

II.E.1 One Step Biomass Gas Reforming-Shift Separation Membrane Reactor

Michael J. Roberts (Primary Contact),
Chinbay Fan, Michael Onischak
Gas Technology Institute (GTI)
1700 South Mount Prospect Road
Des Plaines, IL 60018
Phone: (847) 768-0518; Fax: (847) 768-0600
E-mail: mike.roberts@gastechnology.org

DOE Technology Development Manager:
Mark Paster

Phone: (202) 586-2821; Fax: (202) 586-9811
E-mail: Mark.Paster@ee.doe.gov

DOE Project Officer: David Peterson
Phone: (303) 275-4956; Fax: (303) 275-4753
E-mail: david.peterson@go.doe.gov

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Subcontractors:

- Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), Pittsburgh, PA
- Schott North America, Duryea, PA
- ATI Wah Chang, Albany, OR

Project Start Date: February 1, 2007
Project End Date: January 1, 2011

Technical Targets

This project is directed at developing a membrane reactor that can survive the rigors of a gasification reactor environment while having a sufficiently high hydrogen flux to achieve a hydrogen production cost of \$1.60/kg (without delivery) per the DOE 2012 technical target.



Approach

Our approach is shown in Figure 1 and shows a membrane inside the fluidized-bed gasifier to extract hydrogen directly from the gasifier using a high temperature H₂-selective membrane.

This approach will achieve a one-step biomass gas reforming, shift and hydrogen separation.

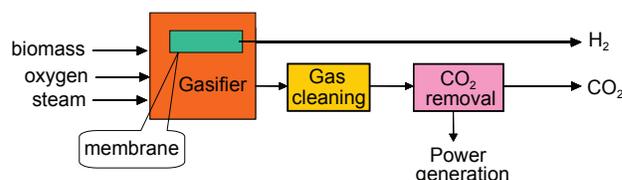


FIGURE 1. Integrated Approach to Hydrogen Production and Separation

Objectives

- Reduce the cost of hydrogen from biomass to \$1.60/kg H₂ (without delivery).
- Develop an efficient membrane reactor that combines biomass gasification, reforming, shift reaction and H₂ separation in one step.
- Develop hydrogen-selective membrane materials compatible with the biomass gasification conditions.
- Demonstrate the feasibility of the concept in a bench-scale biomass gasifier.

Technical Barriers

This project addresses the following technical barriers from the Hydrogen Production section of the Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Infrastructure Technologies Program Multi-Year Research, Development and Demonstration Plan:

- (L) Impurities
- (N) Hydrogen Selectivity
- (O) Operating Temperature
- (P) Flux

Accomplishments

Hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) is a typical contaminant in the syngas generated from solid-fuel gasification systems. For biomass gasification systems, depending on the feedstocks, the H₂S content is generally below 1,000 ppm.

Hydrogen permeation tests in the presence of hydrogen sulfide were conducted for the PdCu membrane at several temperatures as shown in Figures 2 and 3. There was no apparent effect on the hydrogen permeation due to the H₂S for several hours.

Although this project was recently initiated, the work shown in Figures 2 and 3 was conducted through GTI's cost sharing activity.

Future Directions

- Improve proton and electronic conductivity and chemical stability of ceramic membrane (ASU).
- Develop synthesis methods to prepare thin membranes of modified ceramics.

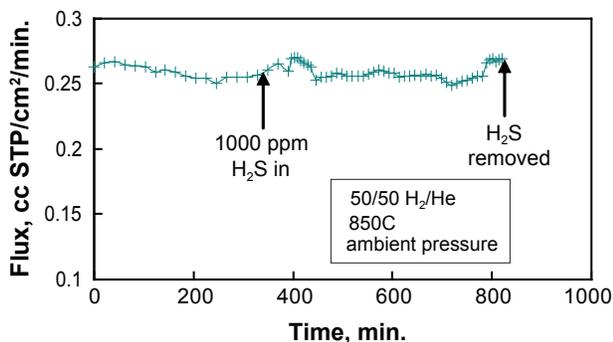


FIGURE 2. Effect of H₂S on Pd₈₀Cu₂₀ Alloy Membrane at 850°C

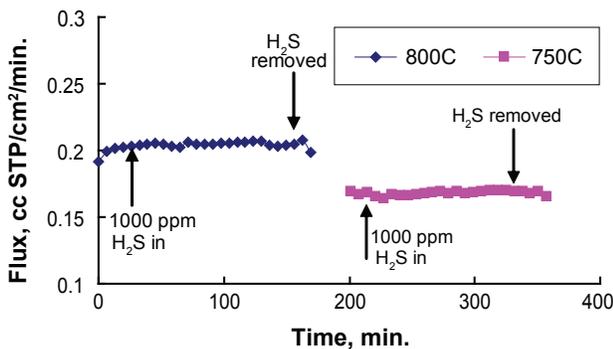


FIGURE 3. Effect of H₂S on Pd₈₀Cu₂₀ Alloy Membrane at 800 and 750°C

- Conduct oxidation and sulfidation corrosion analysis (NETL).
- Develop robust membrane materials to withstand gasifier conditions.
- Survey known glass-ceramic compositional families with respect to H₂ permeability (Schott North America).
- Evaluate using glass as a substrate to incorporate other hydrogen transport materials such as Pd or other metals.
- Evaluate conceptual design, tubular, planar, or monolithic.
- Sealing development assisted by ATI Wah Chang.
- Mechanical design of membrane.