



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**REMOVAL OF COPPER AND LEAD FROM  
AQUEOUS SOLUTION BY  
TARTARIC ACID MODIFIED RICE HUSK**

**WONG KOI KIM**

**FSAS 2001 50**

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**2001**



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**By**

**WONG KOI KIM**

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of  
Science in the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

**February 2001**



**I would like to dedicate this thesis to:**

**My Family Members,**

**My Supervisor,**

**My Co-supervisors,**

**My Friends,**

**All of those who were involved in this study...**

Abstract of the thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia  
in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

**REMOVAL OF COPPER AND LEAD FROM AQUEOUS SOLUTION BY  
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**February 2001**

**Chairman : Prof. Dr. Lee Chnoong Kheng**

**Faculty : Science and Environmental Studies**

The potential of rice husk (RH) modified with various carboxylic acids to remove Cu(II) from aqueous solution was investigated. It was found that the sorption capacity of rice husk was enhanced by this modification. Tartaric acid modified rice husk (TARH) has the highest sorption capacity for Cu(II). TARH was produced by treating RH with 1.2 M tartaric acid and heated at 180 °C for 10 minutes.

In order to understand the sorption characteristics of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by TARH, batch and column studies were performed under various experimental conditions. The parameters studied were pH, temperature, contact time, initial concentration of metal solutions, presence of competitive cations and chelators, sorbent dosage, rate of agitation, particle size of sorbent, bed height, flow rate and sorption-desorption cycles using synthetic solution and semiconductor electroplating wastewater.

The results of batch studies indicated that the sorption process was pH dependent and exothermic. Kinetic study showed that uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) reached equilibrium after 60 minutes. The maximum binding capacities of the TARH at room temperature determined from the Langmuir isotherms were 31.85 and 120.48 mg/g for Cu(II) and Pb(II), respectively. In the presence of competitive cations and chelators, metal uptake decreased. The affinity of TARH for Pb(II) was greater than Cu(II) on a weight basis. The uptake increased with increasing sorbent dosage and agitation rate.

The results of column studies showed that the utilised capacities of TARH at different bed depths agreed closely with the maximum sorption capacities obtained from Langmuir isotherm for both Cu(II) and Pb(II). The results also showed that breakthrough depended on bed depth, initial influent concentration of metal ion and flow rate. However, the effect of flow rate on sorption was minimal. The relationship between service time and bed depth was linear. Predicted breakthrough curves obtained from a two parameter mathematical model for Cu(II) and Pb(II) in wastewater agreed well with experimental values.

In sorption-desorption study, Cu(II) and Pb(II) could be removed almost quantitatively by eluting with a 0.1 M HCl solution and the column could be used repeatedly for at least 5 cycles in the treatment of wastewater.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PENYINGKIRAN KUPRUM DAN PLUMBUM DARIPADA LARUTAN  
AKUEUS OLEH SEKAM PADI YANG DIUBAHSUAIKAN DENGAN  
ASID TARTARIK**

Oleh

**WONG KOI KIM**

**Februari 2001**

**Pengerusi : Prof. Dr. Lee Chnoong Kheng**

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Keupayaan sekam padi (RH) yang diubahsuaikan dengan pelbagai jenis asid karbosilik untuk mengasingkan Cu(II) dari larutan akueus telah dikaji. Didapati bahawa pengubahsuaian ini telah meningkatkan kapasiti erapan sekam padi. Sekam padi yang diubahsuaikan dengan asid tartarik (TARH) memberi erapan yang paling tinggi. TARH telah disediakan pada keadaan optimum dengan merawat RH menggunakan 1.2 M asid tartarik dan dipanaskan pada 180°C selama 10 minit.

Untuk memahami ciri-ciri erapan TARH terhadap Cu(II) and Pb(II), kajian kelompok dan turus telah dijalankan di bawah pelbagai kaadaan eksperimen seperti pH, suhu, masa, kepekatan awal larutan akueus logam, kehadiran kation-kation saingan dan agen-agen pengkelat, dos pengeras, kadar acuman, saiz zarah, ketinggian turus, kadar aliran dan edaran erapan-penyaherapan dengan menggunakan larutan sintetik dan air sisa saduran semikonduktor.

Keputusan kajian kelompok menunjukkan bahawa proses erapan dipengaruhi oleh pH dan bersifat eksotermik. Kajian kinetik menunjukkan keseimbangan tindakbalas untuk Cu(II) and Pb(II) diperolehi selepas 60 minit. Kapasiti erapan maksimum untuk TARH terhadap Cu(II) dan Pb(II) pada suhu bilik yang ditentukan daripada isoterma Langmuir adalah 31.85 dan 120.48 mg/g masing-masing. Kehadiran kation-kation saingan dan agen-agen pengkelat mengurangkan erapan logam. Affiniti TARH terhadap Pb(II) lebih tinggi daripada Cu(II) berdasarkan berat. Erapan meningkat dengan peningkatan dos pengerap dan kadar acuman.

Keputusan kajian turus menunjukkan bahawa kapasiti erapan TARH yang digunakan untuk mengerap Cu(II) dan Pb(II) pada pelbagai tinggi turus adalah lebih kurang sama dengan kapasiti erapan maksimum yang diperolehi daripada isoterma Langmuir. Keputusan juga menunjukkan bahawa masa pemunculan dipengaruhi oleh ketinggian turus, kepekatan awal influen dan kadar aliran. Walau bagaimanapun, kesan kadar aliran terhadap erapan adalah kecil. Hubungan di antara masa layangan dan ketinggian turus adalah linear. Kelok pemunculan bagi Cu(II) dan Pb(II) dari air sisa yang diramalkan daripada model matematik dua parameter adalah lebih kurang sama dengan nilai eksperimen.

Dalam kajian erapan-penyaherapan, hampir semua Cu(II) dan Pb(II) dapat diasingkan dengan larutan 0.1 M HCl dan turus tersebut dapat digunakan sekurang-kurangnya 5 kitaran secara berterusan untuk merawat air sisa.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Lee Chnoong and co-supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Low Kun She for their supervision, invaluable guidance, unfailing help, advice and suggestion throughout the duration of this study.

In addition, I would like to thank my co-supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd. Jelas for his consistent support and help throughout my studies.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest appreciation to all the staff in Chemistry Department, especially to Madam Choo for their assistance and cooperation that in one way or another has contributed to the success of this study.

My sincere gratitude is also extended to my housemates, cousemates and friends for their help, encouragement and comments which have contributed towards the success of this study.

Last but not least, I would like to express my deepest affection to my beloved family for their caring, patience, support and understanding.

This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

---

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION.....	2
ABSTRACT.....	3
ABSTRAK.....	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	7
APPROVAL SHEETS.....	8
DECLARATION FORM.....	10
LIST OF TABLES.....	14
LIST OF FIGURES.....	16
LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	21
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
I     INTRODUCTION.....	23
Copper.....	24
Lead.....	27
Tartaric Acid.....	29
Citric Acid.....	30
Rice Husk.....	32
Treatment of Heavy Metals.....	34
Chemical Precipitation.....	34
Adsorption.....	36
Ion Exchange.....	37
Membrane System.....	39
Biological Treatment.....	40
Significance of Study.....	41
Objectives of Study.....	43
II    LITERATURE REVIEW.....	44
Low Cost Materials as Sorbents.....	44
III   MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY.....	60
Preparation of Natural Rice Husk.....	60
Preparation of Modified Rice Husk.....	60
Initial Modification.....	60
Modification by Various Types of Carboxylic Acids.....	61
Final Optimisation using Selected Carboxylic Acid (Tartaric acid) on Concentration, Temperature and Time.....	61
Reagents.....	61
Industrial Wastewater.....	62
Batch Experiments.....	62
Comparative Study on The Various Chemically Modified Rice husk.....	62
Effect of pH.....	63



Effect of Contact Time and Initial Concentration.....	63
Effect of Agitation Rate.....	64
Effect of Particle Size.....	64
Sorption Isotherm.....	64
Effect of Temperature.....	65
Effect of Sorbent Dosage.....	65
Effect of Chelator.....	65
Effect of Competitive Cation.....	66
Acidic Esterification of Tartaric Acid Modified Rice Husk...	66
Column Studies.....	66
Effect of Bed Depth.....	67
Effect of Flow Rate.....	67
Effect of Initial Concentration.....	67
Sorption-Desorption Study.....	68
Treatment of Industrial Wastewater.....	69
Sorption Isotherm.....	69
Study on The Efficiency of Chemical Precipitation by NaOH.	69
Effect of Bed Depth in Column Study.....	70
Effect of Flow Rate in Column Study.....	70
Effect of Initial Concentration in Column Study.....	70
Sorption-Desorption Study.....	71
Instrument.....	71
Fourier-transform Infrared Spectrophotometer.....	72
Inductively Coupled Plasma-Atomic Emission Spectrometer.	72
IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	73
Modification of Rice Husk.....	73
Development of Initial Modification Conditions.....	73
Modification by Various Types of Carboxylic Acids.....	75
Final Optimisation using Selected Carboxylic Acid (Tartaric acid) on Concentration, Temperature and Time.....	75
Fourier-transform Infrared Spectra.....	79
Batch Experiments.....	83
Effect of pH.....	83
Effect of Contact Time and Initial Concentration.....	85
Sorption Kinetic.....	89
Effect of Agitation Rate.....	94
Effect of Particle Size.....	94
Boundary Layer Effect.....	99
Intraparticle Diffusion.....	103
Sorption Isotherm.....	107
Effect of Temperature.....	116
Effect of Sorbent Dosage.....	120
Effect of Chelator.....	122
Effect of Competitive Cation.....	125
Acidic Esterification of TARH.....	128
Study on The Efficiency of Chemical Precipitation by NaOH.	129

Column Studies.....	138
Effect of Bed Depth.....	139
Bed Depth Service Time Model.....	147
Effect of Flow Rate.....	149
Two Parameter Mathematical Model.....	156
Effect of Initial Concentration.....	183
Sorption-Desorption Study.....	188
V    CONCLUSION.....	199
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	203
VITA.....	214

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1      Composition of rice husk.....	33
2      Uptake of Cu(II) by BE rice husk treated with citric acid of various concentrations.....	74
3      Uptake of Cu(II) by BE rice husk treated with 0.9 M CA at various heating temperatures for 90 min.....	74
4      Uptake of Cu(II) by BE rice husk treated with TA of various concentrations at various heating temperatures.....	77
5      Uptake of Cu(II) by NE rice husk treated with TA of various concentrations at various heating temperatures.....	78
6      Uptake of Cu(II) by NE rice husk treated with 1.2 M TA at 180°C for various durations.....	79
7      The characteristic bands of the infrared spectrum of tartaric acid.....	82
8      Relationship between initial metal ion concentration and sorption capacity and rate.....	93
9      The $\beta_L$ values for Cu(II)-TARH and Pb(II)-TARH systems.....	103
10     The $K_i$ values for Cu(II)-TARH and Pb(II)-TARH systems.....	104
11     Langmuir constants for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems at different temperatures.....	110
12     Comparative sorption capacities of TARH for Cu(II) and Pb(II) with some other types of biomass and industrial by-products.....	112
13     Langmuir constants for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution and wastewater.....	116
14     Enthalpy ( $\Delta H^\circ$ ) and entropy ( $\Delta S^\circ$ ) for Cu(II)-TARH and Pb(II)-TARH.....	120
15     A comparison of Cu(II) and Pb(II) removal by precipitation and sorption processes.....	136
16     Utilised capacity of TARH on the sorption of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from synthetic solutions and wastewater at various bed depths.....	147

17	Total removal percentage of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from synthetic solutions and wastewater at different flow rates.....	156
18	Values of erf(x).....	159
19	Total removal percentage of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from synthetic solutions and wastewater at different initial metal concentrations.....	187
20	Recovery percentage of Cu(II) in TARH using HCl of different concentrations.....	189
21	Sorption-desorption cycles of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from synthetic solutions and wastewater by TARH column using 0.1 M HCl.....	194

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
1      Uptake of Cu(II) by NRH and BE rice husk treated with 0.9 M of various carboxylic acids heated at 140°C for 90 min.....	76
2      The infrared spectrum of tartaric acid.....	80
3      Infrared spectra of natural rice husk (NRH) and tartaric acid modified rice husk (TARH).....	81
4      Reaction process of natural rice husk ( $W_s$ ) modified with tartaric Acid.....	82
5a     Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by NRH and TARH at different pH values.....	84
5b     Concentration of Cu(II) and Pb(II) at various pH.....	86
6      Uptake of Cu(II) by TARH at various concentrations.....	87
7      Uptake of Pb(II) by TARH at various concentrations.....	88
8      Pseudo-second order sorption kinetics of Cu(II) onto TARH .....	91
9      Pseudo-second order sorption kinetics of Pb(II) onto TARH.....	92
10     Uptake of Cu(II) by TARH at various agitation rates.....	95
11     Uptake of Pb(II) by TARH at various agitation rates.....	96
12     Uptake of Cu(II) by TARH of various particle sizes.....	97
13     Uptake of Pb(II) by TARH of various particle sizes.....	98
14     Boundary layer effect on the sorption of Cu(II) by TARH.....	101
15     Boundary layer effect on the sorption of Pb(II) by TARH.....	102
16     Intraparticle diffusion of Cu(II) in TARH.....	105
17     Intraparticle diffusion of Pb(II) in TARH.....	106
18     Langmuir isotherms at various temperatures for the sorption of Cu(II) by TARH.....	108





19	Langmuir isotherms at various temperatures for the sorption of Pb(II) by TARH.....	109
20	Langmuir isotherms for the sorption of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by NRH at 27±2°C.....	111
21	Langmuir isotherms for the sorption of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from synthetic solution by TARH at 27±2°C.....	114
22	Langmuir isotherms for the sorption of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from wastewater by TARH at 27±2°C.....	115
23	Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by TARH at various temperatures.....	117
24	Van't Hoff plots of Cu(II) and Pb(II) sorption by TARH.....	119
25	Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by different dosages of TARH.....	121
26	Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by TARH at various metal to chelator ratios.....	124
27	Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by TARH at various molar ratios of Cu(II) : Pb(II).....	126
28	Uptake of Pb(II) and Cu(II) by TARH at various molar ratios of Pb(II) : Cu(II).....	127
29	Uptake of Cu(II) and Pb(II) by TARH and acidic esterified TARH (E-TARH).....	130
30	Infrared spectra of tartaric acid modified rice husk (TARH) and esterified tartaric acid modified rice husk (E-TARH).....	131
31a	Precipitation of copper and lead hydroxide from synthetic solution (single metal ion solution) by NaOH at various pH values.....	133
31b	Precipitation of copper and lead hydroxide from synthetic solution (mixed solution) by NaOH at various pH values.....	134
32	Precipitation of copper and lead hydroxide from wastewater by NaOH at various pH values.....	135
33	Solubilities of metal hydroxides as a function of pH.....	137
34	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) in synthetic solution at different bed depths at a flow rate of 25mL/min.....	140

35	Breakthrough curves of Pb(II) in synthetic solution at different bed depths at a flow rate of 25mL/min.....	141
36	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) and Pb(II) in wastewater at different bed depths at a flow rate of 25mL/min.....	143
37	Utilised capacity of TARH on the sorption of Cu(II) from synthetic solution at different bed depths at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	144
38	Utilised capacity of TARH on the sorption of Pb(II) from synthetic solution at different bed depths at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	145
39	Utilised capacity of TARH on the sorption of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from wastewater at different bed depths.....	146
40	BDST plots of Cu(II)/ Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	150
41	BDST plots of Cu(II)/ Pb(II)-TARH systems in wastewater at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	151
42	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) in synthetic solution at different flow rates and at a bed depth of 10 cm.....	152
43	Breakthrough curves of Pb(II) in synthetic solution at different flow rates and at a bed depth of 10 cm.....	153
44	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) and Pb(II) in wastewater at different flow rates and at a bed depth of 10 cm.....	154
45	Two parameter ( $t_{0.5}$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution at different flow rates (Q) (5-40 mL/min).....	158
46	Two parameter ( $\sigma^2$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution at different flow rates (Q) (5-40 mL/min) and 10 cm constant bed depth (L).....	161
47	Two parameter ( $t_{0.5}$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution with different sorbent weights (M) (1.5-6.0 g).....	162
48	Two parameter ( $\sigma^2$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in synthetic solution with different sorbent weights (M) (1.5-6.0 g).....	163
49	Two parameter ( $t_{0.5}$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in wastewater at different flow rates (Q) (5-40 mL/min).....	164

50	Two parameter ( $\sigma^2$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in wastewater at different flow rates (Q) (5-40 mL/min) and 10 cm constant bed depth (L).....	165
51	Two parameter ( $t_{0.5}$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in wastewater with different sorbent weights (M) (1.5-6.0 g).....	166
52	Two parameter ( $\sigma^2$ ) plots for Cu(II)/Pb(II)-TARH systems in wastewater with different sorbent weights (M) (1.5-6.0 g).....	167
53	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 5 mL/min.....	168
54	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 10 mL/min.....	169
55	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	170
56	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 40 mL/min.....	171
57	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 5 mL/min.....	172
58	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 10 mL/min.....	173
59	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 25 mL/min.....	174
60	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution at a flow rate of 40 mL/min.....	175
61	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in wastewater at different flow rates (5-40 mL/min).....	177
62	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in wastewater at different flow rates (5-40 mL/min).....	178

63	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution with different sorbent weights (1.5-6.0 g).....	179
64	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in synthetic solution with different sorbent weights (1.5-6.0 g).....	180
65	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Cu(II)-TARH system in wastewater with different sorbent weights (1.5-6.0 g).....	181
66	Theoretical (two parameter model) and experimental breakthrough curves for Pb(II)-TARH system in wastewater with different sorbent weights (1.5-6.0 g).....	182
67	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) in synthetic solution at different initial influent concentrations at a constant flow rate of 25 mL/min and bed depth of 10 cm.....	184
68	Breakthrough curves of Pb(II) in synthetic solution at different initial influent concentrations at a constant flow rate of 25 mL/min and bed depth of 10 cm.....	185
69	Breakthrough curves of Cu(II) and Pb(II) in wastewater at different initial influent concentrations at a flow rate of 25 mL/min and bed depth of 10 cm.....	186
70	Elution process of Cu(II) (from synthetic solution) in TARH column by 0.1 M HCl.....	190
71	Elution process of Pb(II) (from synthetic solution) in TARH column by 0.1 M HCl.....	191
72	Regeneration cycles of Cu(II) from synthetic solution by TARH.....	192
73	Regeneration cycles of Pb(II) from synthetic solution by TARH.....	193
74	Elution process of Cu(II) (from wastewater) in TARH column by 0.1 M HCl.....	196
75	Elution process of Pb(II) (from wastewater) in TARH column by 0.1 M HCl.....	197
76	Regeneration cycles of Cu(II) and Pb(II) from wastewater by TARH..	198

## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

$b$	constant related to the energy of sorption
$\beta_L$	liquid-solid mass transfer coefficient
$C_e$	equilibrium concentration of metal ion
$C_o$	initial metal ion concentration in solution
$C_t$	metal ion concentration in solution at time $t$
$\text{erf}(x)$	error function of $x$
$H$	bed depth
$\Delta H^\circ$	enthalpy change
$k$	initial sorption rate
$k_1$	a constant.
$k_2$	a constant.
$k_3$	a constant.
$k_4$	a constant.
$k_r$	rate constant of sorption
$k_L$	Langmuir isotherm constant
$K_d$	distribution coefficient
$K_i$	intraparticle diffusion rate constant
$\log K_1$	stability constant which show the effectiveness of a chelator
$L$	column length
$m$	mass of sorbent per unit volume of metal ion solution
$M$	sorbent weight
$N_e$	amount of metal ion sorbed by sorbent at equilibrium

$N^*$	maximum sorption of the system
$N_o$	sorption capacity
$q_e$	amount of metal ion sorbed on the surface of the sorbent at equilibrium
$q_t$	amount of metal ion on the surface of the sorbent at time t
$Q$	flow rate
$R^2$	correlation coefficient
$R$	gas constant
$\sigma$	standard deviation
$S$	surface area for mass transfer or specific particle surface
$\Delta S^\circ$	entropy change
$t$	time
$t_{0.5}$	time at 50 % breakthrough
$T$	absolute temperature
$v$	volume of particle free liquid
$v$	linear flow rate
$w$	mass of sorbent

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Wastewater is the combination of liquid and water-transported wastes from homes, commercial buildings, industrial facilities, and institutions, along with any groundwater infiltration, surface water and storm water inflow that may enter the sewer system. Wastewater may contain pollutants such as heavy metals, toxic organic compounds, phosphorus, detergents, biodegradable organics, nutrients, dissolved inorganic solids, and refractory organics.

Heavy metal is one of the pollutants present in wastewater and can directly endanger plants, animals and human life. There is a growing awareness of the potential health hazard presented by the accumulation of heavy metals in various aspects of the environment. Heavy metals are generally classified as hazardous materials. Any cation having an atomic weight greater than 23 (atomic weight of sodium) is considered a heavy metal (Corbitt, 1998); hence wastewater obviously contains numerous types of heavy metals. As many heavy metals can be toxic and carcinogenic, it is important to investigate the type and level of metals in wastewater.

The most toxic heavy metals are mercury, lead, arsenic, chromium, cadmium and nickel. These metals are widely used in industry, particularly in metal finishing or metal plating industries and in such products as batteries and electronic devices. They are also used in certain pesticides and medicines. Thus heavy metals enter the