Superconducting Phase Diagram of the Sodium Cobalt Oxyhydrates Na_xCoO₂· yH₂O

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A characteristic feature of the cuprate superconductors is the existence of an optimal electronic doping regimes. That is thought to be a universal characteristic of cuprate superconductors. Recently, this feature of the cuprates has been challenged for the new superconductor, sodium cobalt oxyhydrates $NaxCoO_2$ · yH_2O .

To determine the properties of this novel superconductor NaxCoO₂· yH₂O as a function of electronic doping, we have synthesized a series of polycrystalline samples with varying Na content x. Deintercalation of Na and oxidation was performed using oxidizing agent KMnO₄. The superconducting properties were characterized using a quantum design SQUID magnetometer. The Na/Co ratio of the products was measured using ICP-AES. Co oxidation state was measured by redox titration.

By controlling the amount of Na chemically and measuring directly the Co valence, we have tried to draw a superconducting phase diagram using a series of samples over the broad range of cobalt valence.