

THERMOSETTING RESIN COMPOSITION

This invention relates to thermosetting resin compositions.

There are a variety of heat-resistant resins which can be used as insulating materials in order to meet the demands for greater capacity, smaller size, lighter weight, and higher degree of reliability of electronic devices and equipment as well as for better heat resistance characteristics, longer service life, and maintenance-free properties of electrical machinery and apparatus. Among these heat-resistant resins, imide resins of the addition polymerization type, such as bismaleimide resins and aromatic diamine-modified bismaleimide resins, are well known. Such bismaleimide resins have excellent heat resistance, but are not very satisfactory because of the difficulties in processing. The melting points of bismaleimides are high and their curing rates are very low. Moreover, their poor solubility in organic solvents necessitates the use of polar solvents, such as N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone and dimethylformamide, which are undesirable from the viewpoint of environmental pollution.

Furthermore, an organic peroxide such as dicumyl peroxide or benzoyl peroxide is usually added to maleimide resins for the purpose of promoting their cure. When such a resin composition is used as impregnating varnish to make prepregs, the cleavage products of the organic peroxide remaining in the prepregs may lead to a reduction in quality and performance of the finally obtained laminates and, especially in the case of copper-clad laminates, to blistering or peeling-off of the copper foil.

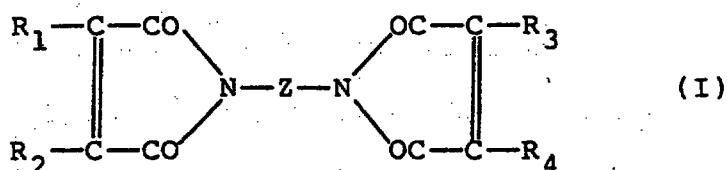
It is well known that bismaleimides form a three-dimensional network when they are heated above their melting points or subjected to the action of free radicals. It is also known that the presence of a catalytic amount of a free-radical initiator is desirable for the purpose of achieving an effective crosslinking reaction (see, for example, J. Amer. Chem. Soc., Vol. 81, P. 1187, 1959). By nature, many free-radical initiators have a low activation energy for their decomposition and are unstable and easily decomposable even at room temperature, so that special care must be taken in their storage and handling.

It is an object of this invention to provide an improved thermosetting resin composition.

The present invention provides a thermosetting resin composition comprising:

5 (a) at least one maleimide compound selected from

(i) bismaleimides having the formula



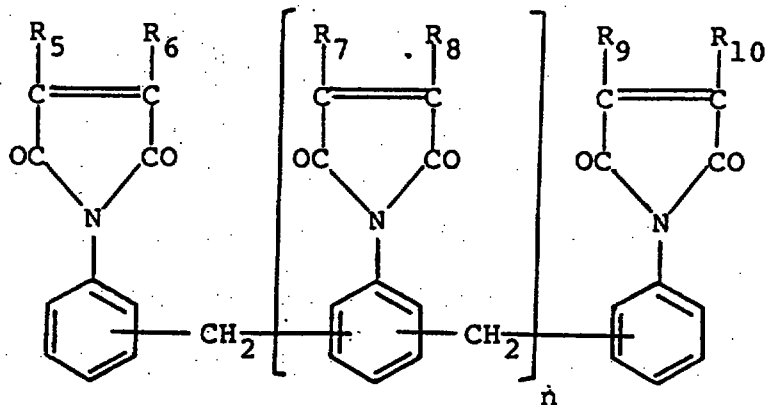
10 where R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 are the same or different from each other and are: hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals, or
15 substituted phenyl radicals having one or more substituents selected from straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, halogen atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is an aliphatic radical of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms, and, when
20 there are two or more radicals represented by R_{13} , said radicals are identical to or different from each other,



groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl groups, and cyano groups; and Z is a divalent organic radical of at

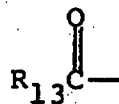
least 2 carbon atoms; and

(ii) polymaleimides having the formula



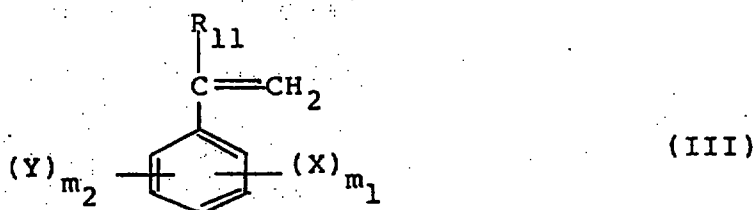
(II)

where R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 , R_9 , and R_{10} are the same or different from each other and are hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals; or substituted phenyl radicals having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms, straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined,

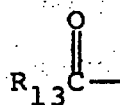


groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl groups, and cyano groups; and n is zero or a positive number; and

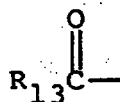
(b) at least one alkenylphenol derivative selected from compounds having the formula



5 where R_{11} is a hydrogen atom; or halogen atom; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radical; or substituted phenyl radical having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms, straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10
10 carbon atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined,

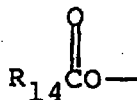


groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl
15 groups, and cyano groups; X is a hydrogen atom; or a halogen atom; or a carboxyl group; or an



group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a $R_{13}O-$
20 group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a cyano group; Y is a hydroxyl group; or a $R_{13}O-$ group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a glycidyloxy group; or an aryloxy group; or a substituted aryloxy group having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms or straight-
25 chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or a propargyloxy group; or a substituted propargyloxy group having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms or straight-chain or branched alkyl

radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or an



group in which R_{14} is an aliphatic radical of from 1 to 20
5 carbon atoms; or an aromatic radical, and if there are two
or more radicals represented by R_{14} they may be the same or
different; and m_1 and m_2 are positive integers and the sum
of $m_1 + m_2$ has the value of 5; and linear dimers thereof;
and polymers thereof.

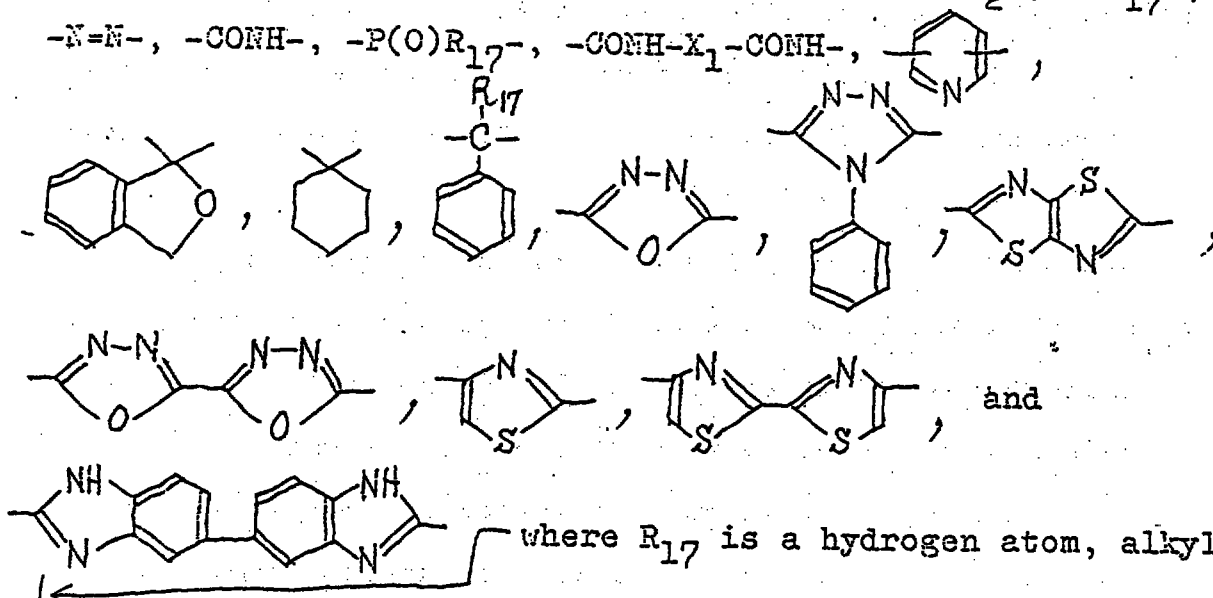
10 In addition to the aforesaid components (a) and (b),
this thermosetting resin composition can contain (c) at
least one polymerizable unsaturated compound. The thermo-
setting resin compositions consisting of components (a),
(b) and (c) have more excellent performance than those
15 consisting essentially of components (a) and (b).

In a particularly preferred thermosetting resin
composition of the invention R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 are equal
or different and are
hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or
20 branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; phenyl
radicals; and Z is either an organic radical of 2 or more
carbon atoms selected from aliphatic, alicyclic, aromatic,
or heterocyclic radicals or combinations thereof; or a
combination of an organic radical as defined above with
25 -O-, -S-, -S-S-, -CO-, -SO-, -SO₂-, -CO₂-, -N=N-, -NH-, or
-CONH-; R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 , R_9 , and R_{10} are equal or different
and are hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain

or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals; and n has a value of from 0.1 to 10; and R_{11} is a hydrogen atom; or halogen atom; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or 5 phenyl radical; X is a hydrogen or halogen atom; Y is a hydroxyl group; or a $R_{13}O-$ group wherein R_{13} is as previously defined; or a glycidyloxy group; or a $R_{14}COO-$ group wherein R_{14} is as previously defined; and m_1 and m_2 are positive integers and the sum of $m_1 + m_2$ has a value of 5.

10 Specific examples of the radical represented by Z in formula (I) include two or more phenylene or cyclohexylene radicals interconnected either by a simple valence bond or by an atom

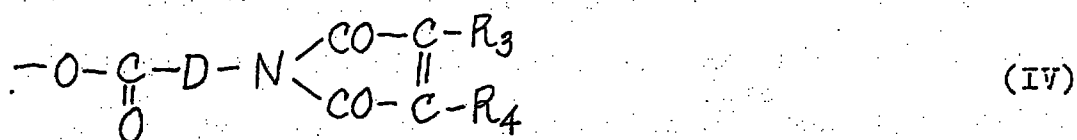
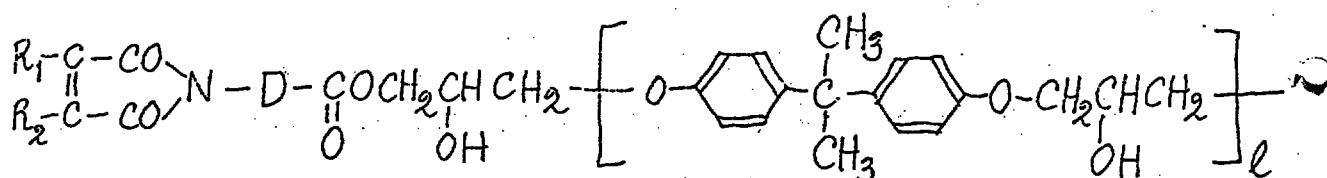
or inert ^(radical) selected, for example, from $-O-$, $-S-$, alkylene radicals of from 1 to 3 carbon atoms, $-CO-$, $-SO_2-$, $-KR_{17}-$, $-N=N-$, $-CONH-$, $-P(O)R_{17}-$, $-CONH-X_1-CONH-$,



where R_{17} is a hydrogen atom, alkyl radical of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, phenyl radical, or cyclohexyl radical, and X_1 is an alkylene radical of up to 13 carbon atoms. Each phenylene or cyclohexylene radical may have one or more substituents such as methyl radicals.

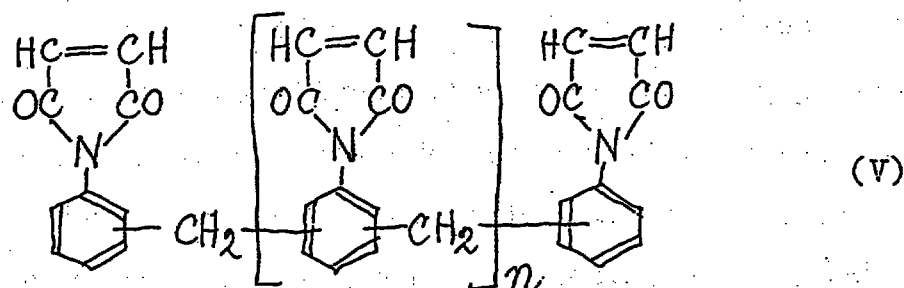
The above-defined maleimide compounds are exemplified in the following:

Specific ^(examples) of the compounds of formula (I) include N,N'-ethylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-ethylenebis(2-methylmaleimide), N,N'-trimethylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-tetramethylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-hexamethylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-1,4-cyclohexylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-m-phenylene ^(bis) maleimide; N,N'-p-phenylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-2,4-tolylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-2,6-tolylene ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-(oxydi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(oxydi-p-phenylene)bis(2-methylmaleimide), N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bis(2-methylmaleimide), N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bis(2-phenylmaleimide), N,N'-(sulfonyldi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(thiodi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(dithiodi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(sulfonyldi-m-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(o,p-isopropylidenediphenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(isopropylidenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(o,p-cyclohexylidenediphenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(cyclohexylidenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(ethylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(m-xylylene) ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-(p-xylylene) ^(bis) maleimide, N,N'-(4,4"-p-triphenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(p-phenylenedioxydi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bis(2,3-dichloromaleimide), and N,N'-(oxydi-p-phenylene)bis(2-chloromaleimide). They further include maleimide-terminated phenoxy compounds having the general formula

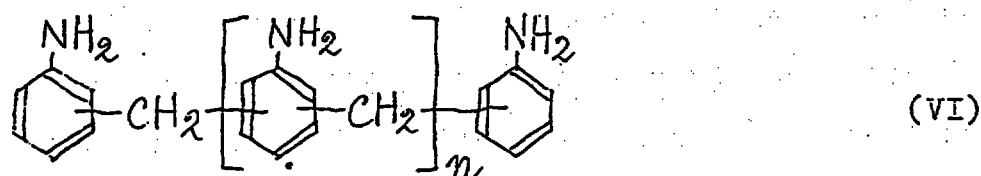


where R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 are as previously defined for formula (I), D is a divalent organic radical selected from aliphatic, alicyclic, and aromatic radicals, and l is a number having a value of from 0 to 20. Specific examples of the radical represented by D in formula (IV) include methylene, dimethylene, trimethylene, hexamethylene, m-phenylene, and p-phenylene radicals.

Specific examples of the compounds of formula (II) include polymethylene polyphenylene polymaleimides having the formula

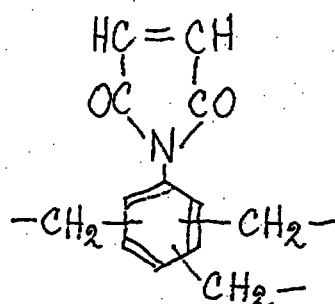


where n is a number having an average value of 0 or greater. These polymaleimides can be obtained by reacting an aniline-formaldehyde condensation product of the formula



where n is as previously defined, with maleic anhydride according to any conventional procedure. The resulting polyaleimide may contain polymeric by-products having one

or more branched structural units of the formula



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The maleimide compounds of formulas (I) and (II) may be used either alone or in combination.

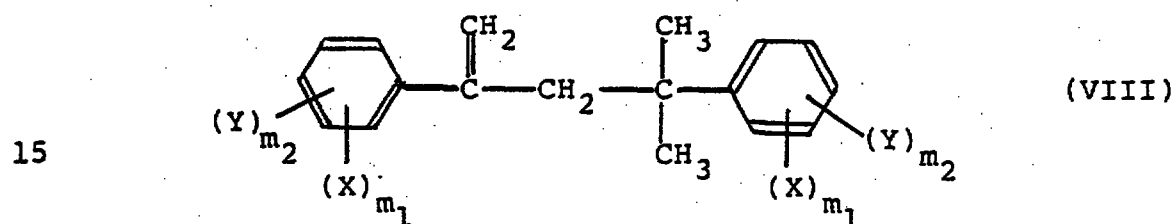


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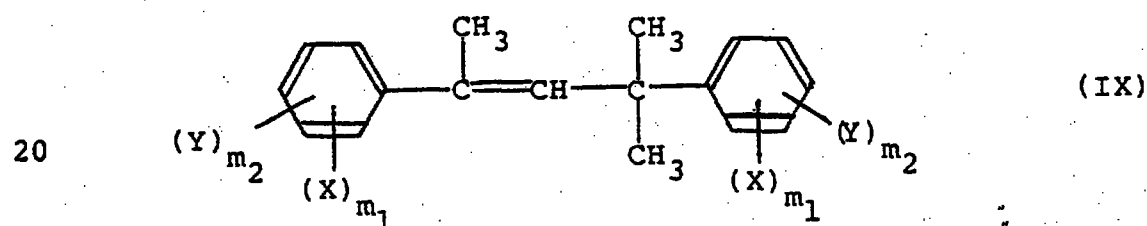
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Specific examples of the alkenylphenol derivatives include vinylphenol (o-, m-, and p-isomers), isopropenylphenol (o-, m-, and p-isomers), vinylcatechol, isopropenylcatechol, α -ethylvinylphenol, vinylphenyl acetate, isopropenylphenyl acetate, vinylphenyl benzoate, isopropenylphenyl benzoate, vinylphenyl cinnamate, isopropenylphenyl cinnamate, vinylphenyl glycidyl ether, isopropenylphenyl allyl ether, vinylphenyl propargyl ether, isopropenylphenyl propargyl ether, and the like.

10 The linear dimers of the above-defined alkenylphenyl compounds can be represented by the general formulas



and



where X, Y, m_1 and m_2 are as previously defined for formula (III). Specific examples of the linear dimers of the above-defined alkenylphenol derivatives include 4-methyl-2,4-bis-25(2-, 3-, or 4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-pentene or -2-pentene, 4-methyl-2,4-bis(dihydroxyphenyl)-1-pentene or -2-pentene, 4-methyl-2,4-bis(3,5-dichloro-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-pentene or -2-pentene, the acetic, benzoic, and cinnamic esters of the aforesaid compounds; the glycidyl, allyl, and propargyl ethers of the aforesaid compounds; and the like.

(H)

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(chemical)
The makeup of the thermosetting resin composition of the invention may vary widely according to the purpose of its use. The weight ratio of the maleimide compound to the alkenylphenyl compound can ^(generally) range from 1:1 to 300:1, the preferred range being from 5:1 to 200:1. ^(the amount of) If maleimide compound used is ^(below) the aforesaid limits, the resin composition as used in the form of a varnish will have a shortened pot life and the cured product will show a ^(lowering) of thermal stability or heat resistance, while if it is above the aforesaid limits, the resin composition will show a decrease in curing rate and will have such poor curability that the cured product may fail to achieve sufficient mechanical strength.

The thermosetting resin composition of the invention can contain a polymerizable unsaturated compound in addition to the maleimide compound and the alkenylphenyl compound. The term "polymerizable unsaturated compound" as used herein denotes vinyl monomers, radical-polymerizable unsaturated polymers, and radical-polymerizable unsaturated oligomers.

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Specific examples of the vinyl monomers include styrene, substituted styrenes having their substituent or substituents on the benzene nucleus, acrylonitrile, acrylic acid and its esters, methacrylic acid and its esters, acrylamide, glycidyl acrylate, glycidyl methacrylate, divinylbenzene, divinyltoluene, diallyl phthalate, triallyl cyanurate, tribromophenyl allyl ether, and the like. Specific examples of the radical-polymerizable unsaturated polymers and oligomers include unsaturated polyester, polybutadiene, polychloroprene, polypentadiene, and diallyl phthalate prepolymer; the foregoing polymers and oligomers modified by the addition of styrene, maleic acid, or epoxy resin; cyclic oligomers such as dicyclopentadiene and cyclododecatriene; terpenoids; and the like. These polymerizable unsaturated compounds may be used either alone or in combination.

The amount of polymerizable unsaturated compound used depends on whether it is a monomer, polymer, or oligomer. However, the ratio of the combined weight of the maleimide compound and the alkenylphenyl compound to the weight of the polymerizable unsaturated compound can generally range from 1:50 to 200:1, the preferred range being from 1:20 to 100:1. If the amount of polymerizable unsaturated compound used is above the aforesaid limits, the cured product will show a lowering of heat resistance and storage stability, while ^(if) it is below the aforesaid limits, the (fluidity of the) resin composition will be too low to exhibit good molding properties.

The thermosetting resin composition of the invention can be cured by application of heat. Although (particular) no limitation is placed on the curing temperature, the preferred range is from 30 to 300°C. It can also be cured by exposure to radiation

such as ultraviolet rays, X rays, alpha rays, beta rays, and gamma rays.

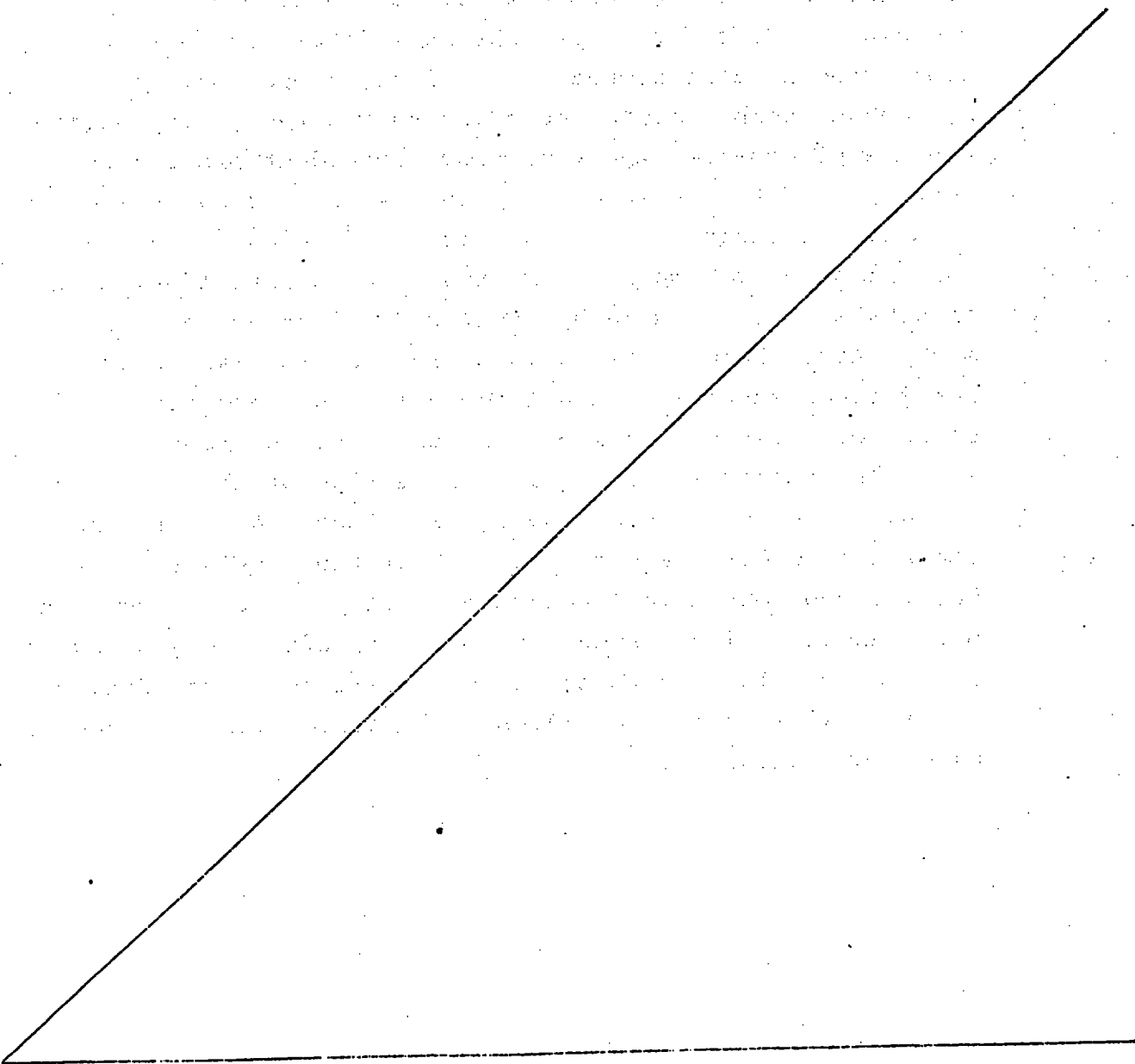
Depending on the purpose of its use, the thermosetting resin composition of the invention can be either mixed with one or more additional components or dissolved in an organic solvent. More specifically, if the resin composition is to be used as a molding material, one or more inorganic fillers such as silica, silica glass, clay, aluminum hydroxide, asbestos, glass fiber, mica, gypsum, kaolin, cement, talc, zinc white, graphite, magnesite, molybdenum disulfide, titanium white, silica sand, carbon black, barium sulfate, and calcium carbonate can be incorporated thereinto. Moreover, a conventional flame retarder such as brominated organic compounds, antimony compounds, and phosphorus compounds can be added to the resin composition for the purpose of imparting flame-retardant properties thereto. If the resin composition is to be used in the form of a solution, it can be dissolved in an organic solvent such as N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, dimethylformamide, dimethylacetamide, dimethyl sulfoxide, dioxane, acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, tetrahydrofuran, cellosolve (trade mark for 2-ethoxyethanol), methyl acetate, ethyl acetate, chloroform, benzene, toluene, xylene, and chlorobenzene.

The thermosetting resin composition of the invention can give a cured product having excellent heat resistance, storage stability, and moisture absorption resistance as well as good electrical and mechanical properties, and can bring about an improvement in operating efficiency owing to its good molding and fast-curing properties. Accordingly, it has a wide variety of industrial applications and can be used, for example, in

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the manufacture of impregnating (resins,) adhesive (s) and coatings, molding materials. Moreover, when used in the vulcanization of rubber, it can exhibit excellent crosslinking and vulcanization-accelerating effects thereby imparting improved characteristics, such as very high resistance to heat deterioration, to the vulcanized rubber. Thus, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the thermosetting resin composition of the invention is an exceptionally good material having a wide spectrum of functionality.



The present invention is further illustrated by the following examples. In these examples, all parts and percentages are by weight unless otherwise noted.

Example 1

To N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide were added varying amounts of a chemical product (commercially available under the trade name of PARMANOL 200 from Mitsui Toatsu Chemicals, Inc.) consisting of 70% of linear p-isopropenylphenol dimer, 2% of p-isopropenylphenol monomer, 4.3% of linear p-isopropenylphenol trimer, 4.5% of linear p-isopropenylphenol tetramer and higher oligomers, 1.1% of phenol, 0.9% of propylphenol, 3.5% of bisphenol A, and 13.7% of other components. These ingredients were thoroughly mixed at room temperature to form three groups of mixtures. A 1-g aliquot of each mixture was melted on an iron plate preheated to and kept at the temperature specified in Table 1, and then stirred well with a spatula to measure the time required for gelation. The results thus obtained are (summarized) in Table 1.

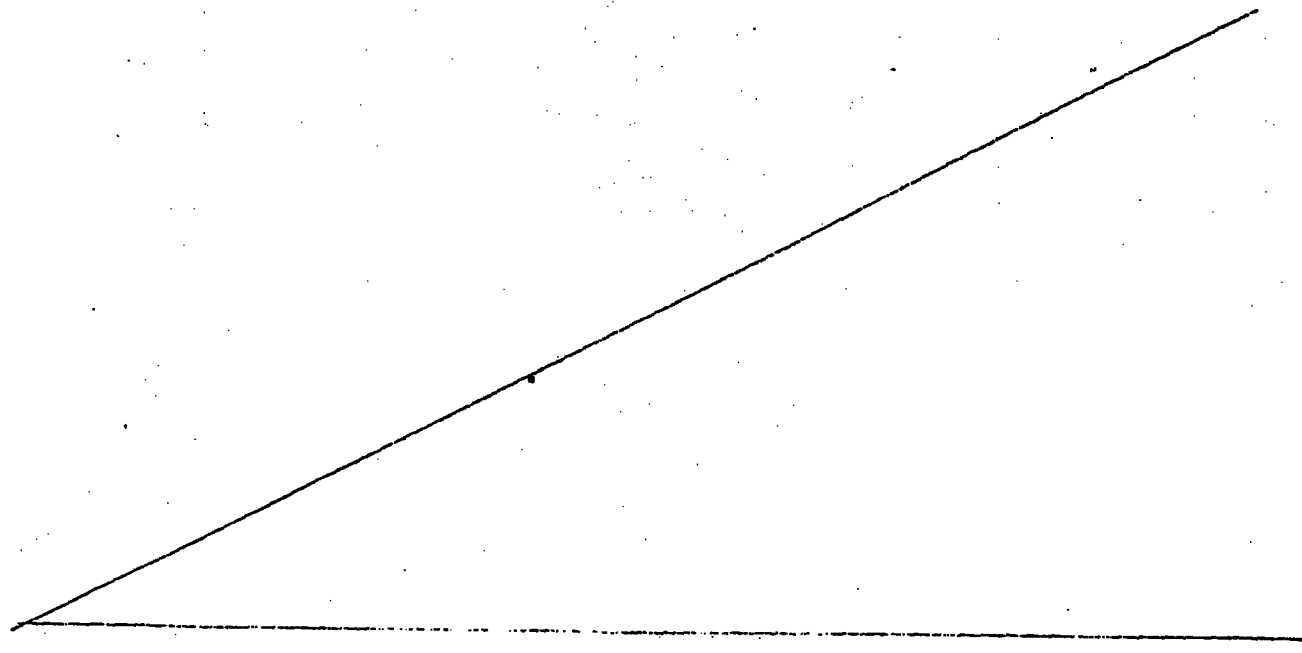


Table 1

	PARMANOL 200 (% by weight)	Bismaleimide (% by weight)	Molar Ratio of Bismale- imide to PARMANOL 200	Gelation Temperature (°C)	Gelation Time (min)
1-1	0	100	∞	165	50
1-2	10	90	6.8	"	15
1-3	20	80	3.0	"	8.5
1-4	30	70	1.8	"	5.5
1-5	40	60	1.1	"	3
1-6	50	50	0.76	"	2
2-1	0	100	∞	180	17.5
2-2	4	96	15.2	"	8
2-3	9	91	7.6	"	5
2-4	17	83	3.8	"	3
2-5	33	67	1.5	"	2.5
2-6	41	59	0.8	"	< 1
3-1	0	100	∞	200	6
3-2	10	90	6.8	"	2
3-3	20	80	3.0	"	2
3-4	30	70	1.8	"	1.7
3-5	40	60	1.1	"	1.5
3-6	50	50	0.76	"	0.8

Example 2

To 0.1 mole of N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide was added 0.2 mole of p-isopropenylphenyl acetate. These ingredients were ^(thoroughly) mixed, and a 1-g aliquot of the resulting mixture was melted on an iron plate preheated to and kept at 160°C. As a result, the gelation time was found to be 60 seconds. When used alone, the bismaleimide did not gel even after 60 minutes heating.

Example 3

The procedure of Example 2 was repeated except that the p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was replaced by p-isopropenylphenyl benzoate. As a result, the gelation time was found to be 70 seconds.

Example 4

The procedure of Example 2 was repeated except that the p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was replaced by p-isopropenylphenyl cinnamate. As a result, the gelation time was found to be 100 seconds.

Example 5

An ^(intimate mixture) of 10 g of styrene, 7 g of N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, and 1.5 g of p-isopropenylphenol was prepared. Upon heating at 120°C, it cured in 35 minutes. When styrene was used alone, little polymerization product was noted even after 3 hours' heating at that temperature. Moreover, a mixture of styrene and the aforesaid bismaleimide showed similar unsuccessful results.

Example 6

A resin composition (commercially available under the trade name of ESTAR KE7472 from Mitsui Toatsu Chemicals, Inc.)

consisting of about 55% of unsaturated polyester, about 45% of styrene, and 0.02% of hydroquinone was allowed to cure with or without an accelerator. The accelerator used was ^(a) mixture of N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide and Parmanol 200 or p-isopropenylphenol. The results thus obtained are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

	ESTAR XE7472 (g)	Bismale- imide (g)	Alkenylphenol (g)		Curing Temperature (°C)	Curing time (min)
1-1	6.0	0.8	PARMANOL 200	0.2	200	2.5
1-2	"	0.9	PARMANOL 200	0.1	"	3.5
1-3	"	-	-	-	"	>30
2-1	7.0	1.0	p-Isopropenyl- phenol	0.13	120	15
2-2	"	1.0	PARMANOL 200	0.2	"	17.5
2-3	"	-	-	-	"	>180

Example 7

The procedure of Example 2 was repeated except that the p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was replaced by p-isopropenylphenyl allyl ether. As a result, the gelation time was found to be 80 seconds.

Example 8

The procedure of Example 2 was repeated except that the p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was replaced by p-isopropenylphenyl glycidyl ether. As a result, the gelation time was found to be 70 seconds.

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Example 9

An (intimate mixture) of 10 g of liquid polybutadiene (commercially available under the trade name of NISSO-PB G-1000 from Nippon Soda Company, Limited), 10 g of styrene, 7 g of N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, and 2.0 g of p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was prepared. Upon heating at 120°C, it cured in 28 minutes.

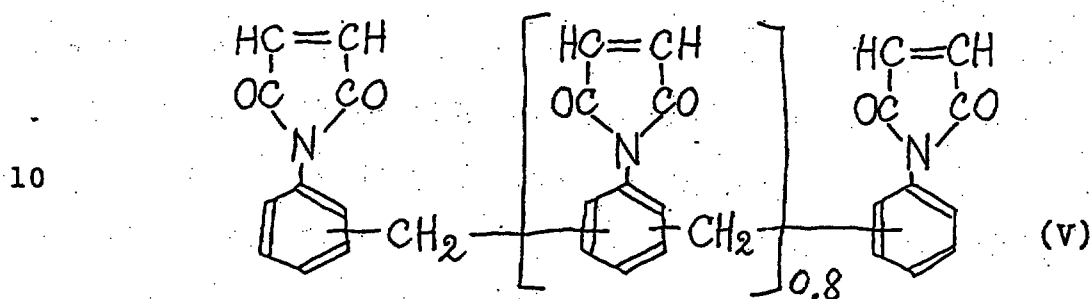
Example 10

An (intimate mixture) of 10 g of liquid polybutadiene (commercially available under the trade name of NEW POLYOIL NX-5 from Nippon Zeon Co., Ltd.), 10 g of styrene, 7 g of N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)bismaleimide, and 2.1 g of p-isopropenylphenyl acetate was prepared. Upon heating at 120°C, it cured in 34 minutes.

33

Example 11

An intimate mixture of 0.90 g of p-isopropenylphenol and 10.74 g of a polymethylene polyphenylene polymaleimide of formula (V) in which *n* had an average value of 0.8 was prepared. Thus, the aforesaid polymaleimide is represented by the formula



Upon heating at 150°C, this mixture cured in 86 seconds. When the aforesaid polymaleimide alone was heated at that temperature, the curing time was as long as 32 minutes.

With respect to the published application GB 2054618A, a divisional application No. 8315194 has been filed.



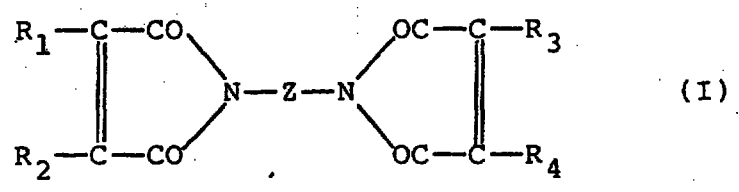
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CLAIMS:

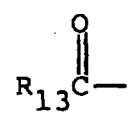
1. A thermosetting resin composition comprising:

(a) at least one maleimide compound selected from

5 (i) bismaleimides having the formula



10 where R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 are the same or different from each other and are: hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals, or
15 more substituents selected from straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, halogen atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is an aliphatic radical of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms, and, when
20 there are two or more radicals represented by R_{13} , said radicals are identical to or different from each other,

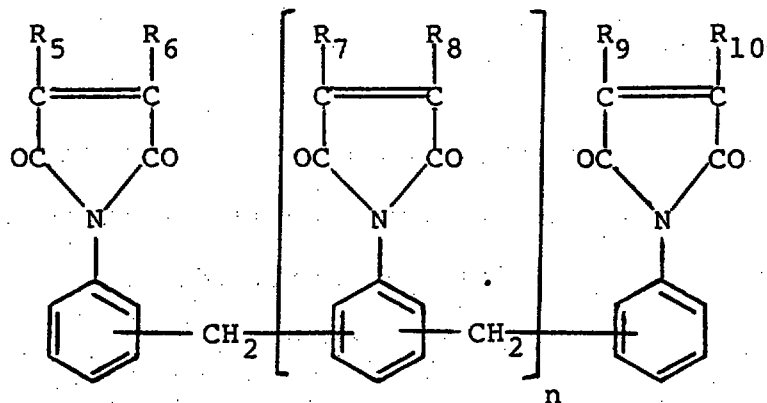


25 groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl groups, and cyano groups; and Z is a divalent organic radical of at



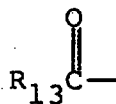
least 2 carbon atoms; and

(ii) polymaleimides having the formula



(II)

where R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 , R_9 , and R_{10} are the same or different from each other and are hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals; or substituted phenyl radicals having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms, straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined,

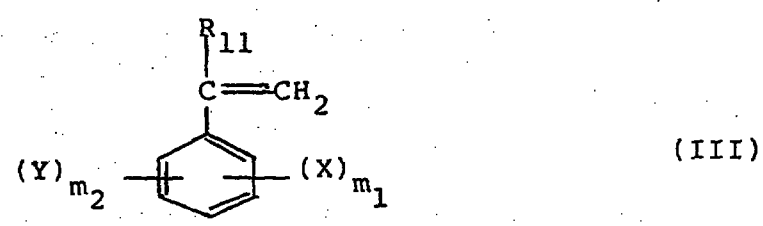


groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl groups, and cyano groups; and n is zero or a positive number; and

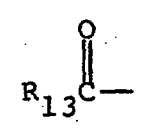
(b) at least one alkenylphenol derivative selected from compounds having the formula



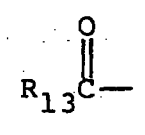
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5 where R_{11} is a hydrogen atom; or halogen atom; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radical; or substituted phenyl radical having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms, straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 10
10 carbon atoms, $R_{13}O-$ groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined,



groups in which R_{13} is as previously defined, hydroxyl
15 groups, and cyano groups; X is a hydrogen atom; or a halogen atom; or a carboxyl group; or an



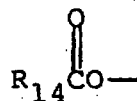
group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a $R_{13}O-$
20 group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a cyano group; Y is a hydroxyl group; or a $R_{13}O-$ group in which R_{13} is as previously defined; or a glycidyloxy group; or an aryloxy group; or a substituted aryloxy group having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms or straight-
25 chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or a propargyloxy group; or a substituted propargyloxy group having one or more substituents selected from halogen atoms or straight-chain or branched alkyl

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radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or an



group in which R_{14} is an aliphatic radical of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms; or an aromatic radical, and if there are two or more radicals represented by R_{14} they may be the same or different; and m_1 and m_2 are positive integers and the sum of $m_1 + m_2$ has the value of 5; and linear dimers thereof; and polymers thereof.

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2. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 1 wherein R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 are equal or different and are hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; phenyl radicals; and 2 is either an organic radical of 2 or more carbon atoms selected from aliphatic, alicyclic, aromatic, or heterocyclic radicals or combinations thereof; or a combination of an organic radical as defined above with -O-, -S-, -S-S-, -CO-, -SO-, -SO₂-, -CO₂-, -N=N-, -NH-, or -CONH-; R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 , R_9 , and R_{10} are equal or different and are hydrogen atoms; or halogen atoms; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radicals of from 1 to 5 carbon atoms; or phenyl radicals; and n has a value of from 0.1 to 10; and R_{11} is a hydrogen atom; or halogen atom; or straight-chain or branched alkyl radical of from 1 to 10 carbon atoms; or phenyl radical; X is a hydrogen or halogen atom; Y is a hydroxyl group; or a $\text{R}_{13}\text{O}-$ group wherein R_{13} is as



previously defined; or a glycidyloxy group; or a $R_{14}COO-$ group wherein R_{14} is as previously defined; and m_1 and m_2 are positive integers and the sum of $m_1 + m_2$ has a value of 5.

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3. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the maleimide compound is N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)-bismaleimide.

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4. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the maleimide compound is a polymaleimide in which n has a value of from 0.3 to 3.

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5. A thermosetting resin composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the alkenylphenol compound is a p-isopropenylphenol or a linear dimer thereof.

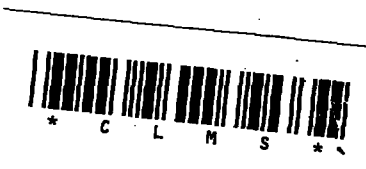
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6. A thermosetting resin composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the weight ratio of the maleimide compound to the alkenylphenol compound ranges from 1:1 to 300:1.

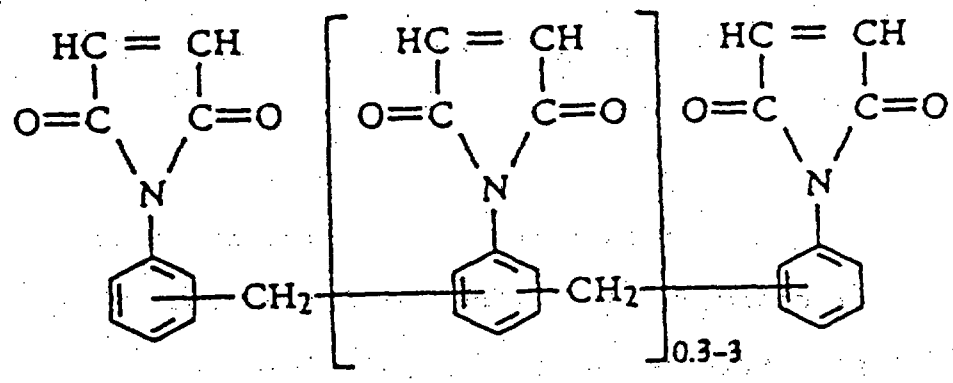
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7. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 1 wherein the maleimide compound is at least one compound selected from N,N'-(methylenedi-p-phenylene)-bismaleimide and polymaleimides having the formula

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and the alkenylphenol derivative is at least one compound selected from p-isopropenylphenol and linear dimers thereof, the weight ratio of the maleimide compound to the alkenylphenol compound ranging from 1:1 to 300:1.

8. A thermosetting resin composition according to any one of the preceding claims containing, in addition to components (a) and (b), at least one polymerizable unsaturated compound.

9. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 8 wherein the polymerizable unsaturated compound is at least one compound selected from vinyl monomers, radical-polymerizable unsaturated polymers, and radical-polymerizable unsaturated oligomers.

10. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 8 wherein the polymerizable unsaturated compound is at least one vinyl monomer selected from styrene, substituted

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styrenes, acrylonitrile, acrylic acid, acrylic esters, methacrylic acid, methacrylic esters, acrylamide, glycidyl acrylate, and glycidyl methacrylate.

5 11. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 8 wherein the polymerizable unsaturated compound is unsaturated polyester, cyclized polybutadiene, or polybutadiene having the 1,2-double bond.

10 12. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 8 wherein the ratio of the combined weight of the maleimide compound and the alkenylphenyl compound to the weight of the polymerizable unsaturated compound ranges from 1:50 to 200:1.

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13. A thermosetting resin composition according to claim 1, substantially as described herein.

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