## Elsevier Editorial System(tm) for Chemosphere Manuscript Draft

Manuscript Number: CHEM27336

Title: Colour removal and carbonyl by-production in high dose ozonation for effluent polishing

Article Type: Research Paper

Section/Category: Science for Environmental Technology

Keywords: Ozonation; colour removal; carbonyl by-products

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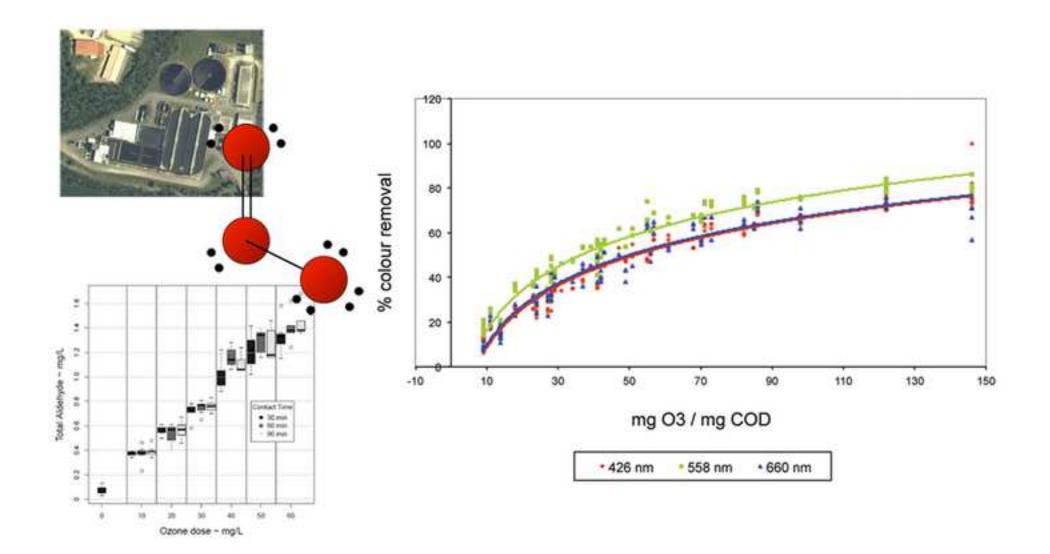
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Highlights (for review)

## **Highlights**

- We tested high dose ozonation (10÷60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>) on a treated effluent
- Complete colour removal was needed
- At 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup> aldehyde concentration ranged between 0.72 and 1.02 mg L<sup>-1</sup>
- Glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentrations were directly related to colour removal
- Colour removal can be used for predicting glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentration



#### Abstract

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## **ABSTRACT**

A series of experimental tests has been conducted to investigate the efficiency and the by-product generation of high dose ozonation (10 to 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>) for complete colour removal from a treated effluent with an important component of textile dyeing wastewater. The effluent is discharged into an effluent-dominated stream where no dilution takes place, and thus, the quality requirement for the effluents is particularly strict. Three contact times were adopted: 30, 60 and 90 min. Colour was measured as absorbance at 426, 558 and 660 nm wavelengths. The experimental work showed that at 50 mg L<sup>-1</sup> colour removal was complete and at 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup> the final aldehyde concentration ranged between 0.72 and 1.02 mg L<sup>-1</sup>. Glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentrations were directly related to colour removal, whereas formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acetone and acrolein were not. Thus, the extent of colour removal can be used to predict the increase in glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentrations. As colour removal can be assessed by a simple absorbance measurement, in contrast to the analysis of specific carbonyl compounds, which is much longer and complex, the possibility of using colour removal as an indicator for predicting the toxic potential of ozone by-products for textile effluents is of great value.

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## **ABSTRACT**

A series of experimental tests has been conducted to investigate the efficiency and the byproduct generation of high dose ozonation (10 to 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>) for complete colour
removal from a treated effluent with an important component of textile dyeing wastewater.
The effluent is discharged into an effluent-dominated stream where no dilution takes place,
and thus, the quality requirement for the effluents is particularly strict. Three contact times
were adopted: 30, 60 and 90 min. Colour was measured as absorbance at 426, 558 and
660 nm wavelengths. The experimental work showed that at 50 mg L<sup>-1</sup> colour removal was
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**Keywords:** Ozonation; colour removal; carbonyl by-products

## 1. Introduction

In effluent-dominated streams (Schmidt, 1993) advanced processes to polish treated effluents must be adopted to reduce the impact of discharge on the receptor. In reality, where the base flow of the stream is essentially made of effluents from wastewater treatment plants, the flow of the receptor is too low to allow any significant dilution of the residual input load; the aim of wastewater treatment should be to produce an effluent quality as close as possible to an acceptable river water quality.

The present study has been carried out at the Bulgarograsso Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)(province of Como, Northern Italy), fed on mixed (industrial and urban) wastewater and discharged into the stream Lura, which remains dry for most of the year (Canobbio et al., 2009). The industrial flow is approximately 70% of the total inflow and approximately 60% of the organic load fed to the WWTP and derives primarily from textile dyeing industries. Consequently, it is characterised by high concentrations of surfactants (especially non-ionic ones) and is quite strong in colour. The Bulgarograsso WWTP includes a biological section consisting of pre-denitrification and biological oxidation followed by sand filtration and chemical oxidation by ozone. In terms of removal rates, its performance is satisfactory when compared with the discharge limits but is still insufficient when considering that its effluent becomes river water in practice. The most serious problems arise from the presence of residual colour that is not completely removed in the present operative conditions. The chief procedure in colour removal is based on ozonation, which is performed at 10-15 mg L<sup>-1</sup> with a 90-min average contact time and is designed to remove especially colour and non ionic surfactants. In textile dyeing effluents the colour is related to the residual, non exhausted dyestuffs which are discharged, not being or being only partially removed in conventional activated sludge treatment plants. In the case of centralized WWTP, a wide variety of dyestuffs can be found, according to the different fabrics and processes performed by each factory. Synthetic dyes are reported as one of the largest groups of organic pollutant in wastewaters (Pan et al., 2011). Azo compounds, having the -N=N- group as chromophore, represent about half of the whole dyestuff production in the world (Liu et al., 2007) and are recognized, along with antraquinone dyes, as non-degradable by the conventional activated sludge process (Wei Chu & Chi-Wai, 2000). They are thus a major component in biologically treated effluents from the textile dyeing industry. Normally the input of coloured effluents does not cause direct toxicity to the receiving water course, but

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the visual impact is strong and some consequences of the influence on the light 71 penetration are likely to occur, even if till now they've not been documented. 72 Based on the kind of fabrics processed by the textile industries in Bulgarograsso area, it 73 74 can be estimated that most dyestuffs in wastewater belong to the class of reactive dyes, most of which are azo-compounds, and that these are absolutely prevailing in the treated 75 effluent, due to their limited degradation during activated sludge process. 76 In the case of the Bulgarograsso WWTP, as well as in many similar plants, discharging 77 into effluent dominated streams, greater colour removal is needed, and the most suitable 78 solution to the problem seems to be the increase in ozone dose in the final polishing of the 79 80 effluent. Ozone is known for being highly efficient in removing colour from wastewater, especially because of its high affinity for double bonds, which are responsible for colour in 81 the chromophore of most dyestuff molecules (Perkowski et al., 1996; Kos et al., 2000; 82 83 Antonelli et al., 2006). However, its dosage is often limited by the need to control the formation of potentially toxic by-products. 84 Specific investigations have noted the potential ecotoxicity of ozonated effluents (Petala et 85 al.,2006) and pointed out that the toxicity of ozone-treated effluents on Vibrio fischeri 86 increased only for ozone doses of over 5.0 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup> and that ozonation influenced the 87 mutagenicity of secondary effluents (measured by Ames test) due to the possible 88 formation of intermediate by-products. (Petala et al., 2008) 89 The most frequently found (and most well-known) by-products of wastewater ozonation 90 are aldehydes (Bolzacchini et al., 2000; Silva et al, 2010; Melin & Odegaard, 2000; Huang 91 et al., 2005). In general, such compounds are considered to be hazardous in drinking 92 water: the WHO guidelines set a reference standard for formaldehyde at 0.9 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, but no 93 such limit for aldehyde concentration in drinking water exists in Europe. In aquatic 94 medium, aldehydes absorb UV light and form very reactive organic free radicals. 95 Acetaldehyde has moderate acute toxicity to aquatic organisms. 96

According to the U.S. EPA database, acute toxicity values range from over 1 mg L-1 to 100 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, and the LC50 for fish is over 10 mg L<sup>-1</sup>. The main aldehydes formed by ozonation are formaldehyde (H<sub>2</sub>CO), acetaldehyde (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>O), glyoxal (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>) and methylglyoxal, all of which are potentially carcinogenic and mutagenic and have been observed to cause tumours in experimental animals (Bull & Koppfler, 1991). Italian law sets limits for total aldehyde concentrations in wastewater for discharge and for re-use at 1 mg L<sup>-1</sup> and 0.5 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, respectively, and this may be an important constraint when high doses of ozone are needed to remove recalcitrant pollutants (Mezzanotte et al., 2005) Many data exist regarding ozonation by-products at low ozone doses, while doses of over 10 mg L<sup>-1</sup> have been less studied. On the other hand, kinetic studies and detailed analyses have been conducted on pure solutions of selected dyestuffs (De Souza et al, 2010, Koch et al., 2002). The above considerations, along with the evidence of several ecotoxicological surveys, have suggested the opportunity to investigate the quantitative relationships between ozone dose, contact time, colour removal and aldehyde formation on real effluent samples in order to assess the performance of the process in presence of all the possible factors affecting colour removal and by-product generation. In this view, a series of experimental tests was performed to define the ozone dose needed to achieve complete colour removal from Bulgarograsso WWTP, representative of common situations in industrial districts, and to assess the potential by-product generation corresponding to the tested ozone dose.

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## 2. Materials and methods

## 2.1 Experimental Design

Twelve samples, representative of the ordinary inflow conditions at the Bulgarograsso WWTP, were collected, as described above, at different times. On average, COD was 70  $\pm$  30 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, absorbance at 426, 558 and 660 nm was 0.145  $\pm$  0.038, 0.104  $\pm$  0.027 and

0.049 ± 0.015, respectively, total aldehydes below the L.O.D. and pH 7.4÷7.5. The high variability of the effluent chemical composition depends on the fact that industrial wastewaters derive from small and medium size factories working for third parties and with a certain discontinuity of industrial processes and production.

Each sample was ozonated at 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60 mg L<sup>-1</sup> ozone doses and three different contact times (30, 60, 90 min) were tested for each dose. At least 6 replicates were completed for each combination of dose and contact time.

Removal efficiency has been evaluated using a two-way ANOVA model, considering both ozone dose and contact time as treatments. To observe differences among specific treatments, a posteriori comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD tests.

## 2.2 Experimental Tests

In the ozonation trials, a pressurised dry air-fed ozone generator (model TP 1/1 A/O<sub>2</sub>, Ozono Elettronica Internazionale) was used. Ozone was injected through a ceramic porous diffuser into a 10 L contact reactor where mixing was optimised by magnetic stirring. Ozone production and the working time of the ozone generator were set to obtain the expected ozone concentration in the sample. Excess residual ozone was removed by bubbling it into two in-series bottles filled with saturated KI solutions.

### 2.3 Sampling

The ozone treatment trials were carried out on samples collected at the outlet of sand filtration of the Bulgarograsso WWTP. Samples (30 L) were collected in plastic containers and transferred to the laboratory for analytical determination and ozone treatment. Analyses and treatments were performed the same day of sampling to minimise the chemical and biological degradation of the effluent components.

- 149 2.4 Analyses
- 150 COD, colour and total aldehyde concentration were analysed in the collected samples
- prior to the ozone experimental trials. The analyses of the total aldehyde concentration
- and colour were repeated after ozone treatment.
- 153 COD and total aldehyde analyses were performed according to the APHA Standard
- Methods (APHA, 1998) and Italian standard methods (APAT-IRSA, 2003), respectively.
- 155 Colour was determined by absorbance at 426, 558 and 660 nm on 0.45-µm filtered
- samples by a Hach Lange DR3900 Visible Spectrophotometer.
- 157 After ozonation, the samples were further investigated by identifying the aldehydes
- 158 formed. The concentrations of formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acetone, glyoxal,
- methylglyoxal and acrolein were determined by HPLC-UV, after derivatisation with 2,4-
- Dinitrophenylhydrazine (DNPH) (USEPA, 1996).
- Such compounds have been chosen based on their toxicity, according to the literature
- 162 data (Bull & Koppfler, 1991).

# 164 3. Results and discussion

165 3.1 Colour removal

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The various tested doses and contact times were evaluated to assess the optimal operation parameters to obtain a nearly complete colour removal, thus minimising the impact of the effluent input on the receiving water body. To obtain a better quantifiable objective, a series of colour measurements has been performed at the three reference wavelengths. The absorbance thresholds for non-detectable colour in the treated effluent have been found at 0.012 (426 nm), 0.009 (558 nm) and 0.05 (660 nm). It is interesting to observe that the threshold below which colour is not detectable is neither the same in untreated and treated samples nor for different treatment doses, apart from consistently being lower for the 660 nm wavelength. In contrast, absorbance is always much higher at

426 nm than at the other wavelengths; at 558 and 660 nm, absorbance is, on average, 57% and 33% of that of the 426 nm value. The influence of the starting quality must also be taken into account. The starting COD is a chief component of ozone demand, and the extent of its oxidation by ozone affects the overall effect of ozonation, including colour removal. To overcome the problem and try to obtain a general interpretation to the experimental data, the percent removal of colour at the three tested wavelengths has been plotted against specific ozone dose for the three wavelengths. In Figure 1, percent colour removal has been reported as a function of absolute ozone dose (mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>) and of specific ozone doses referred to initial COD (mg O<sub>3</sub> mg COD<sup>-1</sup>) and initial absorbance (mg O<sub>3</sub> (absorbance unit\*100)<sup>-1</sup>) for 426 nm wavelength. Further data, referred to 558 and 660 nm wavelength, are provided as supplementary material. Colour removal is well described by logarithmic equations, as also reported in the literature (Sevimli & Sarikaya, 2002), with a strong fitting in both cases. Colour and COD are normally co-variants in the starting sample, even if ozone treatment affects their ratio because ozone is more efficient in removing colour than COD. It is also true that, for common use, the measurement of colour is much simpler and faster than COD analysis and the possibility of using absorbance as reference parameter for setting ozone dose would be of great use.

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To better understand the process, the specific roles of ozone dose and contact time have been considered. Box-plots reporting the absorbance measured at the three tested wavelengths as a function of ozone dose for the three contact times and the three tested wavelengths are included in the Supplementary Material.

A two-way ANOVA model has subsequently been performed on the whole dataset. The results are summarised in Table 1. The model shows high significance for all the three wavelengths (always p<0.0001). It can easily be observed that the role of contact time is nearly negligible (p = non-significant for all the three wavelengths), while colour removal is significantly different among the different ozone doses (p<0.0001 for all the three

wavelengths) and increases with increasing ozone doses. Tukey's HSD tests performed on ozone doses at 426 nm show that every dose increase causes a significant (always p<0.0001) increase in colour removal, except for the highest dose increase (from 50 to 60 mg L<sup>-1</sup>), which does not involve any further significant removal. At both 558 and 660 nm, the increase of ozone dose results in a significantly increased removal of absorbance at every step from 10 to 30 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>. Over such a threshold, a significant improvement takes place only when the ozone dose is raised from 30 to 50 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup> (p=0.006 at 558 nm and p=0.002 at 660 nm) but not for any further dose increase. According to various Authors (Wu & Wang, 2001; Chu & Ma, 2000), the decreasing efficiency of growing ozone doses can depend on the low molecular diffusion of dissolved ozone. This could explain the fact that over 50 mg L-1 no improvement in colour removal takes place. Below such threshold, the presence of intermediates could justify the growing ozone consumption with increasing ozone doses (Sevimli & Sarikaya, 2002) and a consequently lower efficiency in colour removal. Neglecting contact time, as it has been shown to be not relevant, the average colour unit removal per mg  $O_3$  L<sup>-1</sup> is 0.0018±0.0004, 0.0016±0.0005 and 0.0006±0.0002 for 426, 558 and 660 nm absorbance, respectively. Of course, the observed specific colour removal cannot be generalized, being strongly affected by the specific concentrations of the

As previously described, in the present case, the 426 nm wavelength absorbance plays a major role in the colour detectability.

different dyestuffs as well as by the overall properties of the treated effluent, but provide a

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## 3.2 Aldehyde production

useful indication.

The total amount of aldehydes has been determined in all samples, and the results are reported in Figure 2 as a function of ozone dose and contact time. A two-way ANOVA

- model has been performed on the results, which were highly significant ( $F_{20, 129} = 177.066$ ;
- 228 p<0.0001).
- In contrast to the results concerning colour, both the ozone dose and contact time have
- been shown to significantly affect aldehyde production (p<0.0001 for ozone dose and
- p=0.007 for contact time). Tukey's HSD test applied to ozone doses shows that with every
- dose increase from 0 (no dose) to 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>, the increase in aldehydes is significant
- (always p<0.0001). Tukey's HSD test applied to contact times shows that the production of
- 234 aldehydes significantly increases when contact time is raised from 30 to 60 min (p=0.03),
- but not when contact time grows from 60 to 90 min.
- 236 Considering the specific ozone dose, referred both to COD (mg O<sub>3</sub> mg COD<sup>-1</sup>) and to
- 237 absorbance (mg O<sub>3</sub> (unit absorbance\*100)<sup>-1</sup>), the correlation is not so strict. This can be
- explained by the unspecificity of COD and colour measurements. As aldehydes are
- derived from only a small fraction of COD and dye residues, the identification of the
- involved fractions would need further, more specific investigations.
- Upon analysing the whole dataset, the aldehyde concentrations in the treated samples
- ranged from 0.09 to 1.02 mg L<sup>-1</sup>. At 60 mg O<sub>3</sub> L<sup>-1</sup>, the aldehyde concentration ranged from
- 243 0.72 to 1.02 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, practically complying with Italian law standards (1 mg L<sup>-1</sup> in treated
- effluents), and otherwise acceptable from a toxicological point of view.
- The experimental data show that in the present case study an increase in contact time
- 246 would be useless for colour removal and negative for aldehyde production (even if
- 247 differences are very small) apart from being more expensive.
- 249 3.3 Speciation of carbonyl compounds

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- Carboxylic acids and aldehydes are the main products of wastewater ozone oxidation
- 251 (Wert et al., 2007; Tripathi et al., 2011), but aldehydes are more important from a

toxicological point of view. Figure 3 reports the concentration of the analysed aldehydes at 252 different O<sub>3</sub> doses after 90 min of treatment. 253 According to Wert et al. (2007), formaldehyde was found to be the predominant carbonyl 254 compound generated during drinking water ozonation. In our study, however, glyoxal was 255 found to be the main carbonylic by-product. Among the analysed carbonyl compounds, a 256 correlation to ozone dose was established for glyoxal and methylglyoxal, while no 257 significant trend could be observed for the remaining compounds. For glyoxal and 258 methylglyoxal, a linear correlation between ozone dose and concentration existed, in 259 addition to the influence of contact time, as shown in Figure 4. Concentrations generally 260 261 increased for increasing contact time from 30 to 60 min and then decreased upon increase in contact time to 90 min. From a statistical basis, however, differences were not 262 significant. The secondary (when not negligible) role of the contact time in the production 263 264 of formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, glyoxal or methylglyoxal concentration agrees with the results reported by Silva et al. (2010) and Tripathi et al. (2011). 265 From a chemical point of view, the obtained results have been rationalised based on the 266 reactivity of azo dyes during ozonation. In fact, the analysed samples, collected after a 267 complete treatment sequence, were characterised by a low COD value chiefly due to the 268 presence of residual azo dyes. Glyoxal was found to be the main oxidation product, in 269 agreement with the results obtained by Rivera-Utrilla et al. (2002) in the oxidation of 270 sulphonaphtalene with ozone in the presence of ter-butyl alcohol (a suppressor of OH 271 radical). A direct attack of ozone on the activated aromatic ring caused a ring opening and 272 easily lead to formation of glyoxal. Additionally, in the case of radical reaction, the OH-273 radical addition reaction of the aromatic compounds with highly activated aromatic rings 274 resulted in the formation of a hydroxycyclohexadienyl radical, also termed aromatic-OH 275 adduct and an important end product is glyoxal. A significant linear regression between 276

colour removal and glyoxal and methylglyoxal formation can be established, as shown in Figure 5.

In our experimental conditions, it was not possible to establish the main mechanism of

### 4. Conclusions

ozone reaction; either direct ozone reaction or OH radical formation were presumably in action and were responsible for both colour removal and aldehyde production.

In fact, even if it is well known that colour removal by ozone is more efficient in strongly alkaline conditions (for the prevailing of hydroxyl radicals) (Balcioglu & Arslan, 2001), it was decided to operate without adjusting pH. The choice was made considering that significant differences in the process performance have been reported for pH around 11 (Sevimli & Sarikaya, 2002; Balcioglu & Arslan, 2001), while smaller increases from

neutrality seem to have negligible effects. At full scale, and considering the strong buffer potential of wastewater, raising pH from neutrality to 11 would involve unsustainable costs

which would be further increased by the need for re-adjusting it around neutrality before

the final discharge.

The final aldehyde concentration was acceptable even in the highest dose trials. However, glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentrations grew linearly with increasing ozone dose. The obtained data show that the extent of colour removal can be used for predicting the increase in glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentrations. Even if aldehydes could potentially derive from a variety of compounds, in textile dyeing effluents, after a complete treatment sequence of mechanical and biological treatments, it is likely that the major involved component is the residual dyestuff one. Moreover, colour removal is an indicator of the extent of oxidation reactions. Colour removal can be assessed by a simple absorbance measurement, as opposed to the analysis of specific carbonyl compounds, which is much longer and complex. So, the possibility of using colour removal as an indicator for

predicting the aldehyde related toxic potential of ozone treated effluents containing azo dyes is of great value.

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## Acknowledgment

- The research program was funded by Alto Lura SpA. The authors are especially grateful to
- the staff of the Bulgarograsso (Como, Italy) wastewater treatment plant for their effective
- 309 collaboration.

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## **CAPTIONS TO FIGURES**

- Figure 1 Percent removal of colour (as absorbance at 426 nm wavelength) as a function of ozone dose and specific ozone doses referred to COD and to initial absorbance
- Figure 2 Box plot representation of aldehyde concentration as a function of ozone doses for the three contact times (30, 60 and 90 min).
- Figure 3 Concentration (µmol/L) of formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acetone, acrolein, glyoxal and methylglyoxal as a function of ozone doses (90' contact time).
- Figure 4 Box plot representation of aldehyde concentration as a function of ozone doses for the three contact times (30, 60 and 90 min).
- Figure 5 Glyoxal and methylglyoxal concentration as a function of percent colour removal.

Fig.1

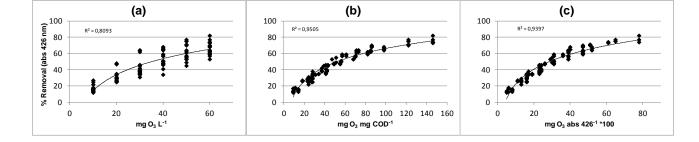


Fig.2

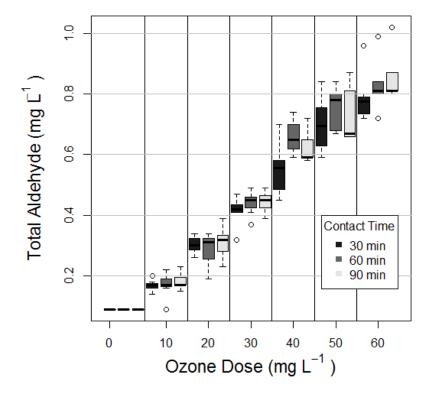


Fig.3

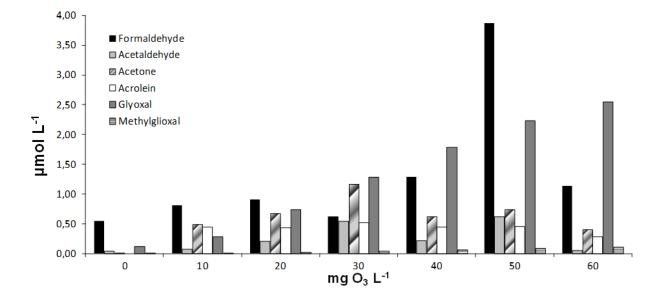


Fig.4

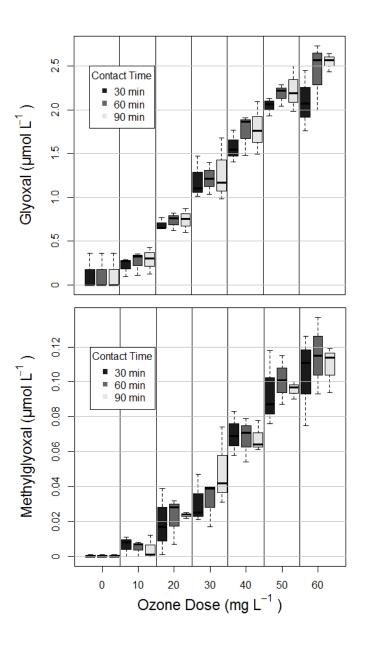
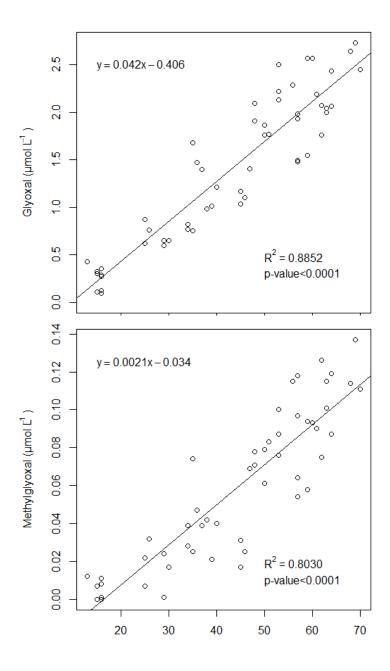


Fig.5



## Table

**Click here to download Table: Table 1.docx** 

## **CAPTIONS TO TABLE**

Table 1 - Two-way ANOVA table for colour removal at the three wavelengths.

Table 1

| Source  | Degrees of freedom (df) | Sum of squares (SS) | Mean square<br>(MS) | F-ratio | <i>P</i> -value |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------|
| 426 nm (F <sub>17, 99</sub> = 40.944; p<0.0001) |                         |                     |                     |         |                 |
| Ozone dose                                      | 5                       | 0.0461              | 0.0092              | 136.692 | < 0.0001        |
| Contact time                                    | 2                       | 0.0004              | 0.0002              | 2.734   | 0.070           |
| Interaction                                     | 10                      | 0.0005              | 0.0000              | 0.712   | 0.711           |
| Residual  | 99                      | 0.0067              | 0.0001              |         |                 |
| Total   | 116                     | 0.0536              |                     |         |                 |
| 558 nm (F <sub>17, 99</sub> = 19.183; p<0.0001) |                         |                     |                     |         |                 |
| Ozone dose                                      | 5                       | 0.0266              | 0.0053              | 64.196  | < 0.0001        |
| Contact time                                    | 2                       | 0.0001              | 0.0001              | 0.763   | 0.469           |
| Interaction                                     | 10                      | 0.0003              | 0.0000              | 0.360   | 0.961           |
| Residual  | 99                      | 0.0082              | 0.0001              |         |                 |
| Total   | 116                     | 0.0352              |                     |         |                 |
| 660 nm ( $F_{17, 99} = 16.222$ ; p<0.0001)      |                         |                     |                     |         |                 |
| Ozone dose                                      | 5                       | 0.00601             | 0.0012              | 54.557  | < 0.0001        |
| Contact time                                    | 2                       | 0.00002             | 0.0000              | 0.553   | 0.577           |
| Interaction                                     | 10                      | 0.00004             | 0.0000              | 0.189   | 0.997           |
| Residual  | 99                      | 0.00218             | 0.0000              |         |                 |
| Total   | 116                     | 0.00825             |                     |         |                 |

