

综述·专论

石墨烯掺杂补强天然橡胶的研究进展

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摘要: 概述石墨烯掺杂补强天然橡胶(NR)的研究进展。石墨烯添加到NR中,可以提高NR的力学性能、热性能、导电性能和耐老化性能;石墨烯在NR中的分散性及与NR的界面相互作用是影响其补强效果的关键因素;石墨烯与NR化学结合对提高其补强作用非常重要;氧化石墨烯(GO)表面具有含氧活性基团,NR在紫外光老化或自然老化的过程中也会产生活性基团,在适合条件下GO与NR之间直接发生接枝聚合反应,最大程度地增大二者的界面作用,因而GO/NR复合材料具有老化自修复功能;光催化剂调控的“多样化”可控自由基聚合可以调控拓扑结构超分子聚合物网络结构,使其具有良好的刺激响应性、自修复性和形状记忆性等。

关键词: 天然橡胶;石墨烯;复合材料;掺杂;补强

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天然橡胶(NR)是一种具有高弹性和粘弹性的高分子材料,是国家的重要资源和工业原材料。我国橡胶树种植面积约为118万 hm^2 ,产量约为80万t,其中海南橡胶树种植面积约占60%,橡胶树种植是海南重要的农业支柱产业之一^[1]。改善NR的性能、提高NR制品的质量、拓展NR的应用领域对促进海南自由贸易港建设具有重要意义。

橡胶制品在实际储存和应用过程中会受到氧气、臭氧、紫外线、湿气和热等多种因素的影响^[2-4],导致胶料的组成及橡胶分子的结构变化,橡胶制品的性能逐渐变差,橡胶制品出现老化现象^[5]。NR是一种以聚异戊二烯为主要成分的天然高分子化合物,含有92%~95%的顺式1,4-聚异戊二烯,其分子主链上含有不饱和双键,容易受到氧和自由基的攻击而发生老化,从而影响其使用价值和应用范围^[6]。为此,人们进行了NR补强和改

性的深入研究^[7-10]。本文概述石墨烯掺杂补强NR的研究进展。

1 石墨烯掺杂补强NR

1.1 石墨烯补强NR的优点

橡胶一般没有自补强性,为满足各种条件下的使用要求,橡胶在实际应用时需加入填料进行补强。K. P. JIBIN等^[7-14]研究表明,添加石墨烯可以大幅提高橡胶的强度、柔韧性、导电性能和导热性能等。工业生产中常用炭黑和白炭黑来补强NR,但这两种填料用量较大,会造成严重的粉尘污染。石墨烯作为一种新型碳材料具备补强弹性体的特性,对NR的补强效果优于炭黑。石墨烯是一种由碳原子以 sp^2 杂化排列形成的单原子层二维晶体结构的碳材料,其碳原子组成多个六边形片状结构,石墨烯具有优异的物理性能、电性能、热性

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能、光学性能以及较大的比表面积。自2004年英国曼彻斯特大学物理学家Andre Geim课题组首次剥离得到石墨烯片层以来,人们对石墨烯进行了大量的研究,不断深入开发石墨烯制备及其应用技术,尤其在复合材料领域,石墨烯得到了越来越广泛的应用。将石墨烯作为填料加入到NR中是目前提高NR的物理性能、电性能、热性能及耐老化性能的有效手段^[14-17]。

1.2 石墨烯分散程度的控制

填料的分散性及填料与聚合物的界面粘附性影响复合材料的实际性能。如何使石墨烯在NR基体中均匀、稳定分散是一个重大挑战^[7,18-21]。由于石墨烯表面不含活性基团,具有疏水性,不易分散在橡胶基体中,且易发生团聚,不易有效地发挥石墨烯的优良性能,严重影响了石墨烯在橡胶工业中的应用,因此需要对石墨烯进行改性处理,以提高石墨烯在橡胶基体中的分散程度及石墨烯与橡胶的结合程度。

目前国内外对石墨烯的改性主要是在石墨片层表面接枝活性基团,以改善石墨烯的分散程度,并且使其能够更好地与橡胶基体的活性基团结合^[8,22-29]。其中,氧化石墨烯(GO)由于引入了含氧活性基团,具有优异的表面活性、润湿性和亲水性以及良好的分散性和相容性^[30-31],因此在极性溶液中分散性良好的GO或改性GO,更容易在NR基体中分散,避免了其团聚现象的发生,从而可较好地提高NR的力学性能、热稳定性和耐老化性能^[32-39]。A. MOHAMED等^[23]合成了亲石墨烯的两链和三链苯基化表面活性剂,研究了其改性石墨烯纳米片(GNPs)在NR胶乳中的分散性,并与市场上销售的表面活性剂十二烷基硫酸钠和十二烷基苯磺酸钠改性GNPs进行了比较,结果表明:三链苯基表面活性剂与石墨烯高度亲和,添加其改性GNPs的NR胶乳的导电性能增大9个数量级;增加表面活性剂中苯基数量可以显著提高石墨烯在NR基体中的分散性及与NR的亲合性。F. M. CAROLINA等^[24-26]的研究也证明了表面活性剂修饰可以增强石墨烯或GO在NR基体中的分散均匀性。N. WANG等^[32]采用硅烷偶联剂KH550合成GO接枝氮化硼(GO-BN),在NR中加

入GO-BN和膨胀阻燃剂,提高了NR的阻燃性能。L. CAO等^[33]用硅烷偶联剂KH550改性GO,并将其与白炭黑同时填充NR,由于NR与GO的给体-受体和 π - π 相互作用,GO/白炭黑杂化体在NR乳液中能够均匀分散。

1.3 常用的石墨烯掺杂方法

石墨烯/NR复合材料通常采用机械共混法、溶液共混法、乳液共混法制备,以提高石墨烯或改性石墨烯在NR基体中的分散性,但石墨烯仍存在团聚现象^[29]。

溶液共混法即将NR和石墨烯以及助剂分别采用有机溶剂在超声或/和搅拌等条件下溶解后,再将各种分散溶液混合均匀,混合溶液在适宜的温度下挥发去有机溶剂后,得到均匀分散的复合材料。J. R. WU等^[40]采用四氢呋喃溶解NR,将得到的溶液与经双-[3-(三乙氧基硅)丙基]四硫化物改性的石墨烯混合,再在超声和搅拌条件下加入硫化剂DCP,混合溶液经干燥后制得石墨烯/NR复合材料。溶液共混法可以使石墨烯均匀地分散在NR基体中,但有机溶剂的加入不仅影响操作者的身体健康、造成环境污染,而且挥发有机溶剂的过程过于漫长,有机溶剂挥发过慢而易发生石墨烯聚集现象。

乳液共混法是在NR胶乳和石墨烯悬浮液的共混溶液中加入凝聚剂,使NR沉析而形成石墨烯/NR复合材料^[21,41-46]。W. JANSOMBOON等^[11]采用乳液共混法将白炭黑/石墨烯共混物加入NR中,试验结果表明,与白炭黑/NR复合材料相比,石墨烯/白炭黑/NR复合材料的撕裂强度和热稳定性提高。Y. Y. LUO等^[43]采用乳液共混法在NR基体中构筑了三维互联石墨烯网络,使石墨烯/NR复合材料的电导率达到 $7.31 \text{ S} \cdot \text{m}^{-1}$,力学性能接近钢筋。乳液共混法因具有简单、快速、环保等特点而受到许多研究者的青睐。国内外采用NR胶乳与石墨烯制备复合材料的方法较为普遍,但是这种方法会引入铁和其他过渡金属元素,这些金属离子如不彻底洗净,复合材料会在干燥或加工成型过程中发生降解。

机械共混法即采用开炼机和密炼机等橡胶加工设备,将石墨烯与NR直接机械混合,与此同

时加入其他助剂以达到采用石墨烯补强NR的目的^[47-51]。M. HERNÁNDEZ等^[50]采用常规机械共混法制备功能化石墨烯片/NR复合材料,填料与橡胶之间强烈的相互作用加速了复合材料的交联反应,提高了复合材料的电导率,同时对复合材料的力学性能有重要影响。这种方法成本低,工艺流程简单,但石墨烯分散程度可控性不强。

采用上述3种方法将石墨烯加入NR中,可以明显改善石墨烯的分散均匀度,但石墨烯与NR基本上都属于物理混合,石墨烯与NR的界面相互作用和结合度远未达到预期。因此,有必要同时提高石墨烯的分散性及石墨烯与NR的结合度。S. S. SIRIPAK等^[51]在制备还原氧化石墨烯(RGO)/NR复合材料时发现,随着RGO用量的增大,RGO/NR复合材料的空隙率增大,同时RGO在复合材料表面团聚的现象显著增加,导致RGO的补强效果降低。J. WANG等^[52]用溶液混合法制备了RGO/炭黑/NR复合材料,在改性石墨烯质量分数从0增大到1%时,RGO/炭黑/NR复合材料的拉伸强度保持率和拉断伸长率保持率增大,耐热老化性能提高,但改性石墨烯质量分数增大至2%时,RGO/炭黑/NR复合材料的耐热老化性能呈下降趋势。

2 石墨烯与NR的化学聚合

石墨烯与NR能否发生化学聚合是必须重视的问题,填料-橡胶的相互作用是决定复合材料最终性能的重要因素,但其相关的报道较少。L. P. LIM等^[19]在不使用可能影响NR稳定性的强还原剂或其他还原剂的情况下,实现了GO的还原,并且用原位聚合法制得了RGO/NR复合材料,其传热系数可增大36%;RGO/NR复合材料的物理性能和耐热性能同时改善,能够用于生产避孕套、手套和探针盖等薄膜制品,拓展了NR的应用领域。X. D. SHE等^[53]研究表明:无机填料/聚合物纳米复合材料的性能主要取决于无机填料与聚合物的界面相互作用,在NR分子链中引入环氧基团和羟基,将含氧基团锚定在GO表面,可增强GO与NR的界面相互作用;环氧化天然橡胶(ENR)以氢键相互作用为驱动力,可抑制GO片层的重新堆积和聚

集,使GO在ENR基体内均匀分散,ENR与GO之间形成的氢键界面对ENR基体有明显的增强作用。E. KONG等^[54]通过热老化试验对石墨烯/NR复合材料的使用寿命进行了预测,结果表明:随着石墨烯用量的增大,石墨烯/NR复合材料的活化能先逐渐增大;石墨烯用量为3份时,石墨烯/NR复合材料在20 °C下的使用寿命最长,为14.5年;石墨烯用量进一步增大到5份时,石墨烯/NR复合材料的活化能减小,20 °C下的使用寿命仅为4.92年。L. Y. WANG等^[55]采用自交联法制备GO/NR复合薄膜,自交联作用不仅提高了GO/NR复合薄膜的交联密度,而且增强了GO与NR基体之间的界面相互作用。

石墨烯/NR复合材料具有大的界面作用和一定聚合度,其力学性能优异,同时表现出了良好的耐老化性能,但石墨烯改善NR的耐老化机理尚未有研究报道。丁玲等^[6]在采用紫外光研究NR耐老化机理时发现,NR老化过程可能发生了氧化反应而使其分子主链断裂,生成了复杂的低分子含氧化合物,而聚异戊二烯单元上的键能(离解能)低是NR容易老化的主要原因。NR分子结构中共含有3种 α -H键,离解能分别为351.6、335.7和322.7 $\text{kJ} \cdot \text{mol}^{-1}$,推测老化反应首先从离解能最小的 α -H键开始,即其先被活化,随后发生氧化反应生成醛和酮等氧化产物,同时C=C键被加成,烯氢含量减少。该研究还表明:NR自然老化与紫外光老化得到的老化产物相似,即NR在紫外光照下可以产生氢自由基和羟基自由基等,而GO表面富含羧基、羟基及环氧基团等,在适合条件下两者发生化学接枝聚合反应;NR自然老化的过程中同样会产生氢自由基和羟基自由基等,GO/NR复合材料中GO表面未接枝的活性基团会与NR的活性基团发生接枝聚合反应,从而使GO/NR复合材料具有老化自修复功能。但经改性或团聚态的GO表面活性基团有效位点数量被限制,与NR自主接枝的几率被大大降低,缺乏对NR的老化修复功能。

3 光化学调控石墨烯-NR聚合结构的可行性

拓扑结构是决定聚物理化性能的重要因

素,控制聚合物拓扑结构对提高材料性能具有关键作用^[56]。光催化是一种有效调控的“多样化”可控自由基聚合方法^[57],目前尚没有光化学调控NR聚合物结构的研究报道。超分子聚合物网络是一种由聚合物通过可逆的非共价键相互连接而成的网络结构,拥有良好的刺激响应性、自修复性以及形状记忆性等传统材料不具备的性能,因此受到了越来越多的关注。为了构筑超分子聚合物网络结构,研究人员可以将氢键、 π - π 堆积以及主客体作用等非共价键作用力引入到超分子网络中,以提高聚合物的强度、加工性能以及与溶剂的相容性等。

西安交通大学材料学院张明明^[58]在前期构筑的荧光金属大环的基础上,提出一种利用荧光金属大环交联聚合物形成聚合物网络的策略,如图1所示。这类超分子聚合物网络很好地保持了金属大环的荧光性能和抗菌性能,而且由于聚合物的引入,提高了其水溶性以及生物利用率。

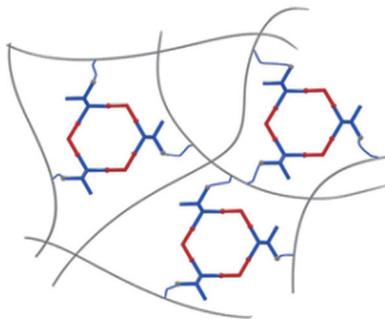


图1 荧光金属大环交联超分子聚合物网络结构
Fig. 1 Network structure of fluorescent metal macrocyclic cross-linked supramolecular polymer

复旦大学高分子科学系、聚合物分子工程国家重点实验室研究了有机光催化剂调控的“多样化”可控自由基聚合(见图2)^[59]。该方法能够从相同的原料组合出发,对氟聚合物的分子拓扑结构[线性、(超)支化]进行多样化定制,聚合物的相对分子质量可调、相对分子质量分布窄、链末端保真度高。通过后续扩链可制备刷状、项链状、拖把状等拓扑结构分子的氟聚合物。“多样化”可控聚合自由基聚合的优势包括:(1)产物复杂化、路线简单化;(2)可为不同的分子拓扑结构安置“休眠”位点,有助于后续丰富聚合物的分子结构;(3)可提供化学成分更加相似而分子拓扑结构不同的产



图2 有机光催化剂调控的“多样化”可控自由基聚合
Fig. 2 Diversified controllable free radical polymerization regulated by organic photocatalysts

物,有助于深入探索聚合物的分子结构对性能的影响。

4 结语

(1) 石墨烯添加到NR中,可以提高NR的力学性能、热性能、导电性能和耐老化性能,且其补强效果优于炭黑。

(2) 石墨烯在NR中的分散性及与NR的界面相互作用是影响其补强效果的关键因素,好的分散程度和大的界面作用更能充分发挥石墨烯对NR的补强作用。

(3) 石墨烯与NR的化学结合对提高其补强作用非常重要,是石墨烯/NR复合材料的重点研究方向之一。

(4) GO表面具有羧基、羟基和环氧基等含氧活性基团,NR在紫外光老化或自然老化的过程中也会产生活性基团,在适合条件下,GO与NR之间可以直接发生接枝聚合反应,从而最大程度地增大二者的界面作用。

(5) NR自然老化与紫外光老化的老化产物相似,老化过程中都会产生氢自由基和羟基自由基,这些活性基团与GO表面的含氧基团发生接枝聚合反应,因而GO/NR复合材料具有老化自修复功能。

(6) 光催化剂调控的“多样化”可控自由基聚合可以调控拓扑结构超分子聚合物网络结构,使其具有良好的刺激响应性、自修复性以及形状记忆性等。

基于以上背景,GO原位光化学接枝聚合NR,即在紫外光作用下NR产生自由基,GO与NR直接发生化学键合,不需要中间体桥接,GO与NR之间的界面作用直接增强,且GO接枝的同时其在NR中的分散性提高,从而使GO达到最佳补强效果,这是可行的研究方向。

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Research Progress of NR Reinforced by Doping Graphene

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Abstract: The research progress of natural rubber (NR) reinforced by doping graphene was summarized. The addition of graphene to NR could improve the mechanical properties, thermal properties, electrical conductivity and aging resistance of NR. The dispersion of graphene in NR and the interfacial interaction between graphene and NR were the key factors affecting the reinforcement effect of graphene. The chemical binding of graphene with NR was very important to improve its reinforcement effect. Graphene oxide (GO) had oxygen–containing active groups on its surface, which under suitable conditions could react with the active groups on the NR macromolecules generated in the process of ultraviolet aging or natural aging. The grafting reaction between GO and NR could enhance the interfacial interaction and enable the self–healing function of the GO/NR composites. The diversified controllable free radical polymerization by photocatalyst could regulate the network structure of supramolecular polymer, so that it had good stimulus–response characteristics, self–healing ability and shape memory property.

Key words: NR; graphene; composite; doping; reinforcement