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## PROPERTIES OF COMPOSITE MATERIALS BASED ON EPOXY RESIN MODIFIED WITH DIBUTYLTIN DIBROMIDE

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A tin-bromine-containing resin was prepared by the interaction of industrial ED-16 epoxy resin with dibutyltin dibromide. A comparative study of the physical, mechanical and relaxation properties of composites based on the original and modified resins cured at different temperatures has been carried out. It has been shown that the composite materials based on a modified resin are characterized by lower values of tensile strength, elastic modulus, fracture work and glass transition temperature as compared with the samples based on the original epoxy resin. The effect of water on the deformation and strength properties of composites was studied. A complex mechanism of the influence of moisture sorbed by the polymer on the complex of properties has been established, which may result from the imposition of the effects of plasticization and additional curing of the epoxy matrix. At short exposure times, the effect of the sorbed liquid is mainly aimed at weakening the intermolecular interaction in the sample, as a result of which its tensile strength decreases and its deformation capacity increases. At long exposure times, post-curing processes prevail, leading to an increase in the crosslinking density and, as a consequence, to a decrease in deformation capacity and an increase in the strength index. It has been shown that epoxy composites containing resin modified with dibutyltin dibromide are characterized by increased fungitoxicity and fire resistance. The studied polymers can be considered as promising for the production of antifouling coatings for hydraulic equipment on their basis.

**Keywords:** epoxy composite, dibutyltin dibromide, physical and mechanical properties, fire resistance, fungitoxicity, antifouling fungal resistant coatings.

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### *Introduction*

Algae and shellfish overgrowth is one of the main problems affecting industrial heat exchangers, sea and river vessels. Settling on the surface of hydraulic engineering objects, fouling causes significant economic damage. The negative consequences of fouling cause reduction of heat transfer, loss of cooling efficiency, premature deterioration of facilities and increased operating and maintenance costs [1–4]. Fouling reduces the speed of ships (up to 50%), increases fuel consumption (up to 40%), increases the weight of hydraulic structures (up to 20%), and disrupts the operation of platforms for oil and gas production on the shelf. Fouling is one of the main reasons for the failure of the underwater parts of ships, submarines and

hydraulic structures, as well as oceanographic instruments that are in the water for a long time. Furthermore, marine organisms can break the insulation of electrical cables and damage metal cables.

Currently, the prevention of fouling is based on special coatings which contain copper or other toxic substances (biocides) that are more toxic and have a long service life [5–8]. A classic example is the use of powdered copper and its oxide in protective coatings that prevent the fouling of the bottom of ships from sea growth, as a biocide. To impart fungitoxicity, other metals and their salts are also used, first of all, tin [5]. Organotin polymers have high antimicrobial and antifungal activity [6,7]. In the composition of binders used in shipbuilding,

halogen-containing polymers are often introduced, which are designed to increase the fire resistance of components [6].

Organotin halides (ORHs) are effective biocides, which, due to the presence of tin atoms, have antimicrobial and antifungal properties, and the presence of halogen atoms makes it possible to increase the fire resistance of paints and varnishes. Unlike metal oxides, the addition of ORH to polymeric materials does not cause secondary corrosive effects. At the same time, in seawater, ORHs are easily decomposed into products which are not dangerous for the sea fauna.

The use of ORHs for the creation of tin and halogen-containing epoxy materials is described very sparingly in the available literature. The use of ORH as reagents for the synthesis of tin-containing hardeners for epoxy resins is known [9]. The tin content in such hardeners reaches 10%. However, they are not halogenated, since hydrohalic acid is released during the reaction. The use of ORH as crosslinking agents for epoxy resins requires high temperatures (150–180°C) for curing, and the resulting materials are very fragile and have low strength. Moreover, the content of tin in them is only 4–7%, and the halogen content is 3–5%, which is insufficient to create materials with low flammability and good antifungal and antimicrobial activity. We managed to obtain compositions with a high content of tin and halogen on the basis of the products of the interaction of ORH with epoxy resins.

Currently, the properties of composites based on tin-halide resins are studied insufficiently. In this regard, the purpose of this work is to study the deformation-strength and relaxation properties of composite materials based on the product of the interaction of an epoxy resin with an organotin halide.

#### Models and methods

Industrial epoxy resin of the ED-16 brand with a mass fraction of epoxy groups of 17.3% and a molecular weight of 495 and the product of its interaction with organotin halide, which was dibutyltin dibromide, were selected as the objects of

research. The interaction took place according to the scheme 1, where Bu is referred to C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub> (scheme 2).

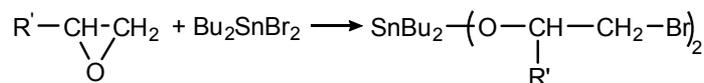
In the course of the reaction, dibutyltin dibromide was added in such an amount that free oxirane rings were retained. The result was a product with a molecular weight of 1350 and a content of epoxy groups of 10.7%.

Diethylenetriaminomethylphenol was used as a hardener. Curing of the compositions was carried out according to modes I: 20°C/240 h (curing without heat supply from the outside, i.e. at room temperature) and II: 20°C/240 h+120°C/3 h (curing at room temperature with subsequent heat treatment). The objects of investigation were films with a thickness of 100–150 μm obtained by curing polymer compositions between two polished surfaces of metal plates coated with a thin layer of a release agent.

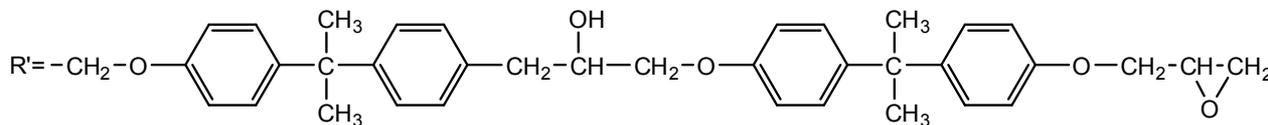
Determination of the glass transition temperature T<sub>g</sub> was carried out using a setup described elsewhere [10]. The same setup was used to study the creep process of composites at a constant mechanical stress of 10 MPa. The mechanical properties under uniaxial tension (breaking stress σ<sub>t</sub> and deformation at break ε<sub>s</sub>) were determined on a Polyany-type device with a rigid dynamometer and automatic recording of measured values [10]. The elastic modulus E was calculated from the slope of the initial portion of the σ vs. ε curve. The water absorption W was determined from the increment in the mass of the film samples after exposure to water for 24 h.

The assessment of the resistance of the composite to mold was carried out in accordance with the State Standard 9.048-89 «Unified system of protection against corrosion and aging (USPACA). Technical products. Laboratory test methods for resistance to mold fungi». Method 2 was used in the tests. The essence of the method lies in the fact that the product, without cleaning from external contaminants, is contaminated with an aqueous suspension of fungal spores and kept under conditions optimal for their development for 28 days.

The oxygen index was determined according



Scheme 1



Scheme 2

to the Standard ISO 4589-2.

The density of the nodes of the chemical network,  $n_c$ , was calculated by the following formula:

$$n_c = \sigma_0 / 3RT\varepsilon_0,$$

where  $\sigma_0$  is the constant applied stress,  $R$  is the molar gas constant,  $\varepsilon_0$  is the equilibrium deformation measured at temperature  $T = T_g + 50K$ .

### Results and discussion

As follows from the diagrams shown in Fig. 1, the samples based on epoxy resin containing ORH (hereinafter modified resin) are significantly inferior to those based on the original resin in terms of tensile strength, deformation at break, elastic modulus and fracture work. Apparently, this results result from the lower speed of movement of the more bulky molecules of the modified resin, as well as the presence of heavy atoms of tin and bromine in it, which, in turn, causes a decrease in molecular mobility and impedes the curing reaction when the curing agent is introduced. The result is a less dense and more defective chemical network. After heat treatment, for all samples, the values of  $\sigma_t$  and  $E$  slightly increase, while the values of the parameters  $\varepsilon_s$  and  $A_f$ , on the contrary, decrease, which is explained by the formation of a denser chemical network due to the additional curing of the samples when exposed to an elevated temperature.

In the resulting denser chemical network, due to the approach of molecules, the probability of the formation of a physical network by hydrogen bonds of OH groups and bromine atoms increases, and

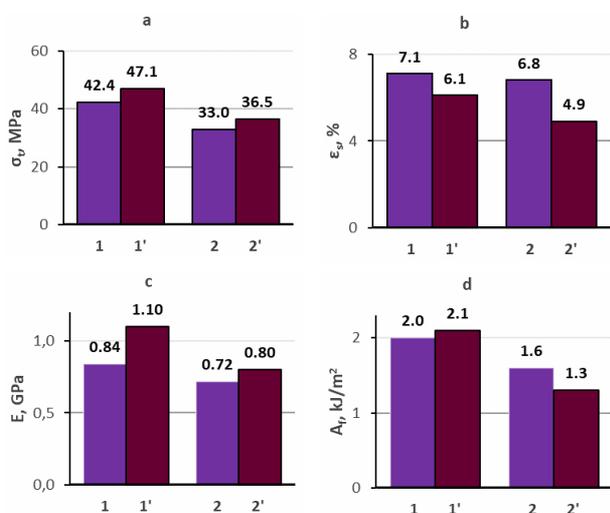


Fig. 1. Tensile strength  $\sigma_t$  (a), deformation at break  $\varepsilon_s$  (b), elastic modulus  $E$  (c), and fracture work  $A_f$  (d) for specimens based on the original (1, 1') and modified (2, 2') resins. Specimens are cured by modes I (1, 2) and II (1', 2')

this additionally strengthens the material. As the temperature rises, the physical mesh breaks down first, and the sparser chemical mesh in modified resin composites is less resistant to mechanical stress. This is reflected in a more rapid decrease in the tensile strength (Fig. 2,a, curve 2) and a significant increase in the strain at break (Fig. 2,b, curve 2) for specimens based on the modified resin even with a slight increase in the temperature. Obviously, this behavior can be associated with an earlier devitrification of the epoxy matrix (Fig. 3,a) and the transition of the polymer to a forced elastic state.

Since tin-containing polymers are intended, first of all, to protect hydraulic structures and mechanisms operating in an aquatic environment against fouling, it was of interest to study the effect of water on their deformation and strength properties. It can be seen (Fig. 4) that the parameter  $\sigma_t$  depends on the holding time ( $t_c$ ) of the sample in water in a complex way. At short times  $t_c$  (about 24 h), for a sample based on the initial resin, a decrease in  $\sigma_t$  is observed by 10% and 33.7% for curing without heating and for a heat-treated composite, respectively. For specimens based on a modified resin, the decrease in  $\sigma_t$  for unheated and heat-treated specimens is approximately the same (29.4% and 35.2%, respectively). After reaching the minimum point, the strength increases with the appearance of a maximum at  $t_c = 360$  h for specimens based on the initial resin, regardless of the curing

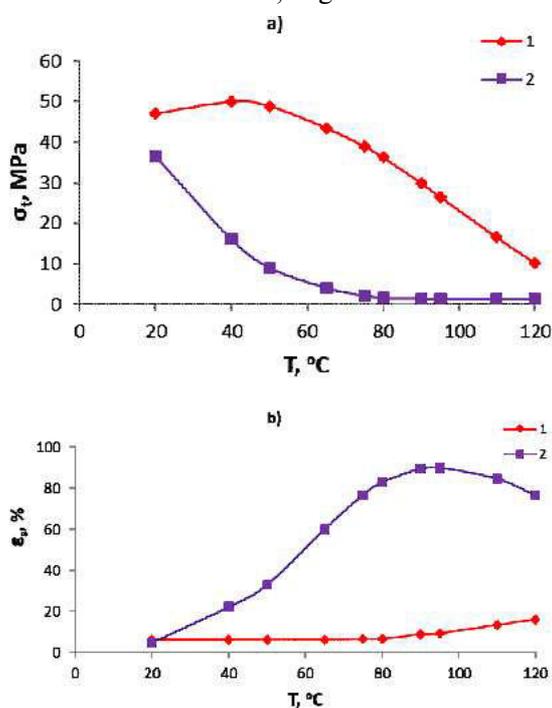


Fig. 2. Tensile strength  $\sigma_t$  (a) and deformation at rupture  $\varepsilon_r$  (b) vs. temperature for epoxide polymers based on initial (1) and modified (2) ORH resins. The specimens were cured by mode II

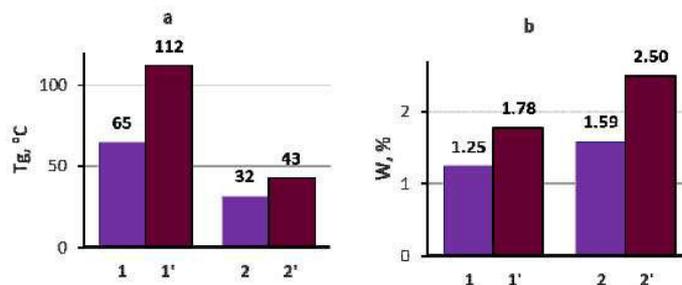


Fig. 3. Glass transition temperature  $T_g$  (a) and water absorption  $W$  (b) for samples based on the original (1, 1') and modified (2, 2') resins. Specimens were cured by modes I (1, 2) and II (1', 2')

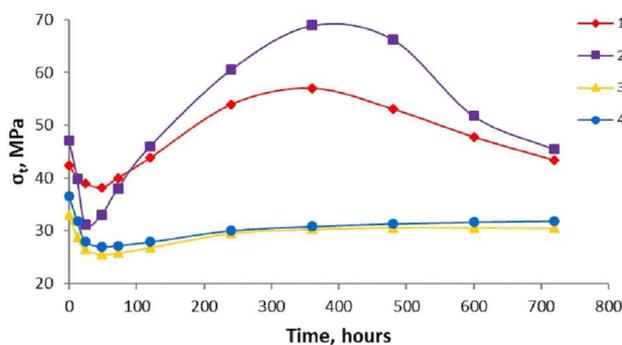


Fig. 4. Tensile strength  $\sigma_t$  vs. exposure time  $t_c$  in water for specimens based on initial (1, 2) and modified (3, 4) resins. Specimens were cured by modes I (1, 3) and II (2, 4)

mode. In this case, at the point of maximum, the  $\sigma_t$  values exceed the initial values by 34.4% and 45.0% for an unheated sample and for a heat-treated sample, respectively. After the maximum,  $\sigma_t$  decreases rather quickly, reaching approximately the same values as the initial values in 720 h (i.e., at  $t_c=0$ ).

For composites based on the modified resin, after reaching a minimum, an increase in the strength index is observed over the entire investigated range of exposure times, reaching almost a plateau at  $t_c=240$  h. In this case, the value of  $\sigma_t$  in the plateau zone is 8% lower than the initial strength value for an unheated sample and 15% lower than for the heat-treated sample.

Dependences of deformation at break on exposure time in water represent (Fig. 5) extreme curves with a maximum at  $t_c=24$  h for composites cured without heating, based on both the initial and modified resin. After reaching a maximum,  $\epsilon_s$  monotonically decreases with increasing  $t_c$  to the values more than two times lower than for samples with  $t_c=0$  h. In this case, the maximum on the  $\epsilon_s$  vs.  $t_c$  dependence for a composite based on a modified resin is more pronounced. The deformation of the sample based on the initial resin cured by mode I at the maximum point is 1.65 times greater than the initial value (at  $t_c=0$  h). For a composite based on a

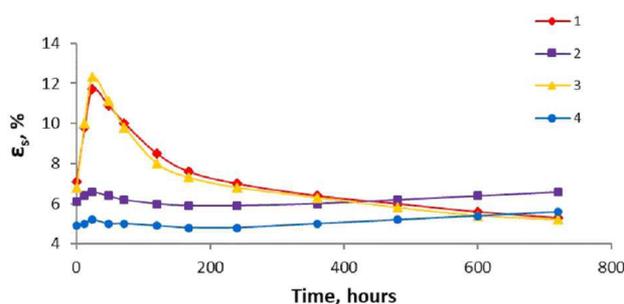


Fig. 5. Dependence of deformation at rupture  $\epsilon_s$  vs. the exposure time  $t_c$  in water for specimens based on the initial (1, 2) and modified (3, 4) resins. Specimens were cured by modes I (1, 3) and II (2, 4)

modified resin, the increase in deformation is even greater and amounts to 2.03 times (Fig. 5, curve 3). For specimens post-cured at 120°C, the  $\epsilon_s$  maxima are less pronounced (Fig. 5, curves 2 and 4), and the deformation at rupture at  $t_c=720$  h is higher than at  $t_c=0$  h.

As follows from Fig. 6, exposure of epoxy polymers in water also leads to a change in their glass transition temperature. It can be seen that for specimens cured without heating, at short exposure times in water, the  $T_g$  parameter decreases slightly at very short exposure times  $t_c=3-5$  h (from 65°C to 62°C). Further, with increasing  $t_c$ , the value of  $T_g$  begins to increase, and it is especially intense in the interval  $t_c$  from 10 h to 72 h, where the average increment of  $T_g$  is about 0.25°C for 1 hour of water aging. In the interval  $t_c$  from 72 h to 240 h, the growth rate of  $T_g$  is significantly lower (0.012°C/h), and at  $t_c$  from 240 h to 720 h it tends to 0 (0.0021°C/h). An increase in  $T_g$ , obviously, indicates an increase in the frequency of the spatial network in the polymer. At the same time, for the heat-treated samples,  $T_g$  decreases monotonically when exposure time both in water and in air increased (Fig. 6, curves 3 and 4).

The results of calculating the density of the chemical network  $n_c$  confirm the assumption about

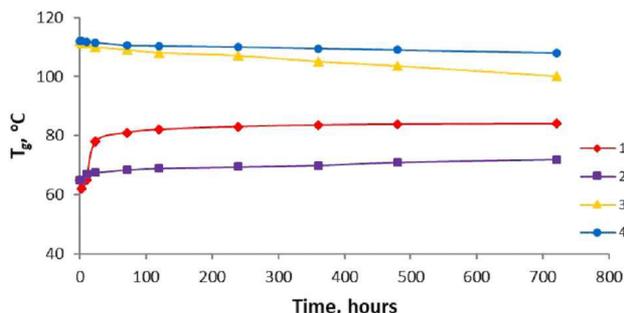


Fig. 6. Dependence of the glass transition temperature  $T_g$  on the exposure time  $t_c$  for samples based on the original resin, cured by modes I (1, 2) and II (3, 4): 1 and 3 – exposure in water; 2 and 4 – exposure in air

the compaction of the chemical network when the epoxy polymer is kept in water. As follows from Fig. 7, for a sample cured without heat supply from the outside, in the first hours of its exposure to water, a sharp increase in  $n_c$  is observed, after which the rate of its increase decreases rapidly. In our opinion, the results obtained can be explained in the following way. Water sorbed by the polymer appears to weaken physical bonds, leading to an increase in the intensity of molecular motion. As a result, the probability of contact of unreacted reactive groups and, consequently, the formation of additional chemical crosslinks increases. In the case of aging of the samples in air, the observed changes in the parameters  $T_g$  (Fig. 6, curve 2) and  $n_c$  (Fig. 7, curve 2) are extremely insignificant. At the same time, they also can be largely attributed to the effect associated with the action of moisture sorbed from the air.

The observed results give grounds to speak of a significant acceleration of the process of additional curing of the epoxy polymer in water at deep stages of the conversion of reactive (epoxy and amine) groups. In this case, in a relatively short time  $t_c=24-72$  h, the values of the parameter  $n_c$  are achieved, which are close to those for the heat-treated sample. A slightly different picture is observed for the samples subjected to heating. Although here, too, the additional curing of the sample is observed when it is kept in water, which is reflected in a slight increase in  $n_c$  with increasing  $t_c$  (Fig. 7, curve 3), the plasticization effect prevails, causing a monotonic decrease in  $T_g$  with increasing  $t_c$  (Fig. 6, curve 3). Interestingly, for a heat-treated polymer, a decrease in its heat resistance with time is observed even when it is aged in air (Fig. 6, curve 4). Apparently, this is due to the plasticizing effect of moisture sorbed from the air. The results obtained allow assuming that to ensure a higher performance of film samples based on epoxy compositions, one should strive to achieve

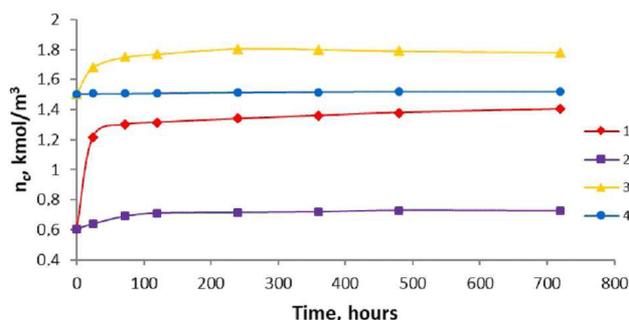


Fig. 7. Dependence of the density of the chemical network  $n_c$  on the holding time  $t_c$  for samples based on the original resin, cured in modes I (1, 2) and II (3, 4): 1 and 3 – exposure in water; 2 and 4 – holding in air

a certain optimum, different from the limiting completeness of curing.

Assuming the superposition of the effects of plasticization and additional curing of epoxy polymers upon exposure to water, the observed change in their deformation and strength properties under the influence of a liquid medium becomes clear. At small  $t_c$ , the effect of the adsorbed moisture is mainly aimed at weakening the intermolecular interaction in the sample, as a result of which its tensile strength decreases and the deformation at break increases. At large  $t_c$  values, when the amount of absorbed water becomes large enough and a rather intense molecular mobility develops, post-curing processes prevail, leading to an increase in the crosslinking density and, as a consequence, to a decrease in the deformation capacity and an increase in the strength index.

Based on this mechanism, it is possible to explain the nature of the change in the dependence of the elastic modulus with the course of water aging. At short times  $t_c$ , the value of  $E$  decreases for all studied samples (Fig. 8), which indicates the effect of plasticization. After reaching the minimum, an increase in the modulus is observed, associated with the additional curing of the epoxy polymer, up to values approximately equal (sample based on modified resin, cured according to mode I) or even slightly higher than the initial value at  $t_c=0$  h (for samples based on the initial resin ED-16 regardless of cure mode and modified resin cured by mode II). At sufficiently long exposure times (over 500 h) for samples based on the initial resin, the plasticization effect again prevails, as evidenced by a further decrease in the elastic modulus.

The creep curves are shown in Fig. 9. It can be seen that the samples based on the modified resin exhibit higher value and rate of creep than the samples based on the original resin. At the same time, a

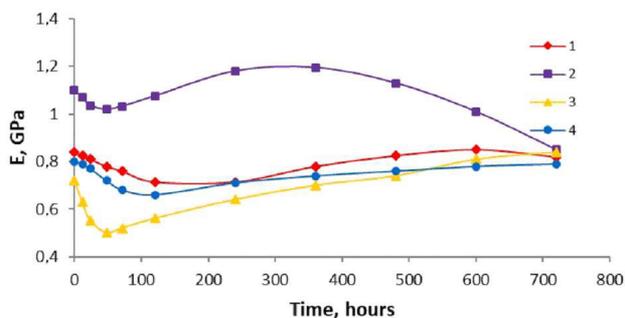


Fig. 8. Dependence of the elastic modulus  $E$  on the exposure time  $t_e$  for samples based on the original (1, 2) and modified (3, 4). Specimens were cured by modes I (1, 3) and II (2, 4)

slight increase in the test temperature significantly accelerates the creep process (Fig. 9, curve 5). This circumstance must be taken into account in the case when the material is required to maintain its size and shape under the action of a load over time.

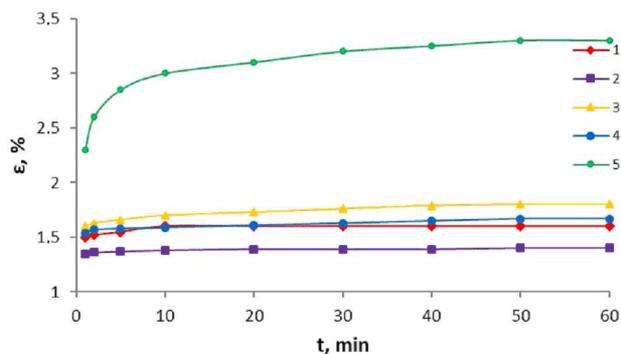


Fig. 9. Creep curves of specimens based on the initial (1, 2) and modified ORH (3, 4, 5) ED-16 epoxy resin, cured by modes I (1, 3, 5) and II (2, 4). Test temperature was 22°C (1, 2, 3, and 4) and 35°C (5)

The results of studying the creep process depending on the time of exposure of the samples to water can serve as an additional confirmation of the

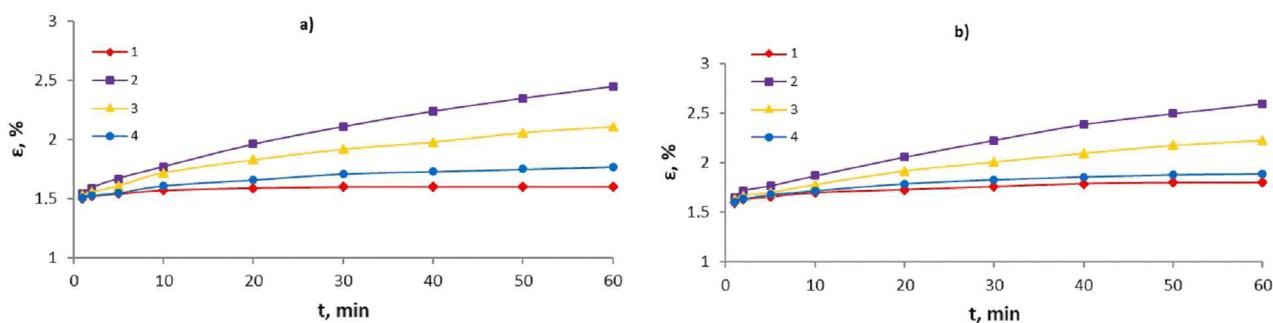


Fig. 10. Creep curves for composites based on the initial (a) and modified (b) resins cured according to mode I. The samples were soaked in water for 0 (1), 24 (2) and 240 (3, 4) hours: 1 and 4 – air tests; 2 and 3 – in water

superposition of the effects of plasticization and additional curing. It can be seen (Fig. 10) that a noticeable increase in the deformability of the samples occurs only in the first 24 h of water aging. Further, with increasing  $t_e$ , a slowdown in the creep process is observed. As a result, a specimen held in water for 240 h exhibits lower deformation than a specimen for which  $t_e$  is 24 h. If the specimen is tested with  $t_e=240$  h in air, then its creep decreases even more and differs little from the creep of the initial sample with  $t_e=0$  h. In this case, the sample with  $t_e=240$  h contains more adsorbed moisture (Fig. 3,b), which naturally plasticizes the composite. This once again emphasizes that at sufficiently long exposure times in water, the post-curing processes play a crucial role, leading to an increase in the crosslinking density of the polymer rather than the plasticization effect.

Due to the fact that the investigated polymer based on the product of interaction of epoxy resin with ORH contains 11.3% of bromine and 8.4% of tin, it has a reduced combustibility and good fungitoxicity. Its oxygen index (OI) is 27% versus 21% for polymers based on the original ED-16 resin; polymers with an OI from 20 to 27 are known [11–15] to be classified as slowly combustible, while polymers with an OI>27 are considered to be hardly combustible and are self-extinguishing when removed from fire. Evaluation of the resistance of the composite to the effects of molds showed that it has sufficient fungitoxicity: the degree of mold growth is 0 (that is, mold growth is not observed under the microscope) versus 2 (weak mold development) for samples based on the original resin. All this expands the possible areas of application of such compositions, first of all, as antifouling and flame retardant coatings.

### Conclusions

Thus, the method for the synthesis of a modified epoxy resin based on an organotin halide and an industrial epoxy resin ED-16 has been developed. Despite the fact that the epoxy composites containing a modified resin are inferior in terms of the complex

of physical and mechanical properties and water resistance to materials based on the original resin, they are significantly superior to them in terms of resistance to the development of fungi and mold as well as fire resistance. The investigated polymers are promising for the production of anti-fouling coatings on their basis for hydraulic equipment operating in the presence of algae, fungi and other microorganisms in the environment.

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## ВЛАСТИВОСТІ КОМПОЗИТНИХ МАТЕРІАЛІВ НА ОСНОВІ ЕПОКСИДНОЇ СМОЛИ, МОДИФІКОВАНОЇ ДИБРОМІДОМ ДИБУТИЛОЛОВА

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Взаємодією промислової епоксидної смоли марки ЕД-16 з дибромідом дибутилолова отримана олово-бромовмісна смола. Здійснено порівняльне дослідження комплексу фізико-механічних і релаксаційних властивостей композитів на основі вихідної і модифікованої смол, отверджених при різних температурах. Встановлено, що композиційні матеріали на основі модифікованої смоли характеризуються меншими значеннями міцності при розтягуванні, модуля пружності, роботи руйнування і температури склування у порівнянні зі зразками на основі вихідної епоксидної смоли. Досліджено вплив води на деформаційно-міцнісні властивості композитів. Встановлено складний механізм впливу сорбованої полімером вологи на комплекс властивостей, який може бути пов'язаний з накладенням ефектів пластифікації і доотвердження епоксидної матриці. При нетривалій експозиції дія сорбованої рідини направлена головним чином на ослаблення міжмолекулярної взаємодії у зразку, внаслідок чого знижується його міцність при розтягуванні і зростає деформаційна здатність. При великих часах експозиції превалюють процеси доотвердження, що приводить до збільшення щільності поперечного зшивання і, як наслідок,

до зниження деформаційної здатності та зростання показника міцності. Показано, що епоксидні композити, що містять смолу, модифіковану дибромідом дибутилтолова, відрізняються підвищеною фунгітоксичністю і вогнестійкістю. Досліджені полімери можуть розглядатися як перспективні для одержання на їх основі протиобростаючих покриттів для гідротехнічного устаткування.

**Ключові слова:** епоксидний композит, дибромід дибутилолова, фізико-механічні властивості, вогнестійкість, фунгітоксичність, протиобростаючі грибостійкі покриття.

## PROPERTIES OF COMPOSITE MATERIALS BASED ON EPOXY RESIN MODIFIED WITH DIBUTYL TIN DIBROMIDE

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A tin-bromine-containing resin was prepared by the interaction of industrial ED-16 epoxy resin with dibutyltin dibromide. A comparative study of the physical, mechanical and relaxation properties of composites based on the original and modified resins cured at different temperatures has been carried out. It has been shown that the composite materials based on a modified resin are characterized by lower values of tensile strength, elastic modulus, fracture work and glass transition temperature as compared with the samples based on the original epoxy resin. The effect of water on the deformation and strength properties of composites was studied. A complex mechanism of the influence of moisture sorbed by the polymer on the complex of properties has been established, which may result from the imposition of the effects of plasticization and additional curing of the epoxy matrix. At short exposure times, the effect of the sorbed liquid is mainly aimed at weakening the intermolecular interaction in the sample, as a result of which its tensile strength decreases and its deformation capacity increases. At long exposure times, post-curing processes prevail, leading to an increase in the crosslinking density and, as a consequence, to a decrease in deformation capacity and an increase in the strength index. It has been shown that epoxy composites containing resin modified with dibutyltin dibromide are characterized by increased fungitoxicity and fire resistance. The studied polymers can be considered as promising for the production of antifouling coatings for hydraulic equipment on their basis.

**Keywords:** epoxy composite; dibutyltin dibromide; physical and mechanical properties; fire resistance; fungitoxicity; antifouling fungal resistant coatings.

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