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**Municipal Wastewater Treatment
Using Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR)
Under Tropical Conditions**

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Abstract

In this research project a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) plant was tested for performance in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), and Suspended Solids (SS), under different temporal conditions. In addition, the removal of biological nutrients, namely ammoniacal nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen and phosphorous in the form of phosphate, from the sewage, with anaerobic and aerobic operations using SBR was studied. The performance of the SBR plant was observed under two operating conditions whereby the variable studied was the total cycle time of the SBR process; i.e. 8-hour cycle mode and 6-hour cycle mode. The effluent quality from the plant was compared against standard effluent quality limits to determine the plant's performance in terms of BOD, COD, SS, ammoniacal nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen and phosphate.

The BOD, COD and SS are the commonly accepted parameters by which sewage treatment plants in Malaysia are judged in terms of performance. The BOD, COD and SS levels in the effluent from the SBR plant consistently complied with Standard B effluent limits at all times. The compliance level for ammoniacal nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen and phosphorus was set at 5.0 mg/l, 10.0 mg/l and 2.0 mg/l respectively. For removal of ammoniacal nitrogen, treatment efficiency of over 90% and 100% compliance was recorded using 8-hour cycle mode, compared to a treatment efficiency from 76% to 79% with only 19% compliance using a 6-hour cycle mode. Since ammoniacal nitrogen is known to be consumed during the aerobic phase, the longer

cycle time provides a much longer aeration time which is essential for nitrification to take place. The laboratory results obtained for nitrate nitrogen concentration in the effluent gave a compliance of more 88% at all times. The treatment efficiency recorded was between 73% and 80%. Thus, using a cycle time of 8-hours or 6-hours does not significantly affect the concentration of nitrates in the effluent. The study showed that removal of phosphorous or phosphate content was better using the 8-hour cycle mode (about 98% compliance and 89% removal efficiency) compared with the 6-hour cycle mode (approximately 20% compliance and 69% efficiency). However, the results obtained for the 8-hour cycle mode in November-December 1999 was gave a compliance level of only 10% with a treatment efficiency of 66%. It is believed that this was due to the insufficient period taken (1 to 2 months) to achieve stable conditions, which require at least 3 months.

In conclusion, the SBR plant performed well in terms of BOD, COD and SS removal under both 6-hour and 8-hour cycle modes. If biological nutrient removal to the proposed limits was desired, however, the SBR plant performed better when it was operated under the 8-hour cycle mode.

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Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR)	1
1.2 Importance of the Study	5
1.3 The Research Project	6
1.4 Study Objectives	7
Chapter 2: Literature Review	8
2.1 General	8
2.2 SBR Technology	17
2.2.1 Time Sequencing	18
2.2.2 Sludge Wasting	20
2.2.3 Nutrient Removal	20
2.2.4 Settling Properties	50
2.3 Cycle Operation	52
2.3.1 Fill Phase	54
2.3.2 React Phase	57
2.3.3 Settle Phase	61
2.3.4 Decant Phase	61

	<u>Page</u>
2.3.5 Idle Phase	62
2.4 System Design	62
2.4.1 Cycle Times	62
2.4.2 Tank Size	63
2.4.3 Food per Mass (F/M) Ratio and Selective Pressures	64
2.5 SBR System Components	65
2.5.1 Inlet	65
2.5.2 Decanter	66
2.5.3 Aeration	67
2.6 Efficiency of SBR Process	69
2.7 SBR in Tropical Conditions	75
Chapter 3: The Research Project	78
3.1 Description of the SBR Plant	78
3.1.1 Introduction	78
3.1.2 Process Flow Description	79
3.2 Project Rationale	81
3.3 Experimental Design	82
3.4 Methodology	87

	<u>Page</u>
3.4.1 Temperature	92
3.4.2 pH	92
3.4.3 Suspended Solids (SS)	93
3.4.4 Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	97
3.4.5 Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	100
3.4.6 Ammoniacal Nitrogen (NH ₃ -N)	102
3.4.7 Nitrate Nitrogen (NO ₃ -N)	104
3.4.8 Total Phosphorus	106
3.4.9 Statistical Analysis of Data	109
3.5 Limitation of the Study	110
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion	111
4.1 Introduction	111
4.2 Overall Results	111
4.2.1 Laboratory Results	114
4.3 Influent Wastewater	117
4.4 Performance in terms of BOD, COD and SS	124
4.4.1 BOD	126
4.4.2 COD	131
4.4.3 SS	136

	<u>Page</u>
4.5 Performance in terms of Biological Nutrient Removal	141
4.5.1 Ammoniacal Nitrogen	142
4.5.2 Nitrate Nitrogen	149
4.5.3 Phosphorus	157
4.6 Correlation Between Parameters Within Any Specified Run	165
Chapter 5: Conclusions	167
References	170
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
Appendix A. Malaysian Effluent and Water Quality Standards	183
Appendix B. SBR Design Parameters	188
Appendix C. Influent Wastewater Quality	191
Appendix D. Effluent Wastewater Quality	196
Appendix E. Statistical Analysis of Data	201

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>	
Table 2.1	Evaluation Summary for SBRs	12
Table 2.2	Performance Data for Grundy Center, Iowa, SBR	14
Table 2.3	SBR operational and performance data	16
Table 2.4	Experiment Conditions for Intermittent Cyclic Process	41
Table 2.5	Composition of Synthetic Wastewater (Laboratory Studies)	43
Table 2.6	Raw wastewater characteristics	46
Table 2.7	Common Operating Policies	58
Table 2.8	Removal Efficiency of Some Municipal SBR Plants	70
Table 2.9	The Operational Conditions	71
Table 2.10	Time schedule mode during a cycle	71
Table 2.11	Influent and Effluent Characteristics of Sewage	72
Table 2.12	The effects of operating cycle time on removal efficiency	72
Table 3.1	Cycle Times for 6-hour and 8-hour Cycle Modes	83
Table 3.2	Laboratory Tests	90
Table 4.1	Summary of Influent and Effluent Wastewater Quality Under 8-hour Mode	115
Table 4.2	Summary of Influent and Effluent Wastewater Quality Under 6-hour Mode	116
Table 4.3	Typical composition of untreated domestic wastewater	117
Table 4.4	Treatment efficiency for BOD	126
Table 4.5	Treatment efficiency for COD	131

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>	
Table 4.6	Treatment efficiency for SS	136
Table 4.7	Treatment efficiency for Ammoniacal Nitrogen	142
Table 4.8	Treatment efficiency for Nitrate Nitrogen	149
Table 4.9	Treatment efficiency for Phosphorus	156

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1.1 Typical SBR Operation for One Cycle	4
Figure 2.1 BOD ₅ Performance Histogram For SBR At Culver, Indiana	11
Figure 2.2 Suggested SBR Operation for Carbon, Nitrogen and Phosphorous Removal	15
Figure 2.3 The Nitrogen Cycle in Biological-Oxidation Processes	23
Figure 2.4 Possible Microbial Conversions of Nitrogen	26
Figure 2.5 Biological Release and Uptake of Phosphate while Alternating Between Anaerobic and Aerobic Conditions	31
Figure 2.6 Schematic Diagram of SBR Operation (Anaerobic-Anoxic and Anaerobic-Aerobic)	34
Figure 2.7 VFA, Dissolved COD and PO ₄ -P Profiles for Treatment of Wastewater Using SBR	37
Figure 2.8 Operating Conditions for Intermittent Cyclic Process for Simultaneous Nitrogen and Phosphorus Removal	42
Figure 2.9 Relationship between aeration time ratio and nitrogen and phosphorus removal rate (Laboratory studies, Runs 1-1 to 1-5)	44
Figure 2.10 TOC, PO ₄ ³⁻ -P, and NH ₄ ⁺ -N after one week operation	49
Figure 2.11 Performance of SBR after EPRS Development	49
Figure 2.12 The Course of SVI – Comparison of Continuous Activated Sludge System and SBR	51
Figure 2.13 Various Types of Fill for SBR Operation	55

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>	
Figure 2.14	Variation of Nitrogen concentration in the bulk solution for 8-hour cycle	73
Figure 2.15	Variation of Phosphorus concentration in the bulk solution for 8-hour cycle	74
Figure 3.1	Schematic Flow Diagram for SBR Plant at KLIA	80
Figure 3.2	Sigma 900 Refrigerated Sampler Program Flowchart	88
Figure 4.1	Influent Flowrate (June – July 1999; 8-hour mode)	119
Figure 4.2	Influent Temperature and pH (June – July 1999; 8-hour mode)	119
Figure 4.3	Influent Flowrate (August-September 1999; 6-hour mode)	120
Figure 4.4	Influent Temperature and pH (August-September 1999; 6-hour mode)	121
Figure 4.5	Influent Flowrate (September-October 1999; 6-hour mode)	122
Figure 4.6	Influent Temperature and pH (September-October 1999; 6-hour mode)	122
Figure 4.7	Influent Flowrate (November-December 1999; 8-hour mode)	123
Figure 4.8	Influent Temperature and pH (November-December 1999; 8-hour mode)	124
Figure 4.9	BOD in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8-hour mode)	127
Figure 4.10	BOD in the Influent and Effluent (August-September 1999, 6-hour mode)	127

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 4.11 BOD in the Influent and Effluent (September-October 1999, 6-hour mode)	129
Figure 4.12 BOD in the Influent and Effluent (November-December 1999, 8-hour mode)	129
Figure 4.13 COD in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8-hour mode)	132
Figure 4.14 COD in the Influent and Effluent (August-September 1999, 6-hour mode)	132
Figure 4.15 COD in the Influent and Effluent (September-October 1999, 6-hour mode)	134
Figure 4.16 COD in the Influent and Effluent (November-December 1999, 8-hour mode)	134
Figure 4.17 SS in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8-hour mode)	137
Figure 4.18 SS in the Influent and Effluent (August-September 1999, 6-hour mode)	137
Figure 4.19 SS in the Influent and Effluent (September-October 1999, 6-hour mode)	139
Figure 4.20 SS in the Influent and Effluent (November-December 1999, 8-hour mode)	139
Figure 4.21 Ammoniacal Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8-hour mode)	143
Figure 4.22 Ammoniacal Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (August-September 1999, 6-hour mode)	144

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 4.23 Ammoniacal Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (September-October 1999, 6-hour mode)	145
Figure 4.24 Ammoniacal Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (November-December 1999, 8-hour mode)	146
Figure 4.25 Nitrate Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8-hour mode)	150
Figure 4.26 Nitrate Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (August- September 1999, 6-hour mode)	151
Figure 4.27 Nitrate Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (September- October 1999, 6-hour mode)	152
Figure 4.28 Nitrate Nitrogen in the Influent and Effluent (November- December 1999, 8-hour mode)	153
Figure 4.29 Phosphorus in the Influent and Effluent (June - July 1999, 8- hour mode)	157
Figure 4.30 Phosphorus in the Influent and Effluent (August-September 1999, 6-hour mode)	158
Figure 4.31 Phosphorus in the Influent and Effluent (September-October 1999, 6-hour mode)	159
Figure 4.32 Phosphorus in the Influent and Effluent (November- December 1999, 8-hour mode)	160

Abbreviations

ASCE	:	American Society of Civil Engineers
BNR	:	Biological Nutrient Removal
BPR	:	Bio-phosphorus removal
BOD	:	Biochemical Oxygen Demand
CAS	:	Conventional Activated Sludge
COD	:	Chemical Oxygen Demand
df	:	degrees of freedom
DGSS	:	Director General of Sewerage Services
DO	:	Dissolved Oxygen
EA	:	Extended Aeration
E. Coli	:	Escherichia Coli
EBPR	:	Enhanced biological phosphorus removal
EPRB	:	Excess phosphorus removal bacteria
F/M	:	Food per Mass
h	:	hour
IAWQ	:	International Association of Water Quality
ID	:	Intermittent Decant
IWK	:	Indah Water Konsortium Sdn Bhd
KLIA	:	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
l/lin.m-min	:	liters per linear meter per minute
m/h	:	meters per hour

m^3/day	:	cubic meter per day
mg/l	:	milligram per liter
MGD	:	million gallons per day
ML/day	:	Million Liters per day
MLSS	:	Mixed Liquor Suspended Solids
MLVSS	:	Mixed Liquor Volatile Suspended Solids
NH_3	:	ammonia
NH_3-N	:	ammoniacal nitrogen
NO_3-N	:	nitrate nitrogen
O&G	:	oil and grease
ORP	:	Oxido-Reduction Potential
PC	:	Personal Computer
PE	:	Population equivalent
PLC	:	Programmable Logic Controller
PO_4-P	:	Phosphate
Q	:	Influent flow rate
RAS	:	Return Activated Sludge
SBR	:	Sequential Batch Reactor
SRT	:	Solids Retention Time
SS	:	Suspended Solids
SVI	:	Sludge Volume Index
t	:	t-statistic
t_d	:	time for Draw

t_f	:	time for Fill
t_i	:	time for Idle
t_r	:	time for React
t_s	:	time for Settle
T-N	:	Total Nitrogen
T-P	:	Total Phosphorus
USEPA	:	United States Environmental Protection Agency
US	:	United States
UK	:	United Kingdom
UWWD	:	Urban Waste Water Directive
VFA	:	Volatile Fatty Acids
V_t	:	Total liquid volume of the SBR tank
V_0	:	Volume remaining at the end of Draw
V_f	:	Volume added during Fill
WEF	:	Water Environment Federation
wt/wt	:	weight per weight
ZSV	:	Zone Settling Velocity

Some Useful Definitions

Aerobic processes are biological treatment processes that occur in the presence of oxygen.

Anaerobic processes are biological treatment processes that occur in the absence of oxygen.

Anoxic denitrification is the process by which nitrate nitrogen is converted biologically to nitrogen gas in the absence of oxygen. This process is also known as anaerobic denitrification.

Biological nutrient removal is the term applied to the removal of nitrogen and phosphorous in biological treatment processes.

Facultative processes are biological treatment processes in which the organisms can function in the presence or absence of molecular oxygen.

Carbonaceous BOD removal is the biological conversion of the carbonaceous organic matter in wastewater to cell tissue and various gaseous end products. In the conversion, it is assumed that the nitrogen present in the various compounds is converted to ammonia.

Nitrification is the biological process by which ammonia is converted first to nitrite and then to nitrate.

Denitrification is the biological process by which nitrate is converted to nitrogen and other gaseous end products.