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Magnetic order, spontaneous polarization, and magnetoelectric effect in rare earth iron borates: $\text{Ho}_{1-x}\text{Nd}_x\text{Fe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ B. LORENZ, R. P. CHAUDHURY, Y. Y. SUN, TCSUH and Dept. of Physics, University of Houston, C. R. DELA CRUZ$^1$, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy, University of Tennessee, L. N. BEZMATERNYKH, V. L. TEMEROV, Inst. of Physics, Siberian Div., RAS, C. W. CHU$^2$, TCSUH and Dept. of Physics, University of Houston — Comprehensive results are presented for the thermodynamic, magnetic, dielectric, and magnetoelectric properties of $\text{HoFe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ and the solid solution $\text{Ho}_{1-x}\text{Nd}_x\text{Fe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ ($x = 0.5$ and 0.75). All compounds undergo a Neél order at $T_N > 30$ K and a spin reorientation at $T_{SR} < 10$ K. $\text{HoFe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ shows a spontaneous electrical polarization below $T_N$ which decreases below $T_{SR}$ and in external magnetic fields. $\text{Ho}_{1-x}\text{Nd}_x\text{Fe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ exhibits both, a spontaneous polarization and a large positive magnetoelectric effect. The superposition of spontaneous polarization induced by the internal magnetic field and the magnetoelectric polarization in external fields results in a complex behavior of the electrical polarization as function of temperature and/or magnetic fields. The magnetic order of $\text{HoFe}_3(\text{BO}_3)_4$ is further explored by neutron scattering experiments in external magnetic fields.

$^1$also at: NSSD, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

$^2$also at: LBNL Berkeley

B. Lorenz
TCSUH and Dept. of Physics, University of Houston

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