situation when correlations are weak and can be treated as a perturbation. It is possible if correlation radius R meets the condition $R^2 \ll \xi_0 l$, where ξ_0 is the coherence length of the superfluid and l is a mean free path. In a principal order on the ratio $R^2/(\xi_0 l)$ only binary correlations are important. Effect of correlations is significant, when $R > \xi_0$. Corrections to the suppression of the T_c and to the temperature dependence of the square of the order parameter Δ^2 within the Ginzburg and Landau region caused by the correlations are expressed in terms of the structure factor of aerogel. In comparison with the non-correlated impurities T_c for ^3He increases and temperature dependence of Δ^2 on T_c - T significantly deviates from linear. Reasonable agreement with experimental data for ^3He is obtained for a realistic value of the correlation radius R . The obtained results can be of importance for impure superconductors with a short coherence length ξ_0 as well.