

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS	
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Available for public release. Distribution unlimited.	
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) #53		7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION Office of Naval Research	
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION The Pennsylvania State Univ.	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Arlington Virginia 12217	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Department of Chemistry The Pennsylvania State University University Park, Pa. 16802		9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION ONR	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Arlington Virginia 22217		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. N00014-84	PROJECT NO. K-0447
		TASK NO. 356/4-6-84	NR WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (include Security Classification) A Second-Order Nonlinear Optical Poly(organophosphazene)			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) A. A. Dembek, C. Kim, H. R. Allcock, R. L. S. Devine, W. H. Steier, C. W. Spangler			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Reprint	13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 1990, February 9	15. PAGE COUNT 10
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION Accepted for publication in <u>Chemistry of Materials</u>			
17. COSATI CODES		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)	
FIELD	GROUP	Polyphosphazenes, polymers, synthesis, NLO materials, optical materials	
	SUB-GROUP		
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) A mixed substituent substituent polyphosphazenes with the structure $[\text{NPOCH}_2\text{CF}_3]_{64\%} \{ \text{O}(\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{O})_3\text{-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-CH=CH-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-NO}_2 \}_{36\%}]_n$ has been synthesized and the second-order nonlinear properties have been investigated. A second-harmonic coefficient of $d_{33}^{(2)} = 5.5 \text{ pm/V}$ was obtained. Reprints (10)			
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p><b>DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A</b> Approved for public release Distribution Unlimited</p> </div> <div style="margin-left: 200px; text-align: center;"> <p>DTIC ELECTE FEB 16 1990 S B D</p> </div>			
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified	
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Dr. Kenneth J. Wynne		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) 202-696-4410	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL NC

Office of Naval Research

Contract N00014-84-K-0477  
R&T Project Code 4132007---004

Technical Report #53

A Second-Order Nonlinear Optical Poly(organophosphazene)

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Accepted for publication in CHEMISTRY OF MATERIALS

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**A Second-Order Nonlinear Optical Poly(organophosphazene)**

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**Abstract:** A mixed substituent polyphosphazene with the structure

$[NP(OCH_2CF_3)_{64\%}\{O(CH_2CH_2O)_3-C_6H_4-CH=CH-C_6H_4-NO_2\}_{36\%}]_n$  has been synthesized and the second-order nonlinear optical properties have been investigated. A second-harmonic coefficient of  $d_{33} = 5.5$  pm/V was obtained.

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The development of polymeric nonlinear optical (NLO) materials is currently an area of intense investigation.<sup>1</sup> Polymeric systems which show second harmonic generation (SHG) have conjugated aromatic molecules with electron-donor and acceptor moieties in a noncentrosymmetric array. These nonlinear optical molecules can be doped into a glassy polymer matrix<sup>2</sup> or can be covalently attached to a polymer backbone<sup>3</sup>. Here we report the synthesis and second order nonlinear optical response of polymer 1, a polyphosphazene in which a nitrostilbene unit is covalently linked to the polymer chain through a tri(ethylene oxide) spacer group. Phosphazene macromolecules offer a potential advantage in that the macroscopic properties of the polymer can be tailored by the incorporation of specific substituent groups.<sup>4,5</sup> Polymer 1 is therefore a prototype which offers many opportunities for further tailoring of the molecular structure to generate an optimum combination of nonlinear optical and physical properties.

Polymer 1 near here.

Our initial work involved the synthesis of a side chain for the polyphosphazene substrate which has molecular characteristics that are required for a nonlinear optical response. As outlined in Scheme I, 4-hydroxybenzaldehyde was allowed to react with 2-[2-(2-chloroethoxy)ethoxy]ethanol in basic ethanol containing potassium iodide for 15 h at reflux to yield 4-[2-(2-(2-hydroxyethoxy)ethoxy)ethoxy]benzaldehyde, 2. Compound 2 was then allowed to react with diethyl(4-nitrobenzyl)phosphonate and potassium tert-butoxide in ethylene glycol dimethyl ether for 15 h at room temperature to give the desired trans-4-[2-(2-(2-hydroxyethoxy)ethoxy)ethoxy]-4'-nitrostilbene, 3. Compound 3 was purified by column chromatography and was recrystallized from n-hexane/methylene chloride.<sup>6</sup>

Scheme I near here.

Polymer 1 was synthesized by the procedure described in Scheme II. Poly(dichlorophosphazene) was prepared by the thermal ring-opening polymerization of the cyclic trimer  $(\text{NPCl}_2)_3$ .<sup>4</sup> In the first step in the synthesis of 1, sodium trifluoroethoxide was added to poly(dichlorophosphazene) to replace approximately 50% of the P-Cl bonds. In the second step, a stoichiometric deficiency of  $\text{trans-NaO}(\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{O})_3\text{-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-CH=CH-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-NO}_2$  was allowed to react with the partially substituted polymer. In the final step, an excess of sodium trifluoroethoxide was added to replace the remaining P-Cl bonds in order to obtain a fully derivatized, hydrolytically stable polymer.<sup>7</sup> Polymer 1 was isolated by precipitation from tetrahydrofuran into water and was purified by dialysis against methanol/water (1:1 v/v) for seven days. The polymer is a yellow elastomeric material that is soluble in common organic solvents such as tetrahydrofuran (THF) and methyl ethyl ketone (MEK). Characterization was achieved by  $^{31}\text{P}$  and  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectroscopy,<sup>8</sup> infrared and UV/visible spectroscopy, elemental microanalysis, gel permeation chromatography and differential scanning calorimetry.<sup>9</sup>  $^1\text{H}$  NMR analysis of polymer 1 indicates a 36% incorporation of the nitrostilbene side chain.

Scheme II near here.

Films of polyphosphazene 1 were cast onto indium-tin oxide coated glass from a concentrated solution of MEK. The solution was first filtered to remove particulate impurities and the films were dried in vacuum to remove all of the solvent. The NLO properties of the films were subsequently investigated using second-harmonic generation. A Q-switched Nd:YAG laser ( $\lambda = 1.064 \mu\text{m}$ ) with a pulse width of 8 ns and a pulse energy of 10 mJ was used as the source of the

fundamental, and a reference sample of Y-cut quartz ( $d_{11} = 0.46$  pm/V) was used for calibration of the frequency-doubled signal. From measurements of the refractive index at both the fundamental and second-harmonic wavelengths, the coherence length of 1 was calculated to be 2.8  $\mu\text{m}$ . The thin-film thicknesses used were always less than this coherence length, being typically ca. 0.5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Alignment of the NLO side groups in the layers was achieved by single-point corona poling, with the point source held at +10 kV, at a distance of 1.5 cm from the surface. Poling voltages greater than 10 kV sometimes resulted in damage to the film, manifested as a slight cloudiness. Note, however, that this voltage was still below the saturation point of the signal. The variation of the signal with poling voltages will be discussed more fully in a later publication. Due to the low glass transition temperature of 1 ( $T_g = 25^\circ\text{C}$ ), the poling was carried out at room temperature while the SHG measurements were being made. Upon removal of the voltage, the second-harmonic signal decayed to zero within a few minutes.

The second-harmonic coefficient of the polymer film,  $d_{33}$ , was obtained from a Maker fringe analysis of the data,<sup>10</sup> giving  $d_{33} = 5.5$  pm/V. This value of  $d_{33}$  was obtained using the isotropic model for poled polymers, where  $d_{33}/d_{31} = 3$ .<sup>2a</sup> Singer et al<sup>3d</sup> have found this model to be appropriate for analysis of their side-chain polymers. Recently, however, Eich et al<sup>3e</sup> have observed deviations from this ratio, possible due to mesogenic interactions among the side groups. The applicability of the isotropic model to poly(organophosphazenes) is currently under investigation.

Given that the degree of alignment was not maximized in this experiment, and that we are using a less efficient donor moiety than other studies of functionalized polymers,<sup>2c,3d</sup> this is a very promising value of  $d_{33}$ . Work to attach more efficient donors and to increase the glass transition temperature of the polymer is in progress.

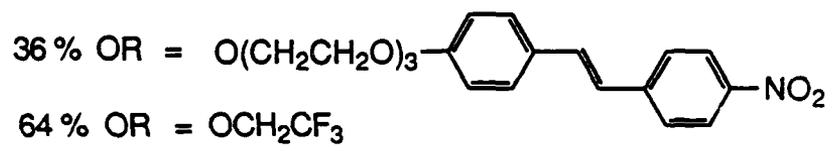
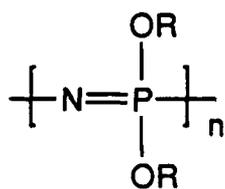
**Acknowledgement.** The research at The Pennsylvania State University was supported by the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research and the Office of Naval Research. The research at University of Southern California was supported by the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research. We would like to thank Y. Shi for the refractive index measurements.

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6. For 3: mp 66-67°C;  $\lambda_{\max}$  (THF) = 378 nm; m/z calcd. 373, m/z found 373; IR

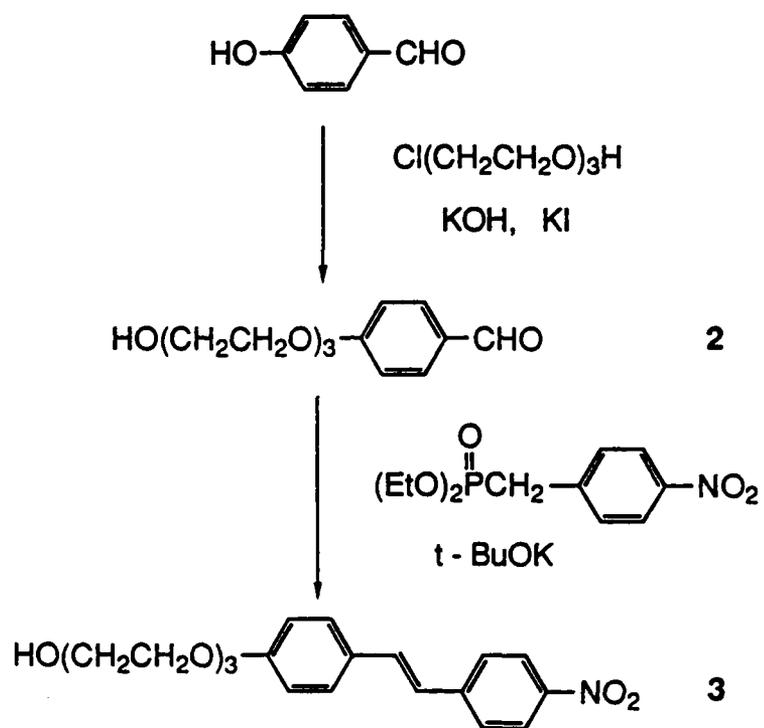
(KBr) 3500-3100 (br,  $\nu(\text{OH})$ ), 1340  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  (s,  $\nu(\text{NO}_2)$ );  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.21 (2H, d,  $J=8.8$  Hz, ArH), 7.61 (2H, d,  $J=8.7$  Hz, ArH), 7.49 (2H, d,  $J=8.7$  Hz, ArH), 7.23 (2H, d,  $J=16.3$  Hz, CH), 7.01 (2H, d,  $J=16.3$  Hz, CH), 6.95 (2H, d,  $J=8.8$  Hz, ArH), 4.18 (2H, t,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 3.90 (2H, t,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 3.75 (6H, m,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 3.65 (2H, t,  $\text{OCH}_2$ ), 2.20 (1H, br s, OH); Yield = 40-55%; Anal. for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{23}\text{NO}_6$ , Calcd: C, 64.33; H, 6.21; N, 3.75. Found: C, 63.96; H, 6.20; N, 3.72.

7. This three step synthetic procedure was necessary since the direct addition of  $\text{trans-NaO}(\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{O})_3\text{-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-CH=CH-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{-NO}_2$  to poly(dichlorophosphazene) resulted in the formation of an insoluble, incompletely substituted polymeric precipitate.
8. NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker WP-360 spectrometer. Chemical shifts are relative to 85%  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4$  ( $^{31}\text{P}$ ) or tetramethylsilane ( $^1\text{H}$ ).
9. For 1:  $\lambda_{\text{max}}$  (THF) = 376 nm;  $^{31}\text{P}$  NMR (THF/ $\text{D}_2\text{O}$ )  $\delta$  -8.3;  $M_n = 3.2 \times 10^5$ ,  $M_w = 1.4 \times 10^6$ ,  $M_w/M_n = 4$ ; IR (KBr) 1340 (s,  $\nu(\text{NO}_2)$ ), 1280  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  (s,  $\nu(\text{P=N})$ );  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $d_6$ -acetone)  $\delta$  8.3-6.9 (m, ArH, CH), 4.5 (br s,  $\text{OCH}_2\text{CF}_3$ ), 4.3-3.6 (m,  $\text{OCH}_2$ );  $T_g = 25^\circ\text{C}$ ; Anal. Found: C, 43.01; H, 4.66; N, 5.13; Cl, <0.11. Analysis is consistent with a 30% incorporation of 3.
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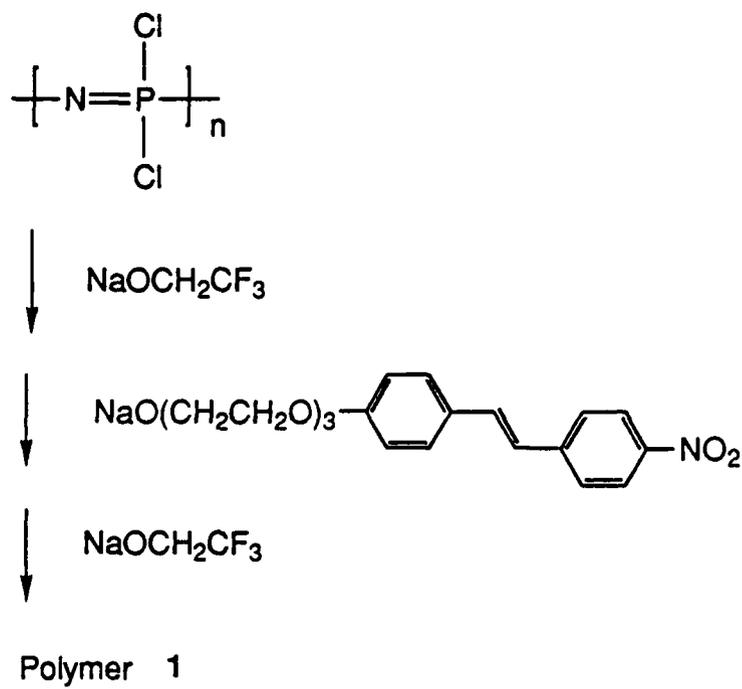


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Polymer 1



Scheme 1



Scheme II

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