



# **MODIFICATION OF ACTIVATED SLUDGE SYSTEM FOR OPTIMUM REMOVAL OF NUTRIENTS**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Engineering  
Ain Shams University for the Fulfillment  
of the Requirement of Ph. Degree  
in Civil Engineering

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**(SANITARY ENGINEERING)**

by  
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## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this work to who suffered to educate,  
prepare, build capacity and help myself to be as I am,

**TO MY MOTHER AND MY FATHER**

Also thanks

**TO MY WIFE**

for her encouragement and support to complete this work

## STATEMENT

This dissertation is submitted to Ain Shams University, Faculty of Engineering for the degree of Ph.D in Civil Engineering.

The work included in this thesis was carried out by the author in the department of Public Works, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University, from September 2008 to January 2014.

No part of the thesis has been submitted for a degree or a qualification at any other University or Institution.

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others

Date: - ---/-- /2014

Signature: - -----

Name: - ***MOSTAFA MOAWED MOSTAFA GAD***

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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## ABSTRACT

**NAME :- MOSTAFA MOAWED MOSTAFA**

**Title :- “MODIFICATION OF ACTIVATED SLUDGE SYSTEM FOR OPTIMUM REMOVAL OF NUTRIENTS”.**

**Faculty** : Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University

**Specialty** : Civil Eng., Public Works, Sanitary Engineering

**Summary** :

The experiment has been performed in order to investigate the effect of using contact stabilization activated sludge as an application of Enhancing Biological Phosphorous Removal (EBPR) by using contact tank as a phosphorus uptake zone and using thickening tank as a phosphorus release zone.

The study involved the construction of pilot plant which setup in Quhafa Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) included contact, final sedimentation, stabilization and thickening tanks respectively with two returns sludge in this system one of them to contact tank and another to stabilization tank. Results showed the removal efficiencies of COD, BOD<sub>5</sub> and TP for this pilot plant with the range of 91%, 92 % and 85 % respectively during the first stage by effecting of 3mg/l influent TP, but during the second stage were with the range of 91%, 93% and 83% respectively by effecting of 5mg/l influent TP and 91%,92% and 83% for COD,BOD<sub>5</sub> and TP respectively under the effect of 8mg/l influent TP during the third stage.

Finally the mechanism of this pilot plant depends on the Removal of the phosphorus from the domestic wastewater as a concentrated TP solution form supernatant above the thickening zone not through waste sludge like traditional systems.

**Keywords:** Enhancement Biological Phosphorus Removal (EBPR); contact stabilization; activated sludge; phosphorus Accumulating Organisms (PAO), poly- $\beta$ -hydroxyalkanoates (PHA) and total phosphorus (TP).

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
COVER	i
THESIS APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION	iii
STATEMENT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
ABSTRACT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
 <b><u>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</u></b>	
1.1 GENERAL	1
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF CURRENT RESEARCH	2
1.3 PLAN OF WORK	2
1.4 THESIS ORGANIZATION	3
 <b><u>CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW</u></b>	
2.1 INTRODUCTION	5
2.2 PHOSPHORUS SOURCES AND ITS STRUCTURE IN MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER	5
2.3 BASICS OF PHOSPHORUS SOURCE CONTROL	7
2.4 PHOSPHORUS COMPOUNDS IN WATER ENVIRONMENT	8
2.5 PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL - PROCESS SCHEMES	8
2.5.1 GROUPS OF PROCESS SCHEMES	9
2.5.1.1 CHEMICAL PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL	9
2.5.1.2 BIOLOGICAL PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL	10
2.6 PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL BY CHEMICAL PRECIPITATION	10
2.6.1 PRINCIPLES OF THE PROCESS	11
2.6.2 CHEMICALS APPLIED	13
2.6.2.1 PRECIPITATION WITH LIME	14
2.6.2.2 PRECIPITATION WITH IRON SALTS	15
2.6.2.3 PRECIPITATION OF PHOSPHORUS WITH ALUMINUM SULFATE	17
2.6.3 PROCESS CONFIGURATION	18
2.7 BIOLOGICAL PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL	20
2.7.1 MICROORGANISMS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS	21
2.8 ENHANCED BIOLOGICAL PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL	

	(EBPR)	22
2.8.1	BASIC THEORY	22
2.8.2	PROCESS CONFIGURATIONS	27
2.8.2.1	A/O (PHOREDOX)	27
2.8.2.2	A <sup>2</sup> /O (3-STAGE MODIFIED BARDENPHO)	28
2.8.2.3	MODIFIED BARDENPHO (5-STAGE PROCESS)	28
2.8.2.4	UCT (UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN)	29
2.8.2.5	MODIFIED UCT	29
2.8.2.6	VIP (VIRGINIA INITIATIVE PLANT)	30
2.8.2.7	JOHANNESBURG (JHB) PROCESS	31
2.8.2.8	PHOSTRIP	31
2.8.2.9	BIO-DENIPHO	32
2.9	MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE OF BIOLOGICAL PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL	34
2.9.1	ANAEROBIC CONDITIONS	34
2.9.2	PHOSPHORUS CONCENTRATION IN A SECONDARY EFFLUENT	34
2.9.3	COMPOSITION OF INCOMING WASTEWATER	35
2.9.4	AVAILABILITY OF EASILY BIODEGRADABLE CARBON SOURCES	35
2.9.5	SOLIDS DETENTION TIME (SDT, SRT)	37
2.9.6	DISSOLVED OXYGEN CONCENTRATION	37
2.9.7	TEMPERATURE	37
2.10	FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL MANAGEMENT	38
2.10.1	PHOSPHORUS IN DETERGENTS AND AS FOOD ADDITIVES	38
2.10.2	IMPROVED WASTEWATER TREATMENT	39
2.10.3	DIVERSION OF WASTEWATER STREAMS	40
2.10.4	IMPROVED SLUDGE HANDLING MANAGEMENT	40
 <b><u>CHAPTER III: MATERIALS AND METHODS</u></b>		
3.1	INTRODUCTION	43
3.2	RESEARCH PROJECT LOCATION	44
3.3	REGIONAL CONDITIONS	44
3.4	EXPERIMENTAL WORK PLAN	45
3.5	LOCATION AND OPERATION CONDITIONS	46
3.6	MODEL DESCRIPTION	46
3.6.1	CONTACT TANK (AEROBIC ZONE)	46
3.6.2	FINAL SEDIMENTATION TANK	48
3.6.3	STABILIZATION TANK	49
3.6.4	SLUDGE THICKENING TANK	50



3.7	FEEDING SYSTEM ARRANGEMENT	51
3.8	EXPERIMENTAL PROTOCOL	52
3.8.1	STARTUP PERIOD	52
3.8.2	FIRST STAGE (3MG/L TP CONCENTRATION)	53
3.8.3	SECOND STAGE – (5MG/L TP CONCENTRATION)	54
3.8.4	THIRD STAGE – (8MG/L TP CONCENTRATION)	54
3.8.5	SAMPLES COLLECTION	54
3.9	MEASUREMENT	54
3.9.1	TOTAL SUSPENDED SOLIDS (TSS) AND VOLATILE SUSPENDED SOLIDS (VSS)	55
3.9.2	CHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND (COD)	56
3.9.3	BIOLOGICAL OXYGEN DEMAND (BOD <sub>5</sub> )	57
3.9.4	TOTAL PHOSPHATE (TP)	57
3.9.5	SOLUBLE ANION PO <sup>-3</sup> <sub>4</sub>	59

#### **CHAPTER IV: RESULTS**

4.1	INTRODUCTION	60
4.2	STARTUP PERIOD AND 1 <sup>ST</sup> STAGE OF OPERATION	60
4.2.1	INFLUENT WASTEWATER CHARACTERISTICS	60
4.2.2	EFFLUENT TREATED WATER CHARACTERISTICS	62
4.2.3	OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE	63
4.2.4	CONTACT TANK PERFORMANCE	65
4.2.5	FINAL SEDIMENTATION TANK PERFORMANCE	66
4.2.6	STABILIZATION TANK PERFORMANCE	67
4.2.7	THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE	67
4.3	EXPERIMENT 2 <sup>ND</sup> STAGE OF OPERATION	69
4.3.1	INFLUENT WASTEWATER CHARACTERISTICS	69
4.3.2	EFFLUENT TREATED WATER CHARACTERISTICS	70
4.3.3	OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE	71
4.3.4	CONTACT TANK PERFORMANCE	73
4.3.5	FINAL SEDIMENTATION TANK PERFORMANCE	74
4.3.6	STABILIZATION TANK PERFORMANCE	74
4.3.7	THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE	75
4.4	EXPERIMENT 3 <sup>RD</sup> STAGE OF OPERATION	77
4.4.1	INFLUENT WASTEWATER CHARACTERISTICS	77
4.4.2	EFFLUENT TREATED WATER CHARACTERISTICS	78
4.4.3	OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE	79
4.4.4	CONTACT TANK PERFORMANCE	81
4.4.5	FINAL SEDIMENTATION TANK PERFORMANCE	81
4.4.6	STABILIZATION TANK PERFORMANCE	82
4.4.7	THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE	82

## **CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION**

<b>5.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>START UP PERIOD AND 1<sup>ST</sup> STAGE</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>5.2.1</b>	<b>REACTOR OPERATION</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>5.2.2.</b>	<b>OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>5.2.2.1</b>	<b>ORGANIC MATTER REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>5.2.2.2</b>	<b>PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>5.2.2.3</b>	<b>INFLUENT AND EFFLUENT PH</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>5.2.3</b>	<b>CONTACT TANK PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>5.2.4</b>	<b>THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>EXPERIMENT 2<sup>ND</sup> STAGE</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>5.3.1</b>	<b>REACTOR OPERATION</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>5.3.2.</b>	<b>OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>5.3.2.1</b>	<b>ORGANIC MATTER REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>5.3.2.2</b>	<b>PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>5.3.2.3</b>	<b>INFLUENT AND EFFLUENT PH</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>5.3.3</b>	<b>THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5.4</b>	<b>EXPERIMENT 3<sup>RD</sup> STAGE</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5.4.1</b>	<b>REACTOR OPERATION</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>5.4.2.</b>	<b>OVERALL SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>5.4.2.1</b>	<b>ORGANIC MATTER REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>5.4.2.2</b>	<b>PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>5.4.2.3</b>	<b>INFLUENT AND EFFLUENT PH</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>5.4.3</b>	<b>THICKENER TANK PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<b>EFFECT OF VARIABLE INFLUENT TP ON THE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>5.5.1</b>	<b>COD INFLUENT / EFFLUENT REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>5.5.2</b>	<b>BOD<sub>5</sub> INFLUENT / EFFLUENT REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>5.5.3</b>	<b>TP INFLUENT / EFFLUENT REMOVAL EFFICIENCY</b>	<b>99</b>

## **CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.3</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>102</b>
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## **LIST OF FIGURES**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>Figure 2-1.</b> The reactions under anaerobic conditions occurring in PAOs	23
<b>Figure 2-2.</b> The reactions under aerobic (or anoxic) conditions occurring in PAOs	24
<b>Figure 2-3.</b> The influence of anaerobic and aerobic conditions over constituents of liquid and cell	24
<b>Figure 2-4.</b> The reactions under anaerobic conditions occurring in GAOs	26
<b>Figure 2-5.</b> The A/O process	27
<b>Figure 2-6.</b> The A <sup>2</sup> /O process	28
<b>Figure 2-7.</b> The 5-stage modified Bardenpho process	28
<b>Figure 2-8.</b> The UCT process	29
<b>Figure 2-9.</b> The Modified UCT process	30
<b>Figure 2-10.</b> The VIP process	30
<b>Figure 2-11.</b> The Johannesburg process	31
<b>Figure 2-12.</b> The PhoStrip process	32
<b>Figure 2-13.</b> The Bio-denipho process	33
<b>Figure 3-1.</b> Location of pilot plan (A: layout of Quhafa WWTP - B: location of setup model	44
<b>Figure 3-2.</b> Schematic diagram for pilot plant	46
<b>Figure 3-3.</b> Contact tank (cross sections)	47
<b>Figure 3-4.</b> Sedimentation tank (photo / cross sections)	48
<b>Figure 3-5.</b> Stabilization tank (cross sections)	49
<b>Figure 3-6.</b> Thickening tank (cross sections).	50
<b>Figure 3-7.</b> Feeding system schematic layout	52
<b>Figure 3-8.</b> Schematic diagram for pilot plant arrangement	53
<b>Figure 4-1.</b> Influent wastewater pH.	60
<b>Figure 4-2.</b> Influent wastewater COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	61
<b>Figure 4-3.</b> Influent wastewater total phosphorus.	61
<b>Figure 4-4.</b> Effluent treated water pH.	62
<b>Figure 4-5.</b> Treated water COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	62
<b>Figure 4-6.</b> Effluent treated water TP.	63
<b>Figure 4-7.</b> COD removal efficiency.	63
<b>Figure 4-8.</b> BOD removal efficiency.	64
<b>Figure 4-9.</b> TP removal efficiency.	64
<b>Figure 4-10.</b> Influent and effluent pH.	65
<b>Figure 4-11.</b> TP inside contact tank and effluent treated water TP.	65
<b>Figure 4-12.</b> Solids concentrations inside contact tank.	66
<b>Figure 4-13.</b> Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the	66

	bottom of FST.	
<b>Figure 4-14.</b>	Solids concentrations inside stabilization tank.	67
<b>Figure 4-15.</b>	Supernatant TP.	67
<b>Figure 4-16.</b>	Supernatant COD and BOD.	68
<b>Figure 4-17.</b>	Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the bottom of thickener tank.	68
<b>Figure 4-18.</b>	Influent wastewater COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	69
<b>Figure 4-19.</b>	Influent wastewater total phosphorus.	70
<b>Figure 4-20.</b>	Effluent treated water COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	70
<b>Figure 4-21.</b>	Effluent treated water TP.	71
<b>Figure 4-22.</b>	COD removal efficiency.	71
<b>Figure 4-23.</b>	BOD removal efficiency.	72
<b>Figure 4-24.</b>	TP removal efficiency.	72
<b>Figure 4-25.</b>	Influent and effluent pH.	73
<b>Figure 4-26.</b>	Solids concentrations inside contact tank.	73
<b>Figure 4-27.</b>	Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the bottom of FST.	74
<b>Figure 4-28.</b>	Solids concentrations inside stabilization tank.	74
<b>Figure 4-29.</b>	Supernatant TP.	75
<b>Figure 4-30.</b>	Supernatant COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	75
<b>Figure 4-31.</b>	Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the bottom of thickener tank.	76
<b>Figure 4-32.</b>	Influent wastewater COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	77
<b>Figure 4-33.</b>	Influent wastewater total phosphorus.	77
<b>Figure 4-34.</b>	Effluent treated water COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	78
<b>Figure 4-35.</b>	Effluent treated water TP.	78
<b>Figure 4-36.</b>	COD removal efficiency.	79
<b>Figure 4-37.</b>	BOD removal efficiency.	79
<b>Figure 4-38.</b>	TP removal efficiency.	80
<b>Figure 4-39.</b>	Influent and effluent pH.	80
<b>Figure 4-40.</b>	Solids concentrations inside contact tank.	81
<b>Figure 4-41.</b>	Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the bottom of FST.	81
<b>Figure 4-42.</b>	Solids concentrations inside stabilization tank.	82
<b>Figure 4-43.</b>	Supernatant TP.	82
<b>Figure 4-44.</b>	Supernatant COD and BOD <sub>5</sub> .	83
<b>Figure 4-45.</b>	Solids concentrations inside sludge layer at the bottom of thickener tank.	83

## **LIST OF TABLES**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>Table 2-1.</b> Phosphorus compound structure in domestic wastewater.	6
<b>Table 2-2.</b> Design parameters for biological phosphorus removal processes	33
<b>Table 3-1.</b> The physical and chemical characteristics of raw waste water in Quhafa WWTP	45
<b>Table 5-1.</b> Dimensions and actual retention times of the different tanks	85
<b>Table 5-2.</b> Comparison between Values of Influent & effluent COD removal efficiency	97
<b>Table 5-3.</b> Comparison between Values of Influent & effluent BOD <sub>5</sub> removal efficiency	98
<b>Table 5-4.</b> Comparison between Values of Influent & effluent TP removal efficiency	99



# CHAPTER (1)

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General

Biological phosphorus removal from wastewater is based on the enrichment of activated sludge with phosphate-accumulating organisms (PAOs). To achieve a phosphorus-removing bacterial population in an activated sludge system, exposure of sludge to alternating anaerobic and aerobic (or anoxic) conditions is necessary. Under anaerobic conditions, P removing bacteria convert volatile fatty acids (VFAs) synthesized in the zone by fermenters to polyhydroxybutyrate (PHB) which is stored intracellularly. Under aerobic conditions, stored PHB is used to generate cell growth, poly-P synthesis and glycogen formation and maintenance, resulting in the uptake of phosphate.

The dominant bacteria in the activated sludge system are aerobic heterotrophs that degrade and eventually mineralize organic compounds present in wastewater to carbon dioxide and water. It is the small size of bacteria and their resultant large surface area to volume ratio which makes them efficient in terms of nutrient and catabolic exchange. Heterotrophic bacterial populations remain relatively stable throughout the plant with various environments in the three zones allowing different bacteria to dominate in terms of metabolic activity.

Several early studies have shown that the removal and release of phosphorus within sludge are the results of the dominance of a single genus of bacteria known as *Acinetobacter* spp. and more specifically a single species, *Acinetobacter calcoaceticus*. *Acinetobacter* spp are able to accumulate more phosphate than is required for cell synthesis; the so-called **luxury phosphate uptake**.

*Acinetobacter* spp. are normally present in activated sludge, but in the minority due to the low growth rate. *Acinetobacter* organisms prefer VFAs, especially acetate, as a growth substrate which are present or can be produced from wastewaters in an activated sludge system. This is achieved by incorporating an anaerobic zone, mostly