

Crystallization and Melt Behavior of Magnesium Hydroxide/Polypropylene Composites Modified by Functionalized Polypropylene

Zhidan Lin, Yixin Qiu, Kan Chen Mai

Key Laboratory for Polymeric Composites and Functional Materials of the Ministry of Education, Materials Science Institute, College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Sun Yat-sen University Guangzhou, 510275, China

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ABSTRACT: The crystallization and melting behavior of Mg(OH)₂/polypropylene (PP) composites modified by the addition of functionalized polypropylene (FPP) or acrylic acid (AA) and the formation of *in situ* FPP were investigated by DSC. The results indicated that addition of FPP increased crystallization temperatures of PP attributed to the nucleation effect of FPP. The formation of *in situ* FPP resulted in a reduced crystallization rate, melting point, and degree of crystallization because of the decreased regularity of the PP chain. For the Mg(OH)₂/PP composites, addition of Mg(OH)₂ increased the crystallization temperatures of PP attributed to a heterogeneous nucleation effect of Mg(OH)₂. Addition of FPP into Mg(OH)₂/PP composites further enhanced the crystallization temperatures of PP. It is suggested that there is an activation of FPP to the heterogeneous nucleation effect of Mg(OH)₂ surface. The addition of AA also

increased the crystallization temperatures of PP in Mg(OH)₂/PP composites, but crystallization temperatures of PP were not influenced by the AA content, a phenomenon explained by the heterogeneous nucleation effect of the Mg(OH)₂ surface activated by FPP and AA. A synergistic effect on crystallization of PP in Mg(OH)₂/PP composites further increased the crystallization temperatures of PP. However, the crystallization temperatures of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by *in situ* FPP were lower than those of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by the addition of FPP or AA. © 2004 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. *J Appl Polym Sci* 91: 3899–3908, 2004

Key words: crystallization; melt; nucleation; Mg(OH)₂/PP composites; functionalization of polymers

INTRODUCTION

Polypropylene (PP) is a kind of general plastic with excellent comprehensive characteristics. However, the high flammability of PP has limited its usefulness. Presently, halogen–antimony trioxide synergistic fire retardant and intumescent fire retardant based on phosphorous-containing materials are mainly used to reduce the inherent flammability of PP. In recent years, inorganic fire retardants such as aluminum hydroxide [Al(OH)₃] and magnesium hydroxide [Mg(OH)₂] have attracted great attention because they are acid and halogen free. However, to be effective, high filler loadings are necessary, resulting in a signif-

icant loss in mechanical properties, especially in strength and toughness.

PP composites filled by Mg(OH)₂ have been widely studied. Hornsby and Watson¹ investigated the mechanical properties of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites. Because of the difference in surface polarity, the addition of Mg(OH)₂ resulted in a significant deterioration of mechanical properties of PP, especially impact strength. Although surface treatment of Mg(OH)₂ improved the mechanical properties of PP composites, different surface treatments on Mg(OH)₂ have various effects on the mechanical properties of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites.^{2,3} Slight improvements in flexural strength and flexural modulus after treatment with silane coupling agents and some increase in impact strength after treatment with a titanate coupling agent were observed. Addition of Mg(OH)₂ treated by fatty acid derivatives resulted in a marked improvement in impact strength of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites. This significant improvement was attributed to a modification of the polymer deformation mechanism in the vicinity of the filler particles resulting in localized voiding, manifested as stress whitening. The morphology,^{4,5} size,⁶ and dispersion⁷ of Mg(OH)₂ also influenced the mechanical properties of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites. The mechanical properties of PP filled by Mg(OH)₂

Correspondence to: K. Mai (cesmkc@zsu.edu.cn).

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needles was higher than that of PP filled by $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ platelets because of the larger surface area of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ needles, leading to an increased effective contact with matrix and enhanced interaction between filler and matrix.⁴ The addition of microporous filler particles with irregular surface promoted the interfacial interaction between particles and matrix, leading to increased flexural strength, although platelet filler tended to introduce crack, resulting in decreased impact strength.⁵ For PP filled by smaller-size particles, the flexural modulus was higher than that of PP filled by larger-size particles.⁶ Generally the higher the degree of dispersion, the higher the tensile, flexural, and impact strength.⁷ On the other hand, the fire-retardant property of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites depended on the content of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$.^{8–10} With increased $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ content, an improved fire-retardant property was observed. Besides $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ content, the fire-retardant property of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites was also relative to the dispersion⁷ and surface treatment of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$.¹¹ It was found that $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ treated by magnesium stearate coupling agent significantly enhanced the flammability of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites, attributed to increasing the fuel content and lowering the viscosity of the PP by the addition of magnesium stearate. The synergistic effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ with other fire retardants was reported, such as intumescent fire retardant,¹² red phosphorous and $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$,¹³ and KCl and Na_2SnO_3 ,¹⁴ for example.

Although surface modification of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ treated by organic coupling agents enhances the mechanical properties of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites, using functionalized polymer to improve compatibility, interfacial interaction, and mechanical properties of PP blends and PP composites has been widely investigated in recent years, such as CaCO_3 /PP,^{4,15,16} mica/PP,¹⁷ talc/PP,¹⁸ halogen-antimony trioxide/PP,¹⁹ $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$ /PP,^{20–24} glass fiber/PP,²⁵ and natural fiber/PP^{26,27} composites. However, few studies^{2,3} on the effect of functionalized PP (FPP) in $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites were reported, in particular the $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites modified by the addition of FPP and the formation of *in situ* FPP.

The physical and mechanical properties of PP composites depend on crystalline morphologies of PP, which are relative to the crystallization behavior of PP. Few studies on crystallization behavior of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites were reported. Crystallization behavior of PP composites filled by $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ with two kinds of morphology were investigated by Cook and Harper.^{5,6} They found that, like mica²⁸ and CaCO_3 ,²⁹ $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ had a heterogeneous nucleation effect on PP, leading to an increase in the crystallization temperatures by 5–10°C and higher degree of crystallization. The smaller size of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ has a more significant effect on the crystallization of PP. It was found that $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ treated by ammonium stear-

ate led to a further improved nucleation rate and narrowed crystallization distribution, but too much modifier had the opposite effect on PP crystallization, resulting in a maximum degree of crystallization appearing at 3 wt % modifier content. However, the effect of FPP on crystallization behavior and melt behavior of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites has not been reported. Because of the location of additive FPP and *in situ* FPP on the interface between $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ and PP, the interaction of FPP with $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ surface will modify the $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ surface properties, accordingly changing the nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ on the crystallization behavior of PP. In this article, the effects of additive FPP and *in situ* FPP on the crystallization and melt behaviors of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites are systematically studied and discussed.

EXPERIMENTAL

Materials

Powdered PP (F401) and pelletized PP (CTS-700) were commercial products of Guangzhou Yinzhu PP (China). Chemical-grade AA was purchased from Shanghai Feida Industrial Trade (China) and used without further purification. Chemical-grade dicumyl peroxide (DCP), used as an initiator for the AA grafting reaction, was a commercial product of Shanghai Chemical Reagent Stocking and Providing Station Pool Enterprise Central Factory (China). $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ was obtained from Zhejiang Chemical Plant (China). The solvent acetone was obtained from Guangzhou Chemical Reagent Factory (China).

Preparation of composites

Preparation of FPP

The DCP and AA were dissolved in acetone and totally blended with powdered PP in a GH-10 high-speed mixing machine (Beijing Plastic Machine Shop, China). After the solvent acetone had completely evaporated, the mixture of AA and DCP was coated onto the surface of the powdered PP, and the pretreated PP was prepared. The pretreated PP was then extruded by a SHJ-53 twin-screw extruder (Nanjing Aviation Institute Xinli Plastic Machine Shop, China) at temperatures of 185–190°C, with the screw speed set at 60 rpm. The extruded products, the functionalized polypropylene (FPP), were frozen in-line in a water bath, dried, and granulated.

Preparation of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites modified by FPP

Preparation of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites modified by in situ FPP. $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$, DCP, AA, and pelletized PP were totally blended with a high-speed mixing machine and

the mixtures were then extruded by a twin-screw extruder at temperatures of 185–190°C, with the screw speed set at 60 rpm. The extruded products were granulated and designated as $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP.

Preparation of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites modified by the addition of FPP. $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$, premade FPP, and pelletized PP were totally blended with a high-speed mixing machine and the mixtures were then extruded by a twin-screw extruder at temperatures of 185–190°C, with the screw speed set at 60 rpm. The extruded products were granulated and designated as $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites modified by additive FPP.

DSC measurements

DSC measurements were made on a Perkin–Elmer DSC-7 thermal system (Perkin Elmer Cetus Instruments, Norwalk, CT) in nitrogen atmosphere with 10°C/min heating and cooling rate. The samples were heated from 50 to 220°C, held at that temperature for 3 min, and then cooled to 50°C, followed by reheating to 220°C for the second heating run. The crystallization and melting parameters were recorded from the cooling and reheating scans.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Crystallization and melting behavior of PP and PP modified by FPP

Figure 1 shows DSC cooling and heating curves of PP modified by additive FPP and PP modified by *in situ* FPP, and the crystallization and melting parameters are presented in Table I. Studies on functionalized PP^{20-24} have shown that the temperature in which the crystallization curve deviates from the baseline (T_c^o) and the peak temperature of crystallization (T_c^p) of FPP were 125.4 and 116.4°C, respectively, both lower than that of pure PP (sample M-0). However, it can be seen from Table II that the temperature at onset of crystallization (T_c^{on}) and the T_c^p of sample MF-0 prepared from PP modified by the addition of 5 phr FPP were higher than those of M-0, indicating that a small amount of FPP had a nucleation effect on PP. A broadening of the width of the crystallization peak (ΔT_c^1) and the width at half-height of the crystallization peak ($\Delta T_c^{1/2}$) of MF-0 were observed. However, the degree of crystallization had essentially not been influenced. For sample MA-20, prepared from PP modified by the addition of 2 phr AA, more significantly increased values of T_c^{on} and T_c^p were obtained: 124.4 and 121.0°C, respectively. The ΔT_c^1 was suppressed. The $T_c^{1/2}$ and ΔH_c are basically the same as those of MF-0. These experimental results indicated that addition of AA into PP can also accelerate the crystallization of PP. During the preparation process of MA-20 by melt

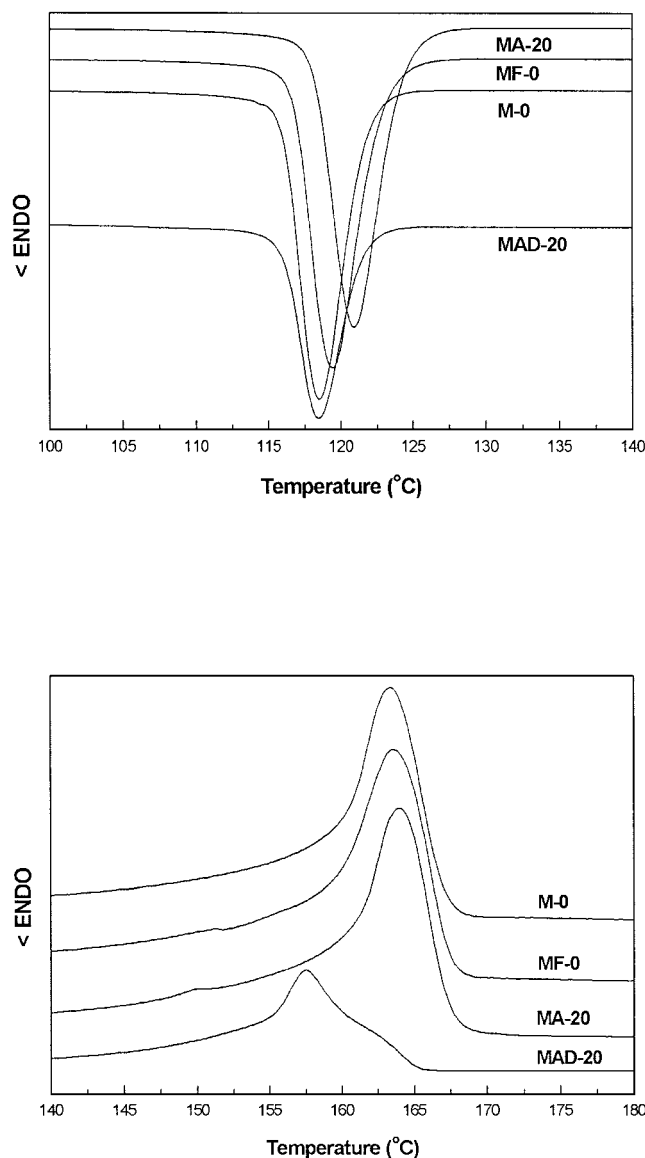


Figure 1 DSC cooling and heating curves of PP and modified PP.

extrusion, possibly one part of AA homopolymerized and formed homopolymer (PAA); the other part of AA reacted with macroradicals produced by degradation of PP during the melt-extrusion process, grafting onto PP and forming *in situ* FPP. Both FPP and PAA may exert a nucleation effect on PP, consequently accelerating the crystallization of PP and increasing the crystallization temperature. Rao et al.³⁰ investigated the thermodynamics of PP grafted with AA and found that the AA homopolymer in PP acted as a nucleating agent.

To facilitate macroradical formation for PP, PP modified by AA in the presence of 0.5 phr DCP, MAD-20 was prepared. Compared to MA-20, a decrease in the T_c^{on} and T_c^p , an increased width of crystallization peak, a decrease of $\Delta T_c^{1/2}$, and a reduced ΔH_c of MAD-20

were observed, which may be attributed to two reasons. On one hand, the DCP produced a large amount of free radicals, resulting in AA grafting onto PP and the formation of *in situ* FPP, thus accelerating crystallization of PP. On the other hand, the grafting of AA onto PP destroyed the regularity of the PP chain, leading to reduced crystallizability of PP. The crystallization of PP depends on the balance of both of these interactions. Compared to pure PP (M-0), high values of T_c^{on} and T_c^p of MAD-20 were observed. Obviously, AA grafting onto PP exerts a nucleation effect on PP, leading to a shift of crystallization peak to high temperature.

Addition of FPP and the formation of *in situ* FPP not only affected the crystallization behavior of PP, but also influenced the melting behavior of PP. The DSC melting results of PP modified by additive PP and *in situ* FPP are presented in Table II. Studies on functionalized PP²⁰⁻²⁴ have shown that the T_m^{on} and T_m^p of FPP were 147.8 and 153.0°C, respectively, both of which are lower than that of M-0, 159.1 and 163.2°C, respectively. The ΔH_m (74.7 J/g) of FPP is also much less than that of MF-0 (95.0 J/g). In the MF-0 prepared by the addition of 5 phr FPP into PP, except for the increased half-height width of melting peak ($\Delta T_m^{1/2}$), the T_m^{on} , T_m^p , and ΔH_m were close to the values of M-0, indicating that the addition of FPP in PP does not significantly influence the melting behavior of PP. For MA-20 prepared from PP modified by the addition of 2 phr AA in the absence of DCP, the T_m^{on} , T_m^p , and ΔH_m basically remained unchanged. However, for MAD-20 prepared from PP modified by the addition of 2 phr AA in the presence of DCP, the T_m^{on} , T_m^p , and ΔH_m are all lower than that of M-0, MF-0, and MA-20. It is suggested that the addition of DCP led to the degradation of PP and the production of a large number of free radicals, in which the AA grafted onto PP and formed FPP. Although the formation of FPP exerted an improved nucleation effect on crystallization of PP, the formation of FPP by grafting reaction resulted in a decrease in the regularity of PP chain. This led to

TABLE I
DSC Crystallization Results of PP and Modified PP

Sample	T_c^o (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
M-0	127.1	118.6	106.3	121.9	20.8	3.3	3.4	98.7
MF-0	128.3	119.5	106.3	123.0	22.1	3.5	3.8	98.5
MA-20	129.6	121.0	106.6	124.4	17.0	3.4	3.8	99.0
MAD-20	127.5	119.0	106.3	121.9	21.2	3.0	3.1	96.5

^a T_c^o , the temperature at which the crystallization curve deviates from the baseline; T_c^p , the peak temperature of crystallization; T_c^f , the temperature at the completion of crystallization; T_c^{on} , the temperature at the onset of crystallization; $\Delta T_c^1 = T_c^o - T_c^f$, the crystallization peak width; $\Delta T_c^{1/2}$, the half-height width of crystallization peak; ΔH_c , the heat of crystallization.

TABLE II
DSC Melting Results of PP and Modified PP

Sample	T_m^o (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
M-0	124.8	163.2	169.6	159.0	44.8	4.1	95.0
MF-0	123.1	163.5	170.0	158.1	46.9	5.6	97.2
MA-20	124.6	163.9	171.6	159.4	47.1	5.0	95.7
MAD-20	126.7	157.4	167.1	153.6	40.4	6.3	86.4

^a T_m^o , the temperature at which the melting curve deviates from the baseline; T_m^p , the peak temperature of the melting curve; T_m^f , the temperature at the completion of melting; T_m^{on} , the temperature at the onset of melting; $\Delta T_m = T_m^f - T_m^o$, the melting peak width; $\Delta T_m^{1/2}$, the half-height width of the melting peak; ΔH_m , the heat of fusion.

reduced nucleation and growth rate, the formation of crystal with low crystalline perfection, and the suppression in melting point and degree of crystallization of PP.

Crystallization and melting behavior of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites

Figure 2 shows the DSC cooling and heating curves of PP filled with different contents of Mg(OH)₂, and the crystallization and melting parameters are presented in Tables III and IV, respectively. The addition of different contents of Mg(OH)₂ led to an increase in T_c^{on} and T_c^p of PP. The crystallization temperature of M-2 with 20 wt % Mg(OH)₂ was much higher than that of M-0, and a broadened crystallization peak was observed, attributed to the heterogeneous nucleation effect of the Mg(OH)₂ surface. However, with increasing Mg(OH)₂ content, crystallization parameters of PP changed only slightly, which was possibly attributable to the fact that there would be a critical surface area for the heterogeneous nucleation effect of the Mg(OH)₂ surface for the crystallization of PP in Mg(OH)₂/PP composites. It can be seen from DSC crystallization curves that when the loading of Mg(OH)₂ was below 40 wt % (M-4), symmetry of the crystallization peak is preferable. However, when the loading of Mg(OH)₂ was up to 60 wt % (M-6), the area in the lower-temperature region of the crystallization peak increased significantly, suggesting that an excess of Mg(OH)₂ would retard the crystal growth of PP, leading to crystallization in the lower temperature. However, compared to pure PP (M-0), irrespective of the Mg(OH)₂ content, a higher crystallization temperature of PP was observed, attributed to the heterogeneous nucleation of the Mg(OH)₂ surface.

The addition of Mg(OH)₂ essentially had no effect on the melting behavior of PP, but a shift to high temperature of T_m^o and a broadened half-height width of melting peak were observed, especially for PP filled with 60% Mg(OH)₂. It can be seen from the melting

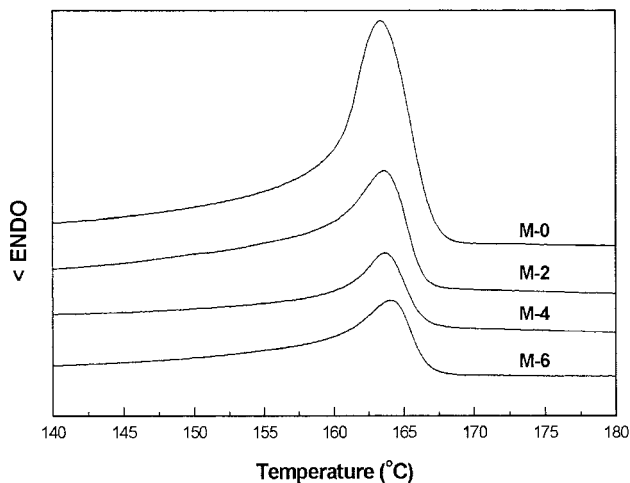
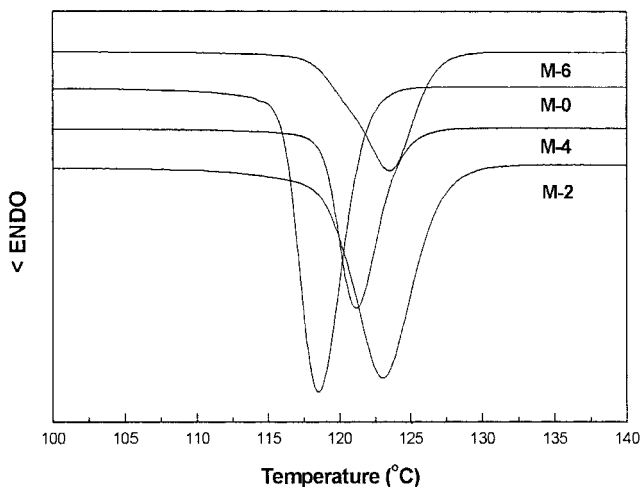


Figure 2 DSC cooling and heating curves of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites.

curves that the area in the low-temperature region of the melting peak increased. It is suggested that the large content of $Mg(OH)_2$ in M-6 hinders the crystallization of PP, resulting in poor crystalline perfection and lower melting point of PP.

Crystallization and melting behavior of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by AA

Figure 3 shows the DSC cooling and heating curves of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by AA containing

TABLE III
DSC Crystallization Results of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ Composites

Sample	T_c^o (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
M-0	127.1	118.6	106.3	121.9	20.8	3.3	3.4	98.7
M-2	131.2	123.3	108.8	127.2	23.7	3.7	3.8	92.2
M-4	129.4	121.4	112.5	124.8	19.2	3.1	3.1	90.7
M-6	131.7	123.6	109.6	127.4	22.1	3.4	4.4	97.5

TABLE IV
DSC Melting Results of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ Composites

Sample	T_m^o (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
M-0	124.8	163.2	169.6	159.0	44.8	4.1	95.0
M-2	126.3	163.5	168.8	157.5	40.0	4.4	92.6
M-4	127.5	163.6	168.0	159.0	37.5	4.1	95.2
M-6	128.5	164.5	168.7	158.0	40.2	6.9	95.9

60 wt % $Mg(OH)_2$, and the crystallization and melting parameters are shown in Tables V and VI, respectively. It can be seen that the addition of 2 phr AA into $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites resulted in an increased T_c^o , T_c^p , T_c^f , T_c^{on} , and ΔT_c^2 , and a reduced ΔT_c^1 , indicating that the addition of AA further enhanced the heterogeneous nucleation effect on PP in $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ com-

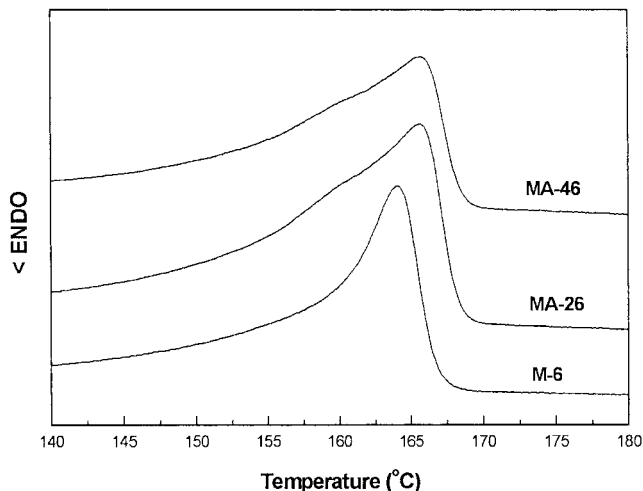
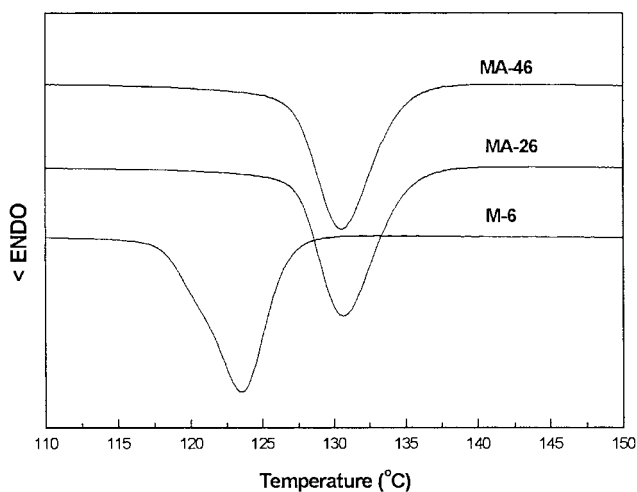


Figure 3 DSC cooling and heating curves of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by AA containing 60 wt % $Mg(OH)_2$.

TABLE V
DSC Crystallization Results of Mg(OH)₂/PP Composites Modified by AA Containing 60 wt % Mg(OH)₂

Sample	T_c^o (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
M-6	131.7	123.6	109.6	127.4	22.1	3.4	4.4	97.5
MA-26	138.1	130.7	122.7	135.0	15.4	4.3	4.1	93.0
MA-46	137.7	130.7	121.9	134.8	15.8	4.1	4.4	75.0

posites and led to nucleation and crystallization at higher temperatures. Because of the crystallization at high temperature, the crystallization rate was slowed, leading to an increased width of the high-temperature region of the crystallization peak compared to that of M-6, and a distinct decrease in the crystallization peak width (ΔT_c^1). With increasing AA content up to 4 phr, all parameters remained unchanged except for a decline in the ΔH_c , which indicated that the increase in AA content scarcely influenced the crystallization behavior of PP in Mg(OH)₂/PP composites.

The above experimental results indicated that the addition of AA or Mg(OH)₂ led to an increased crystallization temperature of PP. The former resulted from the nucleation effect of the homogeneous polymer of AA, PAA, or *in situ* FPP. The latter was mainly attributed to the heterogeneous nucleation of the Mg(OH)₂ surface. The addition of AA and Mg(OH)₂ into PP simultaneously exerted a synergetic effect on the crystallization of PP, leading to a further increase in crystallization temperature. Because there is a critical content of PAA or FPP acting as nucleating agents, an excess of AA would form a thick interface layer between PP and Mg(OH)₂. The greater the content of AA, the larger the grafting amount and the greater the change in the regularity of PP chain, leading to the decreased crystallizability of PP. As a result, a reduced heat of crystallization was obtained.

From the melting results (Table VI), it can be seen that the T_m^{on} and T_m^p of MA-26 and MA-46 modified with AA were higher than those of M-6 unmodified with AA, attributed to the crystallization of PP in high temperature and the formation of crystals with a larger size of lamellae and better crystalline perfection. A narrowed melting peak (small ΔT_m) and a broadened half-height width (large $\Delta T_m^{1/2}$) were observed. A

TABLE VI
DSC Melting Results of Mg(OH)₂/PP Composites Modified by AA Containing 60 wt % Mg(OH)₂

Sample	T_m^o (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
M-6	128.5	164.5	168.7	158.0	40.2	6.9	95.9
MA-26	135.4	165.5	169.6	154.0	34.2	10.0	96.3
MA-46	135.0	165.6	169.6	150.0	34.6	10.3	79.3

decreased T_m^{on} is attributed to the change of the shape of peak. The increase in the AA content resulted in a decrease in heat of fusion. A shoulder peak was observed at 160°C in the melting curve, possibly because another crystal form existed besides the α -form. The β -form of PP is a hexagonal crystal system, whereas Mg(OH)₂ is also a hexagonal crystal system. With the initiation of AA, Mg(OH)₂ is likely to induce the formation of the β -form of PP.

Crystallization and melting behavior of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by the addition of FPP

Figure 4 shows DSC cooling and heating curves of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by the addition of FPP, and the crystallization and melting parameters are presented in Tables VII and VIII, respectively. Comparing the results in Tables III and VII, it can be seen that the addition of FPP in Mg(OH)₂/PP compos-

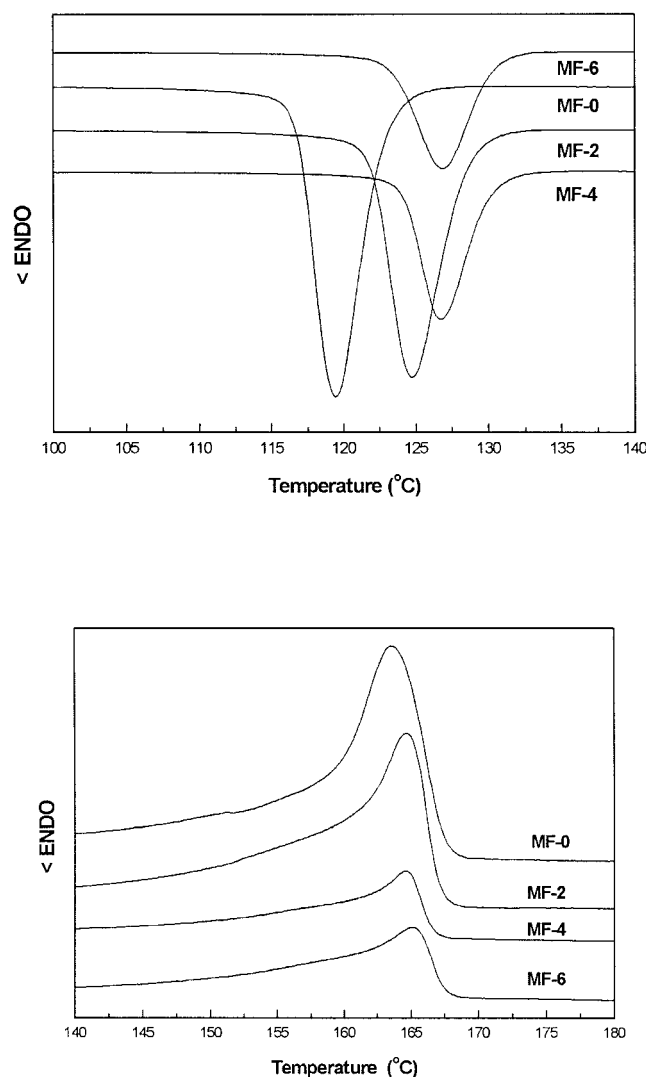


Figure 4 DSC cooling and heating curves of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by FPP.

TABLE VII
DSC Crystallization Results of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ Composites Modified by Addition of FPP

Sample	T_c^o (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
MF-2	133.3	124.9	111.0	128.6	22.3	3.8	3.8	104.6
MF-4	134.3	126.6	112.5	130.2	21.9	3.6	3.4	104.8
MF-6	134.2	126.9	113.8	130.4	22.4	3.5	3.8	96.0

ites led to a further increase in crystallization temperatures (T_c^o , T_c^p , and T_c^{on}), resulting in enhanced T_c^p from 123.3, 121.4, and 123.6°C of M-2, M-4, and M-6, to 124.9, 126.6, and 126.9°C of MF-2, MF-4, and MF-6, respectively. It also suggested that additive FPP functioned as a nucleating agent for the crystallization of PP. The synergetic nucleation effect of FPP and the $Mg(OH)_2$ surface led to further increased crystallizability of PP. Although the crystallization temperature of PP in $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites does not increase with the increased $Mg(OH)_2$ content, enhanced T_c^p was observed with increasing the $Mg(OH)_2$ content. In $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP, the T_c^p of PP does not decrease, even when $Mg(OH)_2$ content was 60 wt %. Compared with M-6, increased crystallization in the low-temperature region in the crystallization peak does not occur. It is suggested that the FPP not only exhibited nucleation effect, but also activated the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $Mg(OH)_2$ surface, leading to further increased crystallization temperatures of PP in $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP.

Compared with Tables IV and VIII, it can be seen that PP in $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP exhibits a high T_m^p , indicating that PP can form crystals with high perfection in the presence of FPP. In the case of no FPP, although an increased crystallization temperature was observed, the addition of $Mg(OH)_2$ does not change the temperature of the melting peak. However, in the presence of FPP, the PP in $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP has a high melting temperature attributed to the effect of FPP, although the melting temperature of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP does not change with the increase in the content of $Mg(OH)_2$.

TABLE VIII
DSC Crystallization Results of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ Composites Modified by Addition of FPP

Sample	T_m^o (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
MF-2	127.3	164.6	169.2	159.2	41.9	5.9	103.5
MF-4	130.0	164.5	169.0	159.2	39.0	6.3	96.2
MF-6	128.5	164.0	168.7	158.0	40.2	6.9	97.0

Crystallization and melting behavior of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP

Figure 5 shows the DSC cooling and heating curves of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of 2 phr AA in the presence of 0.5 phr DCP containing 40 and 60 wt % $Mg(OH)_2$, respectively. The crystallization and melting parameters are shown in Tables IX and X, respectively. By the effect of formation of *in situ* FPP, the T_c^{on} , T_c^p , and ΔH_c of PP in its composites were improved with increased $Mg(OH)_2$ content. Compared with unmodified $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites (M series) and $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by the addition of FPP (MF series), the improvement in T_c^{on} and T_c^p of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP (MAD series) was less than that of the MF series, and a lower ΔH_c was obtained. This was attributed to the fact that the addition of DCP resulted in the deg-

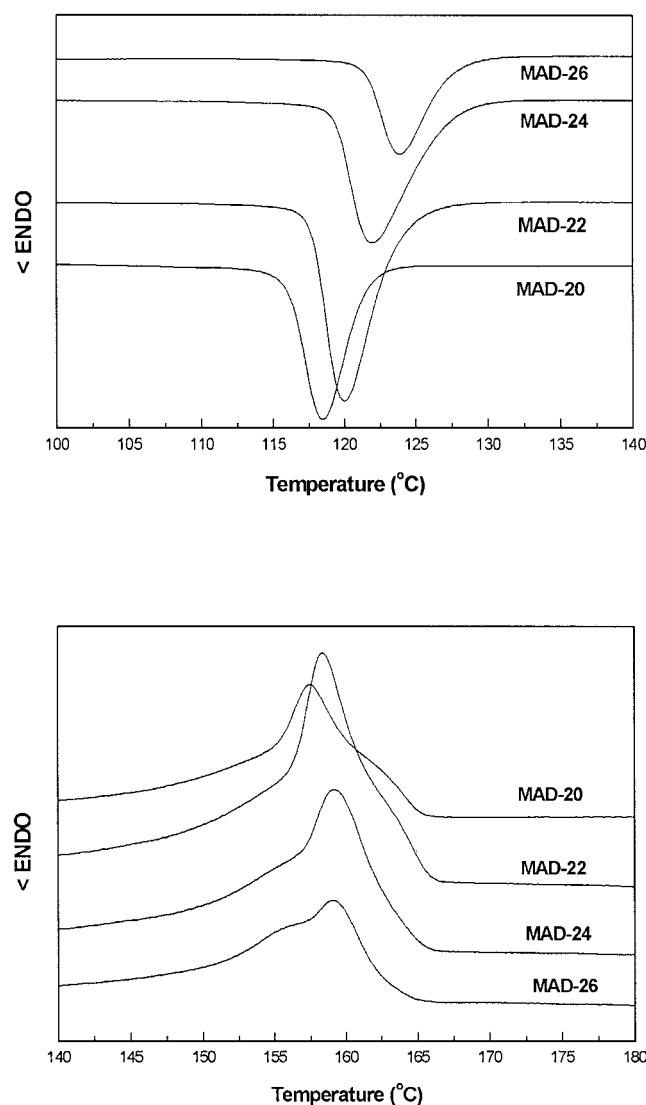


Figure 5 DSC cooling and heating curves of $Mg(OH)_2/PP$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP.

TABLE IX
DSC Crystallization Results of Mg(OH)₂/PP Composites
Modified by *In Situ* FPP

Sample	T_c^o (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
MAD-20	127.5	119.0	106.3	121.9	21.2	3.0	3.1	96.5
MAD-22	129.4	120.0	112.7	123.8	16.7	3.8	3.4	90.0
MAD-24	132.1	122.0	113.8	127.3	18.3	5.3	3.8	94.3
MAD-26	131.7	123.9	116.3	127.5	15.4	3.6	3.4	96.3

radiation of PP and the formation of free radicals, which initialized the *in situ* grafting of AA onto the PP chain and generated functionalized polymer, FPP. The produced *in situ* FPP mainly located at the interface between PP and Mg(OH)₂, and consequently strong polar or even chemistry interaction took place between the carboxylic group of FPP and Mg(OH)₂. The PP chain in FPP was compatible, or cocrystallized with the PP matrix, leading to the decreased heterogeneous nucleation effect of the Mg(OH)₂ surface. FPP located on the Mg(OH)₂ surface does not enter into the PP matrix to induce nucleation effect. Because of the aggregation of DCP and grafting monomer at the interface between Mg(OH)₂ and PP, the grafting reaction destroyed the regularity of PP chain near the Mg(OH)₂. Therefore, the improvement in T_c^{on} and T_c^p of the MAD series was less significant than that of the MF series.

The formation of *in situ* FPP greatly influenced the T_m^p of PP in its composites. Comparing the sample unfilled with Mg(OH)₂ (MAD-20) and pure PP (M-0), the T_m^p was reduced by 6°C. In Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by *in situ* FPP, the T_m^p slightly increased with increased Mg(OH)₂ content from 20 to 60 wt %. The T_m^p of MAD-26 was still lower than that of M-0. A varied shape of melting peak, a decreased intensity of melting peak, and an extended $\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ were observed with increasing the Mg(OH)₂ content. During the formation of *in situ* FPP, FPP located between the two phases led to a changed interface. Because of this changed interface, the effect of Mg(OH)₂ on PP crystallization was varied, resulting in the formation of the non- α -form of PP. Because of this transformation of crystal form during melting, a shoulder peak near 155°C was observed in the melting curves of MAD-26.

TABLE X
DSC Melting Results of Mg(OH)₂/PP Composites
Modified by *In Situ* FPP

Sample	T_m^o (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
MAD-20	126.7	157.4	167.1	153.6	40.4	6.3	86.4
MAD-22	132.5	158.3	167.1	155.0	34.6	5.0	85.1
MAD-24	129.2	159.1	166.7	154.7	37.5	7.2	92.2
MAD-26	130.4	159.0	165.6	152.6	35.2	8.1	93.8

Figures 6 and 7 show the DSC cooling and heating curves of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by the addition of 4 phr AA in the presence of 0.5 phr DCP. The crystallization and melting parameters are presented in Tables XI and XII, respectively. The addition of 2 phr AA and 0.5 phr DCP in composites containing 40 wt % Mg(OH)₂ (MAD-24) led to an increase in T_c^{on} and T_c^p , an extended $\Delta T_c^{1/2}$, and a suppressed ΔH_c . When the AA content was increased to 4 phr, the T_c^{on} , T_c^p , and $\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ were basically the same as those of MAD-22 except for a further decreased ΔH_c . This result agrees with the DSC results of the Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by the addition of AA. An increase in the content of AA does not change the crystallization behavior of PP.

In the composites modified by the addition of AA, with increased AA content, the excessive AA pro-

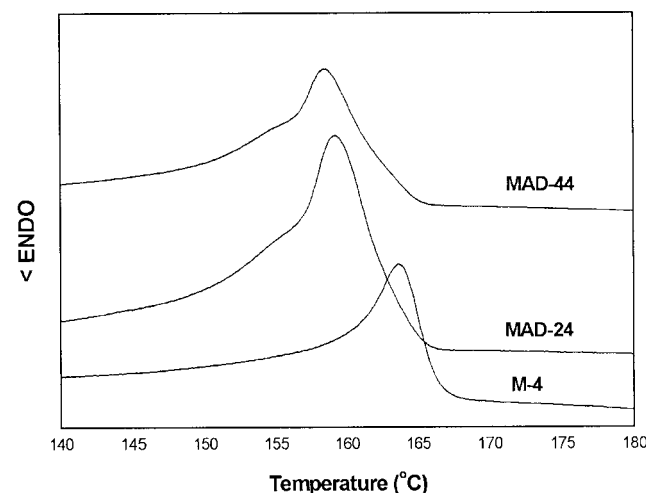
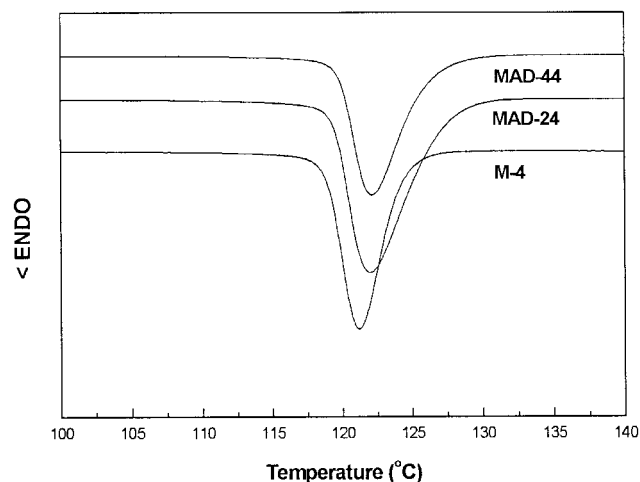


Figure 6 DSC cooling and heating curves of Mg(OH)₂/PP composites modified by *in situ* FPP containing 40 wt % Mg(OH)₂.

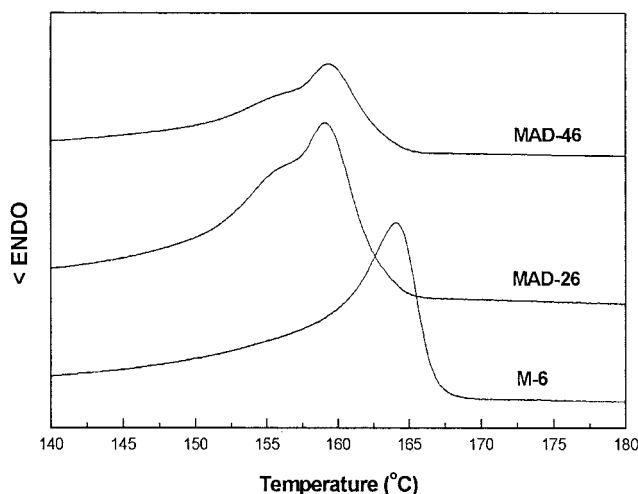
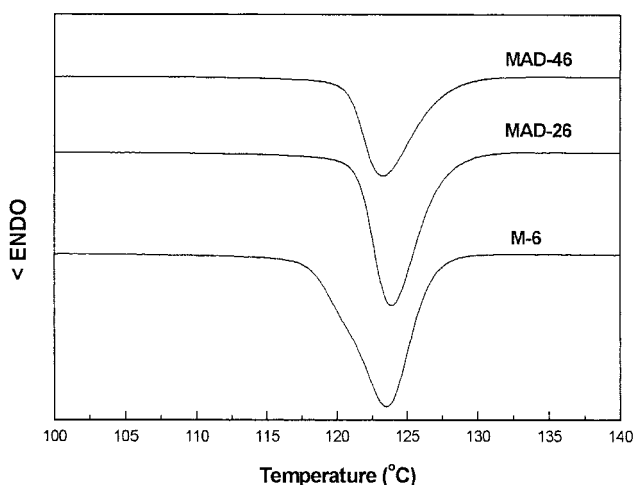


Figure 7 DSC cooling and heating curves of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP containing 60 wt % $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$.

duced a large amount of homopolymer, thus retarding the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ and the crystallization of PP. However, for the composites

TABLE XI
DSC Crystallization Results of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ Composites Modified by *In Situ* FPP

Sample	T_c^c (°C)	T_c^p (°C)	T_c^f (°C)	T_c^{on} (°C)	ΔT_c^1 (°C)	ΔT_c^2 (°C)	$\Delta T_c^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_c (J/g)
M-4	129.4	121.4	112.5	124.8	19.2	3.1	3.1	90.7
MAD-24	132.1	122.0	113.8	127.3	18.3	5.3	3.8	94.3
MAD-44	130.6	122.2	114.4	126.3	16.3	4.1	3.8	87.0
M-6	131.7	123.6	109.6	127.4	22.1	3.4	4.4	97.5
MAD-26	131.7	123.9	116.3	127.5	15.4	3.6	3.4	96.3
MAD-46	130.8	123.3	117.1	127.5	18.3	4.2	3.8	93.0

TABLE XII
DSC Melting Results of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ Composites Modified by *In Situ* FPP

Sample	T_m^c (°C)	T_m^p (°C)	T_m^f (°C)	T_m^{on} (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ (°C)	ΔH_m (J/g)
M-4	127.5	163.6	168.0	159.0	37.5	4.1	95.2
MAD-24	129.2	159.1	166.7	154.7	37.5	7.2	92.2
MAD-44	134.8	158.4	166.0	154.1	31.3	7.2	81.3
M-6	128.5	164.5	168.7	158.0	40.2	6.9	95.9
MAD-26	136.9	159.0	165.8	152.6	28.9	8.1	85.9
MAD-46	137.7	159.3	166.2	153.9	28.5	7.5	85.8

in the presence of DCP, the decrease in degree of crystallization was mainly attributed to the fact that most of AA reacted with PP macroradicals initiated by DCP, leading to an increased amount of AA grafting onto the PP chain. A large amount of grafting chain in PP prevented PP chain folding and arraying to form crystal. Hence, a slightly reduced degree of crystallization was observed.

In $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites modified by *in situ* FPP containing 40 and 60 wt % $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$, respectively, the addition of the 2 phr AA decreased the T_m^p , T_m^{on} , and ΔT_m , and increased the $\Delta T_m^{1/2}$ compared with the composites filled with the same loading of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ in the absence of AA. It can be seen from melting curves that the increased area in the low-temperature region of the melting peak was also observed. Increasing the AA content up to 4 phr, the T_m^p and T_m^{on} remained unchanged, although the ΔH_m of MAD-44 decreased, and the ΔH_m of MAD-46 agreed with that of MAD-26. However, the height of the melting peak was lower than that of corresponding composites containing 2 phr AA. It is suggested that the 4 phr AA was excessive to composites containing 40 wt % $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$, leading to the formation of PAA, which decreased the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ and resulted in a reduced degree of crystallization. However, for the composites containing 60 wt % $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$, the 4 phr of AA was not excessive and resulted in an increased amount of grafting to activate the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ and an increased content of crystallization in the low-temperature region of the melting peak.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the addition of functionalized polypropylene (FPP) accelerated the crystallization of PP and increased the crystallization temperature of PP attributed to the nucleation effect of FPP. The formation of *in situ* FPP resulted in a reduced crystallization rate, melting point, and degree of crystallization because of the decreased regularity of the PP chain. In the $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2/\text{PP}$ composites, the addition of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$

increased the crystallization temperatures of PP attributed to the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$. Addition of FPP further enhanced the crystallization temperatures of PP in $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites. It is suggested that there is an activation of FPP to the heterogeneous nucleation effect of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ surface. The addition of AA also increased the crystallization temperature of PP in $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites, although the increased AA content had no effect on crystallization behavior of PP. Results of this investigation indicated that FPP and AA exhibited an activated heterogeneous nucleation effect on the $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ surface. $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ and FPP afforded a synergistic effect on crystallization of PP in $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites, leading to a further increased crystallization temperatures of PP. However, the crystallization temperatures of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites modified by *in situ* FPP were lower than those of $\text{Mg}(\text{OH})_2$ /PP composites modified by the addition of FPP or AA.

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