FACULTY OF ENGINEERIN & TECHNOLOGY

TOPIC: CEMENT (L-7)

Today , it will be discussed :

❖ **Properties of Cement**

❖**The Physical Properties Of Good Cement Are Based On:**

- **Fineness** of cement.
- Soundness.
- **Consistency**.
- **Strength**.
- Setting time.
- **Heat** of hydration.
- **Loss of ignition**.
- **Bulk density**.

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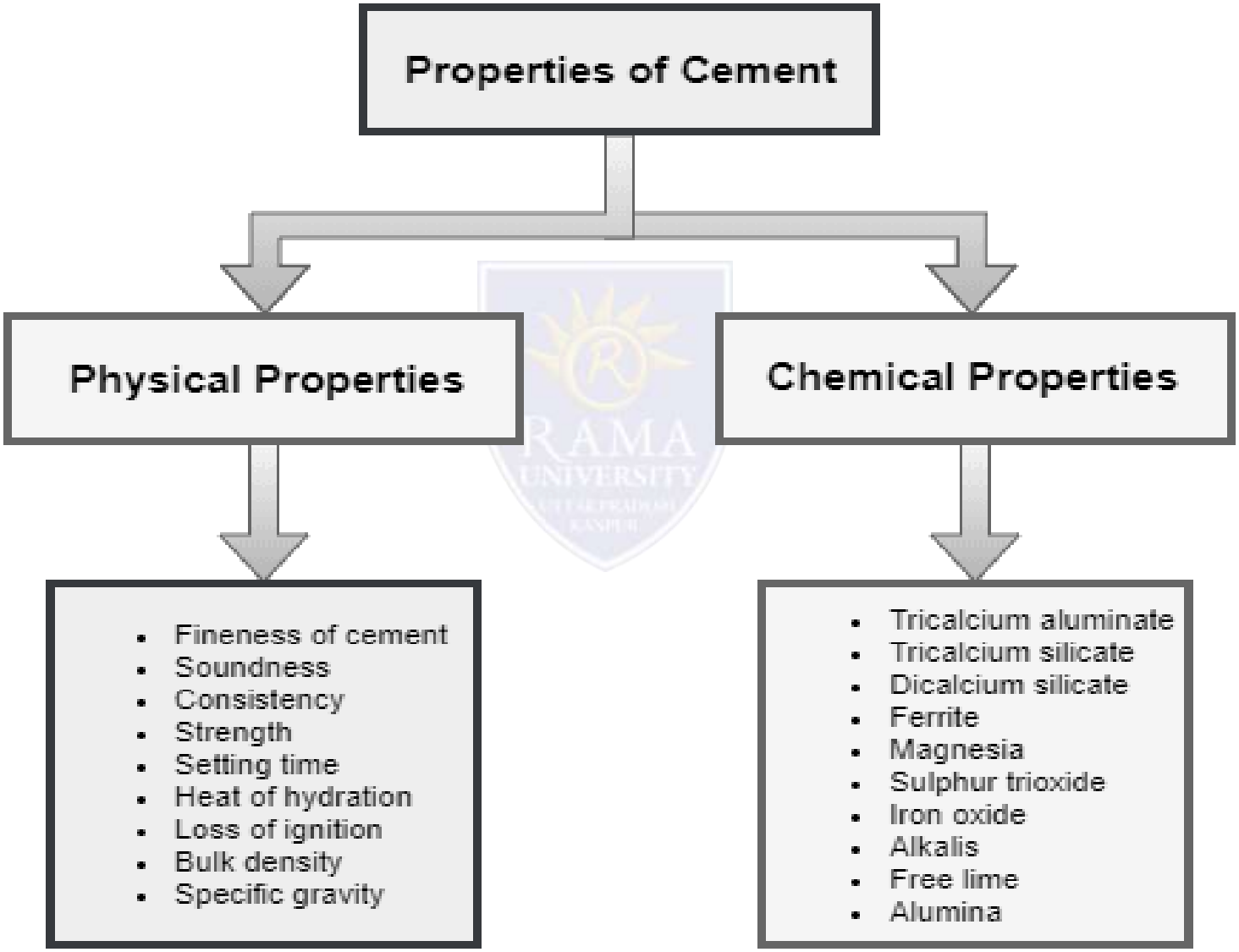

Fineness of Cement

The size of the particles of the cement is its fineness. The required fineness of good cement is achieved through grinding the clinker in the last step of cement production process. As hydration rate of cement is directly related to the cement particle size, fineness of cement is very important.

Soundness of Cement

Soundness refers to the ability of cement to not shrink upon hardening. Good quality cement retains its volume after setting without delayed expansion, which is caused by excessive free lime and magnesia.

Tests:

Unsoundness of cement may appear after several years, so tests for ensuring soundness must be able to determine that potential.

Le Chatelier Test

This method, done by using Le Chatelier Apparatus, tests the expansion of cement due to lime. Cement paste (normal consistency) is taken between glass slides and submerged in water for 24 hours at 20+1°C. It is taken out to measure the distance between the indicators and then returned under water, brought to boil in 25-30 mins and boiled for an hour. After cooling the device, the distance between indicator points is measured again. In a good quality cement, the distance should not exceed 10 mm.

Autoclave Test

Cement paste (of normal consistency) is placed in an autoclave (high-pressure steam vessel) and slowly brought to 2.03 MPa, and then kept there for 3 hours. The change in length of the specimen (after gradually bringing the autoclave to room temperature and pressure) is measured and expressed in percentage. The requirement for good quality cement is a maximum of 0.80% autoclave expansion.

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Consistency of Cement

The ability of cement paste to flow is consistency.

It is measured by Vicat Test.

In Vicat Test Cement paste of normal consistency is taken in the Vicat Apparatus. The plunger of the apparatus is brought down to touch the top surface of the cement. The plunger will penetrate the cement up to a certain depth depending on the consistency. A cement is said to have a normal consistency when the plunger penetrates 10±1 mm.

Strength of Cement

Three types of strength of cement are measured – compressive, tensile and flexural. Various factors affect the strength, such as water-cement ratio, cement-fine aggregate ratio, curing conditions, size and shape of a specimen, the manner of molding and mixing, loading conditions and age. While testing the strength, the following should be considered:

Cement mortar strength and cement concrete strength are not directly related. Cement strength is merely a quality control measure.

The tests of strength are performed on cement mortar mix, not on cement paste.

Cement gains strength over time, so the specific time of performing the test should be mentioned.

Compressive Strength

It is the most common strength test. A test specimen (50mm) is taken and subjected to a compressive load until failure. The loading sequence must be within 20 seconds and 80 seconds.

Standard tests:

Tensile strength

Though this test used to be common during the early years of cement production, now it does not offer any useful information about the properties of cement.

Flexural strength

This is actually a measure of tensile strength in bending. The test is performed in a 40 x40 x 160 mm cement mortar beam, which is loaded at its center point until failure.

Setting Time of Cement

Cement sets and hardens when water is added. This setting time can vary depending on multiple factors, such as fineness of cement, cement-water ratio, chemical content, and admixtures. Cement used in construction should have an initial setting time that is not too low and a final setting time not too high. Hence, two setting times are measured:

Initial set: When the paste begins to stiffen noticeably (typically occurs within 30-45 minutes)

Final set: When the cement hardens, being able to sustain some load (occurs below 10 hours)

Again, setting time can also be an indicator of hydration rate.

Heat of Hydration

When water is added to cement, the reaction that takes place is called hydration. Hydration generates heat, which can affect the quality of the cement and also be beneficial in maintaining curing temperature during cold weather. On the other hand, when heat generation is high, especially in large structures, it may cause undesired stress. The heat of hydration is affected most by C_3S and C_3A present in cement, and also by water-cement ratio, fineness and curing temperature. The heat of hydration of Portland cement is calculated by determining the difference between the dry and the partially hydrated cement (obtained by comparing these at 7th and 28th days).

Loss of Ignition

Heating a cement sample at 900 - 1000°C (that is, until a constant weight is obtained) causes weight loss. This loss of weight upon heating is calculated as loss of ignition. Improper and prolonged storage or adulteration during transport or transfer may lead to pre-hydration and carbonation, both of which might be indicated by increased loss of ignition.

Bulk Density

When cement is mixed with water, the water replaces areas where there would normally be air. Because of that, the bulk density of cement is not very important. Cement has a varying range of density depending on the cement composition percentage. The density of cement may be anywhere from 62 to 78 pounds per cubic foot.

Specific Gravity (Relative Density)

Specific gravity is generally used in mixture proportioning calculations. Portland cement has a specific gravity of 3.15, but other types of cement (for example, portland-blast-furnace-slag and portland-pozzolan cement) may have specific gravities of about 2.90.

Thank You