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Ztek Corporation Revolutionizes Fuel Cell Industry With Versatile Hydrogen Reformer

Efficient Technology allows fuel cell vehicles to refuel at gas stations

WOBURN, MA (March 27, 2002) – Ztek Corporation, a leader in the development of Solid Oxide Fuel Cell technology, today announced it has successfully extracted hydrogen from regular unleaded gasoline using Ztek's patented reformer.

This breakthrough could revolutionize the fuel cell industry by freeing vehicles from the need for an expensive and heavy on-board reformer. By locating reformers at existing service stations, fuel cell vehicles would be refueled similar to current gasoline-powered cars, requiring little change in consumers' fueling or driving habits.

Ztek's reformer extracts hydrogen from gasoline or natural gas. The reformer will extract 85 percent of potential energy from the fuel – many times that of the well-known electrolysis process. The result is a significant reduction in fuel needed to produce the hydrogen. In addition, unlike other reformers, the Ztek reformer does not require any precious metals for its components, greatly reducing costs.

“There is national interest in hydrogen for fuel cells today. This device should make hydrogen easily available to the public driving hydrogen-fueled vehicles. Ultimately, integrating the reformer with our SOFC system will offer station owners a complete power and energy solution,” said Dr. Michael Hsu, Ztek's founder and CEO.

Current reforming methods in use are incompatible with an increasingly “green” automobile. Electrolysis, a competing process used to power fuel cells, uses electricity to produce hydrogen, reducing, if not eliminating, any positive environmental impact. Other known reforming methods emit greenhouse gases, such as CO₂, directly into the atmosphere.

Ztek's reformer allows for separation and sequestration of the carbon dioxide byproduct.

“This advance will extend the life of existing fuel resources and dramatically lessen the environmental impact of consuming those fuels”, said Dr. S.H. Chan, former Dean of the University of Wisconsin School of Engineering and currently President of Yuan Ze University in Taiwan.

Ztek is currently in the process of integrating the components needed to produce pure hydrogen for fueling. Ztek's prepackaged, high-efficiency hydrogen reformer will be available later this year.

About Ztek

Ztek Corporation is a privately held corporation located in Woburn, Massachusetts. The company's mission is to develop and commercialize the world's cleanest, most efficient fossil fuel energy conversion devices. Founded in 1983 by Dr. Michael Hsu, Ztek has been engaged in the development of Solid Oxide Fuel Cell technology, including hydrogen-reforming technology. It holds more than 150 U.S. and international patents on its various key innovations for achieving improved efficiency, simplified and reduced cost of production.