DEVELOPMENTS IN CARBON MATERIALS

Timothy D. Burchell

Leader, Carbon Materials Technology Group
Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Building 4508, MS 6088
P. O. Box 2008
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831-6088

Telephone 615-576-8595
Overview of Presentation

The following carbon-based materials will be reviewed and their applications discussed:

- The Fullerenes
- Graphite (synthetic or manufactured)
- Activated carbon fibers
- Carbon-carbon composites

Carbon R&D activities at ORNL will be emphasized.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

SYNTHETIC GRAPHITE

A material consisting of graphitic carbon which has been obtained by graphitizing non-graphitic carbon.

CARBON-CARBON COMPOSITES

A carbon fiber reinforced carbon matrix material in which the fiber and/or matrix may be graphitic (graphite-graphite composite)
Fig. 4. Laser desorption TOF mass spectra of soot extracts resulting from sequential extractions with (A) benzene, (B) pyridine, and (C) 1,2,3,5-tetramethylbenzene. The spectra are plotted on the same mass scale for comparison.
THE FULLERENES

Potential Applications of the Fullerenes

- Pharmaceutical
- Tribological (lubricant)
- Super conductor
- Thermal insulator
SYNTHETIC GRAPHITE

What is Graphite?

- An allotropic form of carbon
- Hexagonal 2D crystal structure
- Layered crystal planes
- Highly anisotropic
- Conductor in plane, insulator across planes
- A fun material to work with!
THE MAJOR PROCESSING STAGES IN THE MANUFACTURE OF CONVENTIONAL ARTIFICIAL GRAPHITES

1. Raw Petroleum or Pitch Coke
   - Calcined at 1300 °C
2. Calcined Coke
   - Crushed, Grounded and Blended
3. Blended Particles
   - Mixed, Cooled
   - Extruded, Molded or Isostatically Pressed
4. Green Artifact
   - Baked at 1000 °C
5. Baked Artifact
   - Impregnated to Densify
   - Graphitized 2500 - 2800 °C
6. Graphite
Graphite Possesses Unique Properties

- High temperature stability
- High electrical and thermal conductivity
- Chemically inert
- Strength increases with temperature
- Processible and machinable to all forms and sizes

Applications of Graphite

- Arc furnace electrodes
- Resistance heating elements
- Crucibles and boats (semiconductor industry)
- Rocket motor throats, missile nose tips
- EDM electrodes
- Seals and bearings
- Electric motor brushes
- Metal refining and casting
- Nuclear moderator
The CMT Group Is Developing A Design Data Base For the Graphite Core Of The MHTGR

Graphite Data Base Development
- Effects of reactor environment on graphite properties
  - Neutron irradiation
  - He coolant chemistry and oxidation
  - Temperature and pressure
- Strength, strain to failure
  - Elastic constants
  - Fatigue behavior
  - Fracture mechanics data
  - Thermal physical properties
  - Oxidation behavior and mechanisms
- C/C composite control rod development
Activated Carbons are a Broad Family of Carbon Materials

- Coal-derived carbons
- Almond shells
- Olive pits, peach pits
- Charcoal
- AC from waste paper
- Activated carbon fibers

Applications of Activated Carbons

- Gas separation
- Air filtration
- Water filtration
- Solvent recovery
- Military suiting
- Molecular sieves
Activated Carbon Fibers (ACF)

- ACF can be derived from pitch (coal tar or petroleum), polyacrylonitrile (PAN), or rayon precursors
- Fibers are loosely consolidated into a felt, mat or woven cloth, or rigid porous monolith
- Product is thermally activated at temperatures in the range 700-1000°C in steam
Carbon Fiber Composite Molecular Sieve

At ORNL we have developed a rigid, monolithic-activated carbon material named a carbon fiber composite molecular sieve. The material retains the advantages of ACF and, additionally, overcomes problems associated with granular activated carbons.

Hydrogen Separation Is Widely Achieved Using Pressure Swing Adsorption Systems

UOP Polybed PSA Unit treats gas streams from reformer hydrogen plant to produce 66 million SCFD of hydrogen.
"Although there is some room for improvements in the pressure swing adsorption process, the potential gains in process economics in the future are likely to come from the development of new and improved adsorbents."

R. V. Jasra, N. V. Choudary, and S. G. T. Bhat
Research Center, Indian Petrochemicals Corp.

CMT Group Has Developed A Novel Adsorbent/Molecular Sieve Based On Carbon Fibers

Carbon Fiber Composite Molecular Sieve
- High adsorption/desorption rates
- High active surface area
- Microporous [5-10 Å] fibers

Applications: Gas separation, gas storage, air filtration, pressure swing adsorption systems
Activated Carbon Fibers Adsorb And Desorb More Rapidly Than Granular Activated Carbon

- CCl₄ adsorption rate is twice that of granular carbon
- >10 times higher adsorption/desorption rates reported for toluene and methane

Carbon Tetrachloride Adsorption Rates

![Graph showing adsorption rates](image)


ORNL Activated Carbon Fiber Composites Have Very High Active Surface Areas

N₂ BET Surface Areas Of Materials That Have Well-known Molecular Sieve Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Molecular Sieve</th>
<th>N₂(m²/g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linde 5 Å zeolite</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linde 4 Å zeolite</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linde 3 Å zeolite</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbosieve</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saranchar</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch fiber CFCMS</td>
<td>&gt;1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(non-optimal condition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Active surface areas up to 1670 m²/g have been achieved with ORNL CFCs
- Carbon fiber active surface areas > 2000 m²/g and 10 Å pore width have been reported (OSAKA Gas)
ORNL Carbon Fiber Composites Have High Active Surface Area And Are Very Microporous

- Narrow pore size distribution
- Pore size centered at ~ 6 Å pore width
- High active surface area (904 m²/g)
- Active surface areas >2000 m²/g possible

SEPARATION OF CO₂ & CH₄ BY CFCMS (STP)
(Initial composition 50vol% CO₂ and CH₄)

Carbon: CFCMS-48; BET=822 m²/g⁻¹; l = 0.74 nm
Summary And Conclusions

- ORNL/UKCAER have developed a monolithic adsorbent carbon based on carbon fibers

- Gross macroporosity and microporosity can be controlled through processing variables

- Activated carbon fibers have adsorption rates greater than twice that of conventional activated carbons

- Very high active surface areas can be developed in carbon fibers (OSAKA gas report >2000 m²/g (N₂) ASA, 10 Å pore width)

- Narrow micropore size distributions can be achieved in the range 5-10 Å

- A monolithic activated carbon material has significant advantages over granular activated materials for use in pressure swing adsorption equipment, such as the elimination of channelling, by-pass flows and pressure drops
CARBON-CARBON COMPOSITES

FLOW DIAGRAM FOR A TYPICAL CARBON / CARBON COMPOSITE PRODUCTION PROCESS

PITCH (petroleum or coal derived), RESIN

CARBON FIBER BUNDLES (Pitch, PAN or Rayon)

CLOTH LAY-UP, WEAVING
PIERCING, NEEDLING, etc.

DRY PREFORM

IMPREGNATION
150 - 450 °C
VACUUM TO 10 MPa

UP TO 5 ADDITIONAL CYCLES

CARBONIZATION
600 - 800 °C
VACUUM TO 10 MPa

GRAPHITIZATION
>2400 °C

FINAL COMPOSITE DENSITY ~ 1.9 g/cm³
THE STRUCTURE OF AN ORTHOGONAL CARBON-CARBON COMPOSITE SHOWING THE THREE MUTUALLY PERPENDICULAR FIBER REINFORCEMENT DIRECTIONS (x, y, and z)

Applications of Carbon-Carbon Composites

- Reentry vehicle nose tips
- Rocket motor throats and nozzles
- Exit cones
- Aircraft brakes
- Thermal protection
- Thermal management systems
- Fusion reactor first wall armor
Carbon-Carbon Composites for Fusion Energy Devices

ORNL has an active program to develop high-thermal conductivity, carbon-carbon composites for plasma facing components in tokamak fusion reactors. Moreover, we are investigating the effects of neutron damage on the structure and properties of carbon-carbon composites.

CMT Group is leading the development of neutron irradiation tolerant C/C composite materials for fusion energy first wall applications.

Joint European Torus

First Wall C/C Composites
- Neutron damage
  - Dimensional stability
  - Effects on thermal conductivity
- Development of high thermal conductivity uni-directional C/C composite
THE MAJOR PLASMA FACING COMPONENTS OF A TOKOMAK FUSION DEVICE

Carbon Materials Are Widely Used For Tokomak First Wall Armor

JT-60U (Japan)  JET (England)  TFTR (USA)
PLASMA FACING COMPONENTS

MATERIALS REQUIREMENTS

- LOW ATOMIC NUMBER
- HIGH THERMAL CONDUCTIVITY
- GOOD THERMAL SHOCK RESISTANCE
- EROSION RESISTANT (PLASMA SPUTTERING)
- ADEQUATE STRENGTH AND STIFFNESS TO WITHSTAND ELECTROMAGNETIC FORCES DURING DISRUPTIONS
- RESISTANT TO IRRADIATION DAMAGE

RADIATION DAMAGE IN GRAPHITE

\[ \text{INTERSTITIAL} \rightarrow \text{VACANCY} \]

\[ \text{COLLAPSING VACANCY LINE} \rightarrow \text{CONTRACTION} \]

\[ \text{NEW PLANE} \rightarrow \text{EXPANSION} \]
**TYPICAL CARBON FIBER STRUCTURES**

![Diagram of typical carbon fiber structures with labels for graphite planes and fiber diameter.]

Typical fiber diameter ~ 10 μm

RADIAL

HOURGLASS

G.M. Pennock et al.  
CARBON, Vol. 31,  
p. 596, 597 1993

**MICROSTRUCTURAL INTERPRETATIONS OF IRRADIATION INDUCED DIMENSIONAL CHANGES IN 1D C/C COMPOSITES**

![Diagram showing microstructural interpretations of irradiation induced dimensional changes in 1D C/C composites.]

(a) CONTRACTION  
(b) ACCOMMODATING POROSITY  
(c) EXPANSION INITIALLY ACCOMMODATED BY POROSITY

1D C/C COMPOSITE

![Graph showing diameter and length changes with fluence.]

Diameter

Length

DIMENSIONAL CHANGE (%)
MICROSTRUCTURAL INTERPRETATIONS OF IRRADIATION INDUCED DIMENSIONAL CHANGES IN 2D C/C COMPOSITES

Developments in Carbon Materials
Recommended Texts for Carbon Materials

Introduction to Carbon Science

Harry Marsh
Published Butterworth & Co., Ltd., 1989
ISBN 0-408-03837-3

Carbon Fibers

J. B. Donnett and R. P. Bansal
2nd Edition, Published Marcel Dekker
New York, 1992

The Industrial Graphite Engineering Handbook

UCAR Carbon Company, 1991
(39 Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury, CT 06817-0001)
More Advanced Text:

*Physics of Graphite*

B. T. Kelly  
Published Applied Science, 1981  
ISBN 0-85334-960-6

*Adsorption, Surface Area, and Porosity*

S. J. Gregg and K. S. W. Sing  
LIQUIDS THAT TAKE ONLY MILLISECONDS TO TURN INTO SOLIDS

John A. Marshall

School of Industry and Technology
East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina 27858

Telephone 919-757-6705
Liquids That Take Only Milliseconds to Turn into Solids

John A. Marshall, PhD
School of Industry and Technology
East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina 27858

KEY WORDS:

Electrorheology, electrorheological fluid, fluid power transmission, hydraulics.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE:

The student should understand the elementary concepts of magnetism. A basic understanding of fluid flow would be helpful.

OBJECTIVE:

To observe the unusual characteristics of electrorheological fluids. To understand how these fluids change from a liquid to a solid. To understand the potential power transmission advantages of these fluids.

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

1) Plastic bottle containing electrorheological fluid.
2) Energizing probe
3) Personal safety equipment
4) Paper towels
5) Pen

INTRODUCTION:

Electrorheological fluids change their flow characteristics when subject to an electrical field. Response, which takes only milliseconds, is in the form of a progressive gelling that is proportional to field strength. With no field present, the fluid flows as freely as hydraulic oil (Korane, 1991).
Electrorheological fluids represent a maturing technology that has the potential to widen the performance range of automated electromechanical and electrohydraulic equipment. Research and ongoing developments are refining this technology and experts predict an important future for these fluids.

Importance of Electrorheological Fluids:

Current automation capabilities are not advanced enough to build a robot that could play tennis. Even though cameras and computers could direct the robot towards a ball, robots move in an awkward, lumbering fashion because conventional hydraulic valves cannot keep pace with the commands of the computerized controllers.

With electrorheological fluid technology, this type of response time is possible. This technology will allow devices that can operate instantly and without mechanical valves. Increased productivity and better product quality through more dependable and responsive automated equipment is just a small part of what this maturing technology can deliver.

How Electrorheological Fluid Functions:

Electrorheological fluids are composed of two primary components. They are the carrier fluid and the suspended particles. The carrier fluid needs to be a good insulator, compatible with the materials they contact. Typical particle materials include polymers, minerals, and ceramics (Scott, 1984).

When an electrical field is applied across the fluid, positive and negative charges on the particles respond by separating, so each particle then has a positive end and a negative end. Particles of the electrorheological fluid then link together in the same manner that the north pole of one magnet is attracted to the south pole of another magnet (Duclos, 1988).

When the electrical field is removed, the particle attraction is no longer present. The fluid then begins flowing freely. Please see Figures 1 and 2.
Figure 1 - No electrical field present, charges are random, no particle attraction.

Figure 2 - Probe energizing the fluid, particles linked together.
Potential Applications:

Electrorheological fluids can change from solids to liquids so fast they will work well with fast-acting computers. These characteristics suggest a number of unusual engineering applications such as fluid clutches and vibration isolators (Duclos, 1988).

According to Hans Conrad, professor of materials, science and engineering at North Carolina State University, electrorheological fluids will lead to a whole new generation of brakes, automatic transmissions, actuator devices, hydraulic valves, pump parts, and motors (Conrad, 1992).

PROCEDURE:

Safety Considerations:

1. Be very careful to avoid being shocked by the energizing probe.
2. Protective eye wear is mandatory for all those in the lab area.
3. Do not allow the electrorheological fluid to touch anyone's skin or clothing.
4. Obtain a "Material Data Safety Sheet" on the fluid from the supplier. Read the sheet completely and ask questions relating to any information you do not understand.

Electrorheological Fluid Preparation:

1. Check the cap on the plastic bottle containing the fluid and make sure it is securely tightened.
2. Shake the bottle to distribute the stratified particles evenly within the fluid.
3. Set the bottle down on the lab bench and carefully remove the top.
Observing Electrorheological Fluid as a Liquid:

1. Slowly insert the probe into the container of fluid until the metal rods are submerged approximately two inches below the surface of the fluid.

2. Slowly withdraw the probe from the fluid and hold it slightly above the bottle. Observe what happens to the electrorheological fluid on the metal rods of the probe.

3. Set the probe on a paper towel and record your observations.

Observing Electrorheological Fluid as a Gelled Solid:

1. Slowly insert the probe into the container of fluid until the metal rods are submerged approximately two inches below the surface of the fluid.

2. Press and hold down the button on the top of the probe.

3. Slowly withdraw the probe from the fluid and hold it slightly above the bottle. Observe the status of the electrorheological fluid on the metal rods of the probe.

4. With the probe slightly above the fluid level in the bottle, release the button (de-energizing the probe) and observe what happens to the electrorheological fluid on the metal rods of the probe.

5. Set the probe down on a paper towel and record your observations.
SAMPLE DATE SHEET:

Record below the characteristics of the fluid when the probe was not energized:

Record below the characteristics of the fluid when the probe was energized:

INSTRUCTOR NOTES:

1. When the probe was removed from the fluid without being energized, students should have observed the fluid flowing off the metal rods and back into bottle. The fluid will flow as easily as oil.

2. When the probe was removed from the fluid while being energized, students should have observed a gelling of the fluid around the rods of the probe.

3. De-energizing the probe will cause the gelled electrorheological fluid to liquify and drip into the bottle.

REFERENCES:


