

**SELF-HEALING NATURAL RUBBER ON METAL DISORBATE IONIC
NETWORK**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF ABBRIVATIONS	ix
ABSTRACT	x
ABSTRAK	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background Research	1
1.2 Problem Statement	5
1.3 Research Questions	7
1.4 Objectives	7
1.5 Significance of Study	8
1.6 Expected Outcomes	9
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction of Self-healing in Rubber	10
2.1.1 Intrinsic Self-healing	12
2.1.2 Ionic Interaction in Natural Rubber	14
2.2 Natural Rubber (NR)	18
2.2.1 Chemical Structure of NR	19
2.2.2 Properties of NR	20
2.2.3 Application of NR	21
2.3 Vulcanization Process of Rubber	22
2.4 Zinc Disorbate	25
2.5 Properties of Self-healing Rubbers	27

2.6	Application of Self-healing Rubbers	28
2.7	Challenges in Self-healing Rubbers	29

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1	Materials and Chemicals	31
3.2	Instrument and Equipment	31
3.3	Preparation and Characterization NR Grafted ZDS	32
3.4	Moulding and Preparation of Sample	33
3.5	Testing and Characterization NR Grafted ZDS vulcanizate	33
	3.5.1 Tensile Test	33
	3.5.2 Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Analysis	35
	3.5.3 Crosslink density measurement	35
	3.5.4 Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy	37
3.6	Flow chart of The Whole Research Work	38

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1	Tensile Properties and Self-healing efficiency of ZDS-Grafted NR	39
	4.1.1 Tensile strength	39
	4.1.2 Elongation at break	41
4.2	FTIR Analysis of ZDS-Grafted NR	42
4.3	Crosslink Density Assessment of ZDS-Grafted NR	44
4.4	Morphology Analysis of ZDS-Grafted NR	46

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	Conclusion	50
5.2	Recommendation	51

CITED REFERENCES	53
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APPENDICES	57
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<i>CURRICULUM VITAE</i>	68
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ABSTRACT

SELF-HEALING NATURAL RUBBER BASED ON METAL DISORBATE IONIC NETWORK

One of the most critical environmental issues is the improper disposal and processing of rubber waste. Investing in the development of self-healing properties of natural rubber (NR) would have a significant impact on the industry and environment. The concept of self-healing has been developed to extend the life of rubber goods by fully or partially correcting localised mechanical damage without compromising structural reliability or requiring operator intervention. In this study, the self-healing capabilities of NR are investigated with different loadings of zinc disorbate (ZDS) as a self-healing agent. ZDS was added to the NR compound using a peroxide vulcanization system with a varying ZDS content. The tensile properties of the NR-grafted ZDS vulcanizate were determined before and after the healing process to determine the self-healing efficiency. Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) and crosslink-density studies provided evidence of reversible ZDS ionic networks. Compared to unfilled NR, the results show that the addition of ZDS successfully induces the vulcanizates to self-repair and recover when damaged. The FTIR result showed that ZDS successfully grafted onto NR molecular chains. The scanning electron microscopic images showed that the ZDS-grafted NR can repair itself, as evidenced by the small distance between the two fractured samples. The tensile test and the microscopic images of NR/4ZDS revealed that it was the best sample among the others. Thus, this study has shown the potential of ZDS to induce the self-healing function in NR vulcanisates.