

POTENTIAL REUSE OF RECOVERED NONMETALLIC PRINTED CIRCUIT
BOARD WASTE AS SAND REPLACEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION
MATERIALS

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DEDICATION...

A special dedication to my beloved mother, *Faridah Zakaria* and also to my father, *Mohamad Hassan* who often give encouragement, support and pray for my success during my Degree Master's study life.

Not to forget, my siblings, *Siti Suria, Roslan, Amirudin and Nur Aqilah* for always giving me support and attention in any situation i had faced.

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The sacrifice and loyalty that have been shown will not be forgotten until whenever. May all the said prayers will be getting blessings from Allah s.w.t. InsyaAllah...

Sincerely,
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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed the treatment of nonmetallic printed circuit board (PCBs) by adding them into mortar cement and cement brick as sand replacement. This study aims to propose methods for reuse of nonmetallic PCBs waste. The leachability of raw nonmetallic PCBs was tested by performing crushed block leachability test (CBL). This test was conducted to determine the suitability of nonmetallic PCBs as a nontoxic material in terms of environmental. Mortar cement and cement brick specimens with nonmetallic PCBs ranging from 0% to 40% and 0% to 50% by weight of sand were prepared. The effectiveness of the treatment was evaluated by performing compressive strength as well as flexural strength, water absorption and whole block leaching (WBL) tests on the treated nonmetallic printed circuit board. The durability of mortar added 10% nonmetallic PCBs waste was also examined through acidic conditioning tests. The results indicated that the leaching of selected heavy metal ions from the cement matrix and raw nonmetallic PCBs are within the standard limits set by Department of Environment Malaysia (DOE). The analysis from TCLP test showed that almost all of concentration of metal ions detected in the CBL test (without treatment) was higher than the concentration of ion in WBL test (treatment). The compressive strength and flexural strength of the mortar added with nonmetallic PCBs was generally lower in the range of 10.1 N/mm² to 31.9 N/mm² for compressive strength and 3.5 N/mm² to 7.7 N/mm² for flexural strength than the control samples which is 33.5 N/mm² and 8.0 N/mm². The amount of nonmetallic PCBs to replace sand for optimum strength of mortar was about 28% with 95% confident level of ANOVA, and for brick the optimum proportion of nonmetallic PCBs is not more than 30%. From durability tests, weight and compressive strength both of mortars was decrease after soaking in acid solution. The total weight and compressive strength change is about 1.11% and 11.11% for mortar added with nonmetallic PCBs while 0.94% and 13.29% for control mortar. As a conclusion, the study shows that nonmetallic PCBs can be reused in profitable and environmentally friendly ways and has broad application prospects.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah untuk menganalisis bahan sisa bukan logam papan litur pencetak (PCB) yang telah diolah dengan menambahkannya ke dalam mortar simen dan batu bata simen sebagai pengganti pasir. Kajian ini bertujuan bagi mencadangkan kaedah untuk menggunakan semula bahan sisa bukan logam PCB. Ujian pengurusan blok hancur (CBL) telah dijalankan keatas bahan bukan logam PCB. Ujian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji kesesuaian penggunaan bahan sisa bukan logam PCB sebagai bahan bukan toksik dari segi alam sekitar. Mortar simen dan batu bata simen yang telah ditambah dengan bahan sisa bukan logam PCB dengan jumlah penggantian antara 0% hingga 40% dan 0% hingga 50% mengikut berat pasir telah disediakan. Keberkesanan olahan sisa dinilai dengan melakukan ujian kekuatan mampatan, ujian kekuatan lenturan, ujian serapan air dan ujian pengurusan keseluruhan blok (WBL) ke atas mortar dan batu bata. Ketahanan mortar ditambah dengan 10% sisa bukan logam juga telah diperiksa melalui ujian rendaman asid. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa larut lesap ion logam berat daripada mortar dan bahan sisa bukan logam PCB adalah dalam had yang ditetapkan oleh Jabatan Alam Sekitar Malaysia (JAS). Keputusan analisis juga menunjukkan bahawa hampir semua kepekatan ion logam yang dikesan dalam ujian CBL (tanpa olahan) adalah lebih tinggi daripada kepekatan ion logam dalam ujian WBL (telah diolah). Kekuatan mampatan dan kekuatan lenturan mortar yang ditambah bahan sisa bukan logam PCB adalah lebih rendah iaitu 10.1 N/mm² hingga 31.9 N/mm² bagi kekuatan mampatan dan 3.5 N/mm² hingga 7.7 N/mm² bagi kekuatan lenturan berbanding dengan kekuatan mortar kawalan iaitu 33.5 N/mm² dan 8.0 N/mm². Jumlah bahan sisa bukan logam PCB yang optimum untuk menggantikan pasir bagi mencapai kekuatan optimum mortar adalah kira-kira 28% dengan tahap kepercayaan sebanyak 95% berdasarkan ujian ANOVA. Manakala untuk batu bata, jumlah optimum bahan sisa bukan logam PCB yang boleh digunakan untuk menggantikan pasir adalah tidak lebih daripada 30%. Daripada ujian ketahanan pada asid, didapati bahawa berat dan kekuatan mampatan kedua-dua jenis mortar adalah menurun selepas direndam dalam larutan asid. Jumlah perubahan berat dan kekuatan mampatan adalah sebanyak 1.11% dan 11.11% bagi mortar ditambah dengan bahan bukan logam PCB manakala 0.94% dan 13.29% untuk mortar kawalan. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian menunjukkan bahawa bahan sisa bukan logam PCB boleh digunakan semula dengan cara yang menguntungkan dan mesra alam dan mempunyai prospek aplikasi yang luas.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Al ₂ O ₃	-	Aluminum Oxide
ASTM	-	American Standard on Testing Materials
As	-	Arsenic
Ag	-	Argentum
Ba	-	Barium
BaO	-	Barium Oxide
Br	-	Bromine
BS	-	British Standard
CaO	-	Calcium Oxide
CBL	-	Crushed Block Leaching
Cd	-	Cadmium
CH ₃ COOH		Acid Acetic
Cr	-	Chromium
Cr ₂ O ₃	-	Chromium Oxide
CRT	-	Cathode Ray Tubes
Cu	-	Cuprum
CuO	-	Cuprum Oxide
DOE	-	Department of Environmental
ELT	-	Equilibrium Leach Test
Fe ₂ O ₃	-	Ferric Oxide
HCl	-	Hydrochloric Acid
HDPE	-	High Density Polyethylene
Hg	-	Mercury
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
IDEM	-	Indiana Department of Environmental Management

MEP	-	Multiple Extraction Procedure
MF	-	Metallic Fractions
MgO	-	Magnesium Oxide
MS	-	Malaysian Standard
Na ₂ O	-	Sodium Oxide
NaOH	-	Sodium Hydroxide
NEMA	-	National Electrical Manufacturers Association
Ni	-	Nickel
NMF	-	Non-Metallic Fractions
NMP	-	Nonmetallic Plate
OPC	-	Ordinary Portland Cement
Pb	-	Plumbum
PC	-	Personal Computers
PCB	-	Printed Circuit Board
PMCGN	-	Phenolic Moulding Compound Glass Nonmetals
PVC	-	Polyvinyl Chloride
PWB	-	Printed Wire Boards
Se	-	Selenium
SEM	-	Scanning Electron Microscope
SiO ₂	-	Silicon Dioxide
Sn	-	Stannum
SnO ₂	-	Stannum Dioxide
TCLP	-	Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure
USEPA	-	United States of Environmental Protection Agency
WBL	-	Whole Block Leaching
WMC	-	Waste Management Center
XRF	-	X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry
Zn	-	Zink

LIST OF SYMBOLS

<i>A</i>		Area of mortar
<i>F_c</i>	-	Compressive Strength
<i>P</i>	-	Load when sample failed
<i>S_f</i>		Flexural Strength
<i>S₁</i>	-	Compressive strength at initial curing
<i>S₂</i>	-	Compressive strength after immersion
<i>W_d</i>	-	oven-dry weight
<i>W_i</i>	-	Immersed weight
<i>W_s</i>	-	Saturated weight

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The change in government strategy from agriculture to industry, and the rapid economic development, had caused the government facing a few problems. One of these problems is the increasing quantity of electrical and electronic waste (E-waste) (Ibrahim, 1992). Malaysia produces a large amount of waste from E-waste. According to United Nations Environment Programme (2007), electrical and electronic equipments or components that are destined for recycling or recovery or disposal are considered as E-waste. The examples of E-waste are such as used television, motherboard, printed circuit board (PCB), waste of integrated circuit, and others. These wastes exist in a complex situation in terms of materials, design, components and original equipment manufacturing process.

The growth of electrical and electronic industries has increased 13% from year 2000 to 2008 (Johan et al., 2012). Department of Environment (2009) in their inventory report stated that the amount of E-waste will be increasing by an average of 14% annually and by the year of 2020, a total of 1.17 billion units or 21.38 million tons of E-waste will be generated. It is estimated a cumulative total of 403.59 million units of waste from electrical and electronic equipment have been generated in year 2008 and total of 31.3 million units has been discarded in the same year (Johan et al., 2012). In developed country such as China, Japan and Malaysia, the production of electrical and electronic equipment is being growing rapidly.

The disposal, storage, management, and environmental pollution becoming a big problem with the increased of E-waste (Zulkifli et al., 2010). Government and private sectors should take the initiative to reuse E-waste without giving adverse effect to the environment. However, E-waste is considered not safe to be reuse because it is categorized as scheduled wastes by Department of Environment (2010), because it is contains some contaminants that can be potentially hazardous, if improperly handled. For example, printed circuit boards contain heavy metals such as nickel, chromium, tin, lead, copper, brominated flame retardants and cathode ray tubes (CRTs) containing lead oxide.

Therefore the researchers have done various studies to find the possibility to reuse this type of waste. In the reuse of waste, one of the famous industry is the construction industry, in particular the concrete manufacturing industry. Several studies have been done by other developed countries to use and prove that the reuse of waste can improve the properties of the concrete. However, in Malaysia, there is still no any research has been done involving the reuse of E-waste especially printed circuit board in the manufacture of concrete.

1.2 Problem Statement

In recent years there has been increasing concern about the growing volume of E-waste in the country. These increasing volumes of E-waste will contribute problems leading to environmental pollution, threat to human health and constraints in handling waste (Cui and Forssberg, 2003). According to Menad et al. (1998), these problems occur mainly because E-waste is toxic and contains heavy metals which make the disposal process harder to tackle. E-waste that is disposed of in landfill produce highly contaminated leachate which caused environmental pollution especially to surface water and groundwater. For example, acids and sludge from melting computer chips, if disposed into the ground will cause acidification of soil and subsequently contamination of groundwater. They also stated that once E-waste is being filled, it will pose significant contamination problems at which the landfills will leach the toxins into the groundwater. Based on Theng (2008), E-waste also gives hazardous effects to human health. For examples, lead and cadmium in PCBs will give effects on brain development of children. Besides that, brominated flame retardants will interfere reproductive process and also cause immune system damage.

Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs) is one of the important components in electrical and electronic equipment. Electrical and electronic equipment cannot function without PCBs (Huang et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2004). At the end of life E-waste, PCBs will be recycled to get the valuable material such as metal (Hall et al., 2007; Li et al., 2007). The materials produced from recycled PCBs waste basically consist of metals and nonmetallic materials (Guo et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2007; Perrin et al., 2008). Metallic materials can be sold at a high price while the nonmetallic materials of PCBs are disposed in landfill even though without approval from the Department of Environment. Recycling of PCBs is an important subject not only from the recovery of the valuable materials, but also from reuse of nonmetallic materials (Guo et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2007).

The current problems are focused on nonmetallic material since it is being noted by Department of Environment Malaysia as scheduled waste and contain hazardous materials such as Cu, Cr and Br. Besides that, based on Department of Environment (2010), nonmetallic PCBs are required to be transported by licensed contractors or recycling plants to disposed of at Kualiti Alam Sdn. Bhd in Bukit Nanas, Negeri Sembilan. The problem of handling this scheduled waste includes cost of disposal of the waste is expensive compared to municipal solid waste. As stated by Kualiti Alam Sdn Bhd, one of the contractors licenced by the Department of Environmental for scheduled waste disposal and recycling, the cost of handling and disposal of nonmetallic PCBs is RM 150 per metric tonne. Because of this factor, nonmetallic PCBs waste is disposed of by industries illegally without permission from Department of Environmental. There are also industries that just keep nonmetallic PCBs waste in premises without any initiative to recycle them. This situation is directly causing the increasing of the storage problem to industries. Based on Cui and Forssberg, (2003), if not managed properly, the disposal of nonmetallic PCBs will give the negative effect and cause others problems such as resources wasting, risks to human health and environmental pollution.

The amount of nonmetallic materials is enormous, but economic value of nonmetallic materials is very low. Besides that, recyclers have to incur additional expenses when handling and disposing of nonmetallic materials. PCBs recyclers have to pay fee when nonmetallic materials are sent to the landfill sites or waste incineration plants, which would reduce the recycler's net revenue. So these study focus on alternative method of how nonmetallic PCBs could be reuse without giving the negative effect to human health and environmental.

1.3 Research Objective

The objectives of this research are:

- i. To investigate the suitability of nonmetallic PCBs as a nontoxic material in terms of environmental quality.
- ii. To determine the effectiveness of waste treatment processes on nonmetallic PCBs in term of mechanical properties of mortar and cement brick.
- iii. To determine the effect of nonmetallic PCBs contents as a sand replacement in mortar in terms of leachability.

1.4 Scope of Research

In this study, all of experiments were carried out in the laboratory. The experiments had been done in several laboratories such as environmental engineering, science, mechanical and structure and material. Nonmetallic PCBs were taken from two electronic waste recycling factories. The samples are divided into two different types of PCBs namely nonmetallic glass fiber reinforced epoxy resin and nonmetallic cellulose paper reinforced phenolic resin. Mortar cubes and cement bricks were prepared using nonmetallic PCBs as sand replacement.

To achieve all the objectives of this study, several experiments have been done, such as:

- i. Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) on raw material of nonmetallic PCBs and mortar cubes. This test was conducted to determine the pattern of microstructure surface, size and particles arrangement of raw nonmetallic PCBs powder and mortar.
- ii. X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry (XRF) on raw material of nonmetallic PCBs and cement to identify and determine the chemical composition.
- iii. Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) Test on raw material of nonmetallic PCBs and mortar cubes were conducted to evaluate and determine the concentration of heavy metals leached from the raw nonmetallic PCBs waste and mortar cubes.
- iv. Compressive strength, Water adsorption, Flexural strength, and Durability test on mortar and cement brick were conducted to determine mechanical properties of mortar and cement brick.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is significant to identify that the nonmetallic PCBs is safe to the environmental and can be reused by means of production of nonhazardous product that is safe in terms of the environmental, human health and publicly acceptable. The success of this research also very significant in reducing waste disposal cost and resource wasting by making full use of nonmetallic PCBs waste from being dump into landfill. Since nonmetallic PCBs are considered as waste, and it has no value, hence this research is seen important to save the production cost of mortar and

cement brick by using nonmetallic PCBs as sand replacement. The success of this project will widen the applications of nonmetallic PCBs especially as sand replacement in making mortar and cement brick.

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