A regenerative adsorbent heat pump process and system is provided which can regenerate a high percentage of the sensible heat of the system and at least a portion of the heat of adsorption. A series of at least four compressors containing an adsorbent is provided. A large amount of heat is transferred from compressor to compressor so that heat is regenerated. The process and system are useful for air conditioning rooms, providing room heat in the winter or for hot water heating throughout the year, and, in general, for pumping heat from a lower temperature to a higher temperature.
Fig. 3
REGENERATIVE ADSORBENT HEAT PUMP

ORIGIN OF INVENTION

The invention described herein was made in the performance of work under a NASA Contract, and is subject to the provisions of Public Law 96-517 (35 USC 202) in which the Contractor has elected to retain title.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field

This invention is directed towards regenerative heat pump system and method using a working fluid or refrigerant and an adsorbent material.

2. Discussion of the Invention

Heat pumps using solid adsorbent beds are known as cryogenic cooler systems for sorption refrigerators described in articles entitled "High Efficiency Sorption Refrigerator Design", and, "Design and Component Test Performance of an Efficient 4 W, 130K Sorption Refrigerator" in Advances In Cryogenic Engineering, Vol. 35, Plenum Press, New York, 1990. Desorption occurs at 4.46 MPa (646 psia), i.e. \( P_H \) and adsorption at 0.15 MPa (22 psia), i.e. \( P_L \), or a pressure ratio of about 30, i.e. \( P_H/P_L = 30 \). Methane is expanded from 4.46 MPa to 0.15 MPa to achieve cooling below 130K ( -143°C ).

3. Summary of the Invention

Accordingly there is provided by the principles of this invention to provide a system and process having an enhanced coefficient of performance. Still another object of this invention is to provide a regenerative sorbent heat pump system and process which can be used for cooling rooms of a building. Yet another object of this invention is to provide a system which can be used for heating and cooling rooms and buildings in which the cooling can be for comfort or space heating in the winter or for producing hot water year around.

4. Subjects of the Invention

30

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an objective of this invention to provide a system and process improving the efficiency of regenerative sorbent heat pump operations. It is also an object of this invention to provide a system and process for regenerating at least a portion of the heat of adsorption. Another object of this invention is to provide a regenerative sorbent heat pump system and process which can be used for cooling rooms of a building. Yet another object of this invention is to provide such systems and processes which can operate using working fluids or refrigerants having very low or no atmospheric ozone-depletion-potential or "ODP". It is a further object of this invention to provide a system which can be used for heating and cooling rooms and buildings in which the heating can be for comfort or space heating in the winter or for producing hot water year around.

Accordingly there is provided by the principles of this invention a regenerative sorbent heat pump process for cooling a chamber, room or an interior space and for simultaneously regenerating at least a portion of the heat of adsorption. This invention comprises confining a sorbent in a plurality of compressor zones, the number

and a Joule-Thomson expansion valve, or "J-T" valve, with methane as a refrigerant gas and charcoal as the adsorbent, are disclosed in articles entitled "High Efficiency Sorption Refrigerator Design", and, "Design and Component Test Performance of an Efficient 4 W, 130K Sorption Refrigerator" in Advances In Cryogenic Engineering, Vol. 35, Plenum Press, New York, 1990. Desorption occurs at 4.46 MPa (646 psia), i.e. \( P_H \) and adsorption at 0.15 MPa (22 psia), i.e. \( P_L \), or a pressure ratio of about 30, i.e. \( P_H/P_L = 30 \). Methane is expanded from 4.46 MPa to 0.15 MPa to achieve cooling below 130K ( -143°C ).

In the above mentioned methane/charcoal cryogenic refrigerator, the system's high pressure ratio of about 30 essentially precludes regeneration of the heat of adsorption. Usually in systems with high pressure ratios, i.e. \( P_H/P_L \) ratios over about 10, none of the heat of adsorption can be regenerated. By the term "sensible heat" as used herein is meant the "mass" times "specific heat" times "temperature change". Therefore, unless otherwise specified, the term "sensible heat" as used herein does not include latent heat or heat of adsorption.

In order to improve system efficiency and COPs it would therefore be desirable to regenerate at least a portion of the heat of adsorption.
of compressor zones being at least four; continuously introducing a working fluid vapor from an evaporation zone into at least one of the number of compressor zones and sorbing the working fluid vapor on the sorbent therein over a predetermined first or adsorption temperature range and a predetermined first (low) pressure or $P_H$; continuously desorbing working fluid vapor from the sorbent in at least one of the remaining number of compressor zones and removing working fluid vapor therefrom over a predetermined second or desorption temperature range which is higher than the predetermined first temperature or adsorption range and at a predetermined second (high) pressure or $P_L$ which is higher than the predetermined first pressure. A part of the predetermined first or adsorption temperature range overlaps a part of the predetermined second or desorption temperature range. The process further comprises continuously condensing working fluid vapor removed from at least one of the remaining number of the compressor zones at $P_H$ and transferring heat from the working fluid to the environment thereby forming a working fluid liquid; and continuously evaporating the working fluid liquid and forming the working fluid vapor in the evaporation zone at $P_L$ by transferring heat from an interior space to the evaporation zone thereby cooling the interior zone. The process also comprises continuously circulating a heat transfer fluid in series flow through the compressor zones and preventing the heat transfer fluid from directly contacting the sorbent; and continuously removing heat from the heat transfer fluid and transferring it to the environment. The process includes adding heat from a heat source to a predetermined one of the compressor zones over a predetermined period of time; repeating the last mentioned adding heat step sequentially in each of the compressor zones; continuously indirectly transferring heat from the sorbent in at least one of the remaining number of compressors to the heat transfer fluid and from the heat transfer fluid to the sorbent in the compressor zones which are desorbing working fluid vapor thereby regenerating heat; and, maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low and the temperature overlap of the sorbing and desorbing operation sufficiently large so that at least a portion of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

In one embodiment the process further comprises maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio between about 1.1 and about 10, preferably between about 1.1 and about 5, and especially between about 1.1 and about 3. In one embodiment the process further comprises maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low that about 25% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated, preferably sufficiently low that about 50% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated, more preferably sufficiently low that about 70% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated, and especially preferably sufficiently low that about 100% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated. In one embodiment the predetermined first or adsorption temperature range is from at least about $-18^\circ$ C. (0$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $204^\circ$ C. (400$^\circ$ F.), the predetermined second or desorption temperature range is from at least about $38^\circ$ C. (100$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $316^\circ$ C. (600$^\circ$ F.), and, the adsorption and desorption temperature ranges overlap at least about 56 Celsius (100 Fahrenheit) degrees. In a preferred embodiment the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about $-18^\circ$ C. (0$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $204^\circ$ C. (400$^\circ$ F.) the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about $38^\circ$ C. (100$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $260^\circ$ C. (500$^\circ$ F.), and, the adsorption and desorption temperature ranges overlap at least about 56 Celsius (100 Fahrenheit) degrees. In an especially preferred embodiment the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about $10^\circ$ C. (50$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $177^\circ$ C. (350$^\circ$ F.), the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about $38^\circ$ C. (100$^\circ$ F.) to no more than about $232^\circ$ C. (450$^\circ$ F.), and, the adsorption and desorption temperature ranges overlap at least about 83 Celsius (150 Fahrenheit) degrees.

In one embodiment the continuous removal of heat from the heat transfer fluid and transferring it to the environment comprises continuously removing heat from the heat transfer fluid before it flows to a predetermined one of the compressor zones and transferring the removed heat to the environment. In a further embodiment the process comprises repeating the last mentioned heat removal step sequentially for each of the compressor zones.

In one embodiment the continuous removal of heat from the heat transfer fluid and transferring it to the environment comprises continuously indirectly transferring heat from the first mentioned heat transfer fluid before it flows to a predetermined one of the compressor zones and desorbing working fluid vapor from the sorbent in at least one of the remaining number of the compressors has a sorbent contained within the compressor zones and transferring the removed heat to the environment. In a further embodiment the process comprises repeating the last mentioned heat removal step sequentially for each of the compressor zones.

In still another embodiment the adding heat from a heat source to a predetermined one of the compressor zones over a predetermined period of time is performed by adding heat to a second heat transfer fluid, and, indirectly transferring heat from the second heat transfer fluid to the first heat transfer fluid before it enters the predetermined one of the compressor zones.

There is also provided by the principles of this invention a regenerative sorbent heat pump system comprising a working fluid being operable for being sorbed by a sorbent; a plurality of spaced apart compressors. The number of compressors being at least four. Each of the compressors has a sorbent contained within the compressor, an inlet for introducing the working fluid for adsorption by the sorbent, an outlet for removing working fluid desorbed from the sorbent, and a heat conductive passageway having an inlet and an outlet. The heat conductive passageway is for flowing a heat transfer fluid through the compressor and for indirectly transferring heat between the sorbent and the heat transfer fluid without the heat transfer fluid being in contact with the sorbent. The system further comprises means for removing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from each of the compressors; condensing means for transferring heat from the working fluid to the environment or a low temperature heat sink, and, for condensing working fluid vapor to form a low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid. The system also comprises evaporating means for converting
The system also includes a train formed by connecting the train outlet being connected to the first pumping channel. Each of the channels has an inlet and an outlet. Pumping means being connected to the train inlet and the series of compressors of the train. The system also communicates with each other. The first channel being each of the internal heat exchange means, and for conduction with the last heat conductive passageway of the last-in-the-series of compressors of the train. The system also has first pumping means for pumping a first heat transfer fluid around the first train. The outlet of each of the second channels to the second pump means, to the environment or a low temperature heat sink thereby providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump system.

In a further embodiment the system the further comprises heat exchanger means for the indirect transfer of heat between the low temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor, and, for transferring heat from a low temperature source external of the system, including rooms of a building, to the working fluid. Also included is liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from the evaporating means to the condensing means. And, vapor conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor into each of the compressors. The system has a plurality of indirect heat exchange means spaced apart from the compressors. The number of indirect heat exchange means being equal to the number of the compressors. Each of the indirect heat exchange means has a first channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second channel for flowing another heat transfer fluid. The channels being isolated from fluid communication with each other. The first channel being in heat conductive communication with the second channel. Each of the channels has an inlet and an outlet. The system also includes a train formed by connecting in alternating order, the first channels of the indirect heat exchange means to the heat conductive passageways. The train has a train inlet the inlet of the first channel of the first-in-the-series of indirect heat exchange means of the train, and, an outlet of the heat conductive passageway of the last-in-the-series of compressors of the train. The system also has first pumping means for pumping a first heat transfer fluid around the first train. The outlet of the first pumping means is connected to the train inlet and the train outlet being connected to the first pumping means inlet. The system includes second pumping means for conveying a second heat transfer fluid; connecting means for connecting the outlet of the second pumping means to the inlet of the second channel of each of the internal heat exchange means, and for connecting the outlet of each of the second channels thereof to the second pumping means inlet. Also included is flow control means for directing the second heat transfer fluid from the second pumping means to the second channel of a predetermined one of the indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined order thereby defining a flow cycle, and, thereby enabling heat transfer between the first heat transfer fluid in the first channel thereof and the second heat transfer fluid in the second connecting channel thereof. Also included is primary or auxiliary heat exchanger means for heating each of the compressors; and heat control means for controlling the heating period of the primary heating means in each of the compressors thereby defining a heating cycle. Heat discharge means is included for transferring heat from the second heat transfer fluid flowing in the connecting means from the second channels to the second pump means, to the environment or a low temperature heat sink thereby providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump system.

In a further embodiment the system the further comprises heat exchanger means for the indirect transfer of heat between the low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid in the liquid conveying means and the low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor in the vapor conveying means.

In another embodiment the system further comprises means for coordinating the flow cycle and the heating cycle.

In still another embodiment the system also comprises auxiliary heat exchanger means for indirectly exchanging heat between the heat transfer fluid flowing to the train and the heat transfer fluid flowing from the train. The system can also have means for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid flowing from the train to a low temperature heat sink or to the environment.

In one embodiment the primary heating means comprises a heating device in each of the compressors. In another embodiment the primary heating means comprises a heating device between each of the compressors in the train and between the first pumping means outlet and the train inlet. These heating devices are for heating the first heat transfer fluid before it is introduced into the compressor for which it is intended, so that the thusly heated heat transfer fluid thereby heats its intended compressor.

In another embodiment the primary heating means comprises a plurality of second indirect heat exchange means spaced apart from the compressors. The number of second indirect heat exchange means being equal to the number of the compressors. Each of the second indirect heat exchange means having a first channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second channel for flowing another heat transfer fluid. The channels being isolated from fluid communication with each other. The first channel thereof being in heat conductive communication with the second channel thereof. Each of the channels thereof having an inlet and an outlet. In this embodiment the primary heating means comprises a heating device between each of the second indirect heat exchange means connected, relative to the heat conductive passageways, in alternating order before each of the heat conductive passageways. This embodiment also includes third pumping means for pumping a third heat transfer fluid; second connecting means for connecting the outlet of the third pumping means to the inlet of the second channel of each of the second internal heat exchange means, and for connecting the outlet of each of the second channels thereof to the second pumping means inlet. Also included is flow control means for directing the third heat transfer fluid from the third pumping means to the second channel of a predetermined one of the second indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined order thereby defining a second flow cycle, and, thereby enabling heat transfer between the first heat transfer fluid in the first channel thereof and the third heat transfer fluid in the second connecting channel thereof. The primary heating means also includes a heating device in the second connecting means for heating the third heat transfer fluid before it is introduced into the second channel of a predetermined one of the second indirect heat exchange means. The heat control means includes means for controlling the heating devices so that the temperature of the third heat transfer fluid is controlled.

In still another embodiment the pumping means conveys the heat transfer fluid through a cooling loop and then through the train of heat conductive passageways and first channels of the indirect heat exchange means thereby cooling the compressors.

In one embodiment the pumping means divides the flow of heat transfer fluid between a coolant loop and the train of heat conductive passageways.

In yet another embodiment of this invention the system comprises first connecting means for forming a loop of heat conductive passageways by connecting the outlet of one heat conductive passageway to the inlet of another heat conductive passageway and proceeding with such inlet-to-outlet connections until the outlet of the last heat conductive passageway is connected to the inlet of the first heat conductive passageway thereby
forming a loop of heat conductive passageways. This embodiment includes second connecting means for connecting the outlet of the pumping means to the inlet of each of the heat conductive passageways; and third connecting means for connecting the outlet of each of the heat conductive passageways to the pumping means inlet. Additional flow control means is also included for directing the heat transfer fluid from the pumping means to the inlet of a predetermined one of the heat conductive passageways, then around the loop passing through each of the heat conductive passageways only once, and then back to the pumping means. This embodiment also includes phase timing means for redirecting the heat transfer fluid after a predetermined time interval, from the pumping means to another one of the heat conductive passageways thereby beginning a new phase, and for repeating such redirecting after such predetermined time intervals to other of the heat conductive passageways, until the heat transfer fluid is directed from the pumping means to each of the heat conductive passageways thereby completing a flow cycle. Heat discharge means is included for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid in the third connecting means to the environment or a low temperature heat sink.

In one embodiment the working fluid is selected from the group consisting of fluorine substituted ethanes, and, fluorine and chlorine substituted ethanes. In another embodiment the working fluid is selected from the group consisting of 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane or CF₃CH₂F referred to herein as “R124”, 2-chloro-1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane or CF₃CHFCF referred to herein as “R124”, 1,1-dichloro-2,2,2-trifluoroethane or CHCl₂CF₃ referred to herein as “R123”, ammonia and water.

In one embodiment the sorbent is selected from the group consisting of activated carbons, zeolites, silica gels and alumina. A preferred activated carbon is known as AX-21.

In one embodiment the heat transfer fluid is selected from the group consisting of mixtures of diphenyl and diphenyl oxide, ortho-dichlorobenzene, ethylene glycol, methoxypropanol, and water. Examples of such heat transfer fluids are the Dowtherm™ fluids.

For each of the compressors there is a corresponding indirect heat exchanger 120A, 120B, 120C, 120D, 120E and 120F, respectively having first channels 122A, 122B, 122C, 122D, 122E and 122F, respectively, and, second and channels 124A, 124B, 124C, 124D, 124E and 124F, respectively, which are hermetically separated from first channels 122. Pump 126, sometimes referred to herein as the first pumping means, conveys the first heat transfer fluid first into channel 122A, then into passageway 104A, then into channel 122B, then into passageway 104B, then into channel 122C, then into passageway 104C, then into channel 122D, then into passageway 104D, then into channel 122E, then into passageway 104E, then into channel 122F, then into passageway 104F, and then back to pump 126 where upon the first heat transfer fluid is continuously recycled. As a consequence of the in series connecting of the first channels 122 to heat conductive passageways 104 a train 128 of heat conductive passageways 104 is formed having a train inlet 125, which is also the inlet of first channel 122A, and a train outlet 127, which is also the outlet of heat conductive passageways 104F. In embodiment 100 it should be noted that the order of heat conductive passageways 104 and first channels 122 always remains the same thereby eliminating the need for costly control valves in the loop 129 which con-
pump means, pumps a heat transfer fluid, sometimes referred to herein as the second heat transfer fluid, through coolant loop 132 which contains six parallel branches 134A, 134B, 134C, 134D, 134E and 134F containing control valves 136A, 136B, 136C, 136D, 136E and 136F, respectively, and second channels 124A–F, respectively, of indirect heat exchangers 120A–F, respectively. Valves 136A–F are controlled by controller 140 so that only one of valves 136A–F is open at a time thereby permitting the second heat transfer fluid to flow through only one of second channels 124A–F at a time.

Before returning to pump 130, the second heat transfer fluid is cooled by radiator 142 to about 38°F (100°F) and then continuously circulated around coolant loop 132 so that the active second channel always receives the second heat transfer fluid at a temperature of about 38°F (100°F). Radiator 142 transfers heat from the second heat transfer fluid to the outside in the summer, and to the room or zone to be heated in the winter in a conventional manner. In FIG. 1 valve 126F is open and all the other valves, i.e. valves 136A–E, are closed. FIG. 1 represents phase 1 of six phases as will be explained in greater detail later. In the system of FIG. 1 it is to be noted that only one control valve 136 per compressor is required for the second heat transfer fluid of the system, which provides a cost saving advantage to that of systems having two or more control valves per compressor.

Heating devices 108A–F, sometimes referred to herein as the primary heating means, are also controlled by controller 140 so that only one of the heating devices is heating at a time for a predetermined period of time and the remaining heating devices are in active, thereby defining a heating cycle. In the following discussion the temperatures are based on the use of R134a as the working fluid, and the temperature cycle shown in FIG. 3 which is discussed in greater detail later. In FIG. 1, which depicts phase 1, heating device 108C is active and heating the first heat transfer fluid to a temperature of about 204°F (400°F) thereby heating the sorbent in chamber 106C to about 204°F (400°F). Heating devices 108 add heat to the system at a high temperature, i.e. the heating devices increase the temperature of the first heat transfer fluid from about 188°F (330°F) to about 204°F (400°F). In phase 1 the remaining heating devices 106A,B,D–F are not heating their respective compressors 102A,B,D–F, respectively. FIG. 1 the first heat transfer fluid flowing through the train 128 is also heating the sorbent 106D in chamber 106D and 106E, and at the same time also cooling the sorbent in chambers 106A and 106B the combination of which regenerates system heat thereby providing for higher COP’s. As mentioned earlier, in FIG. 1 the second heat transfer fluid is flowing through the second channel 124F of indirect heat exchangers 120F and thereby cooling the first heat transfer fluid flowing through the first channel 122F of indirect heat exchangers 120F. The thusly cooled first heat transfer fluid then flows through heat conductive passageway 104F thereby cooling the sorbent 109F in chamber 106F to a temperature about 38°F (100°F) to about 54°F (130°F).

With valve 136F open for cooling the sorbent 109F in chamber 106F, and heating device 108C activated for heating sorbent 106C in chamber 106C, the calculated temperature profiles of the sorbent in chambers 106A–F are as follows, with the first mentioned temperature corresponding to the sorbent temperature nearest the inlet of its heat conductive passageway 104, and the second mentioned temperature corresponding to the sorbent temperature nearest the outlet of the heat conductive passageway:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>(°C)</th>
<th>(°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102A</td>
<td>45-129</td>
<td>113-265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>129-177</td>
<td>265-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>204-188</td>
<td>400-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>188-104</td>
<td>370-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102E</td>
<td>104-60</td>
<td>220-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102F</td>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above calculated temperature profiles of the first heat transfer fluid as it flows through train 128 of compressors is shown in FIG. 2 which is a computerized simulation of the system and process. The above profile pertains to a first phase, i.e. phase 1, in the operation of the system of embodiment 100. In general the total number of phases will be equal to the number of compressors. For the system of FIG. 1 the number of phases are six which, when completed, defines a cycle. When a phase is completed the next phase begins and the temperature profiles in the compressors shift as follows:

Phase 2, valve 136A open and heating device 108D heating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>(°C)</th>
<th>(°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>54-129</td>
<td>130-265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>129-177</td>
<td>265-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>204-188</td>
<td>400-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102E</td>
<td>188-104</td>
<td>370-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102A</td>
<td>104-60</td>
<td>220-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102F</td>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 3, valve 136B open and heating device 108E heating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>(°C)</th>
<th>(°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>54-129</td>
<td>130-265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>129-177</td>
<td>265-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102E</td>
<td>204-188</td>
<td>400-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102F</td>
<td>188-104</td>
<td>370-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102A</td>
<td>104-60</td>
<td>220-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 4, valve 136C open and heating device 108F heating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>(°C)</th>
<th>(°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>54-129</td>
<td>130-265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102E</td>
<td>129-177</td>
<td>265-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102F</td>
<td>204-188</td>
<td>400-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102A</td>
<td>188-104</td>
<td>370-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>104-60</td>
<td>220-140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>100-130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 5, valve 136D open and heating device 108A heating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>(°C)</th>
<th>(°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102E</td>
<td>54-129</td>
<td>130-265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5,046,319
When phase 6 is completed the cycle is completed and a new cycle begins with phase 1; and, the control valve phases, the heating device activation phases, and the phase temperature profiles repeat as set forth above. The above temperatures are based on the use of R134a as the working fluid using the cycle shown in FIG. 3. Other working fluids can be used and the temperatures will vary with the particular working fluid chosen. The working fluid should be chosen with the end use in mind. For air conditioning of rooms and buildings R134a and R124 are preferred because of their useful operating temperature ranges and low ODPs.

For longer pump life, it is desirable to maintain a constant lower temperature at pump 126. This can be achieved by including a radiator 144 after the outlet of train 128. It should be understood that radiators alone determines flow of working fluid to and from the compressors. For air conditioning of rooms and buildings R134a and R124 are preferred because of their useful operating temperature ranges and low ODPs.

The working fluid or refrigerant side of embodiment 100 contains condensers 150 which provides means for transferring heat from the working fluid to the environment in the summer or to the room or zone in the winter, and, means for condensing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from the compressors to form a low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid. The working fluid side also contains Joule-Thomson expansion valve 152 which provides means for converting low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid to low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor, evaporator 154 which provides means for converting low temperature, low pressure working fluid liquid to low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor and for accepting heat from a low temperature source such as a room or zone in the summer thereby providing comfort cooling, or from the environment in the winter. Conduits 160 provides means for conveying high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from compressors 102 to condenser 150. Conduit 162 provides liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid from condenser 150 to J-T valve 152. Conduit 164 provides liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid liquid from J-T valve 152 to evaporator 154. Conduit 166 provides vapor conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor from evaporator 154 to compressors 102.

Conduit 160 contains check valves 170A-F which prevent high pressure working fluid vapor to flow from compressors 102 to condenser 150 while preventing high pressure vapor from flowing into compressors 102 which are under a low pressure. Conduit 166 contains check valves 172A-F which permit low pressure working fluid vapor to flow into compressors 102 which are under a low pressure while preventing such vapor from flowing into compressors which are under a higher pressure. In FIG. 1, which represents phase 1 of the cycle, working fluid is being desorbed in compressors 102C-E, and, high temperature, high pressure desorbed working fluid vapor is flowing through check valves 170C-E to condenser 150; while low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor is flowing from evaporator 114 through conduit 166 and check valves 172A,B,F into compressors 102A,B,F. The high pressure in conduit 160 prevents check valves 170A,B,F from opening. The high pressure in compressors 102C-E prevents check valves 172C-E from opening. Therefore no solenoid control valves are required for the working fluid side and consequently the temperature of the compressors alone determines flow of working fluid to and from the compressors.

To improve the efficiency of embodiment 100, the working fluid side can also include heat exchanger 174 for exchanging heat between the working fluid liquid in conduit 162 and the working fluid vapor in conduit 166.

The isotherm data for R134a and R124 on AX-21 and AX-21 sorbent was chosen because of its extremely high BET surface area which is over 2000 m²/gm. Working fluids or refrigerants chosen for testing were 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane known as R134a, and 2-chloro-1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane known as R124. These working fluids are preferred because they are believed to be non-toxic, non-flammable, and have high working vapor pressures. Furthermore R134a and R124 have a very low ozone-depletion-potential ("ODP"). The ODP for R134a is 0.0 and for R124 is less than 0.05 as opposed to an ODP for dichlorodifluoromethane, known as R12, of 1.0. Another useful working fluid for all embodiments of this invention is dichlorotrifluoroethane, referred to as R123, will also have high COPs while remaining non-toxic, non-flammable with a low ODP.

The isotherm data for R134a and R124 on AX-21 carbon was measured and is shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, respectively.

R134a/AX-21 Cycle

For the cycle shown in FIG. 3, the adsorption system is heated from 38°C. (100°F.), point A, to 63°C. (146°F.), point B, thereby pressurizing the system from a low pressure or Pz of 335 kpa (48.5 psia) to a high pressure or Pz of 964 kpa (139.7 psia). When heated an additional amount from 63°C. (146°F.), point B, to 204°C. (400°F.), point D, R134a is desorbed from the carbon sorbent at a constant high pressure of 964 kpa (139.7 psia). During cooling from 204°C. (400°F.), point D, to 162°C. (324°F.), point E, the system pressure is reduced without adsorbing significant amounts of R134a. When the system is further cooled from 162°C. (324°F.), point E, to 38°C. (100°F.), point A, R134a is adsorbed at a
constant low pressure of 335 kpa (48.5 psia). In this example the pressure ratio, or $P_L/P_1$, of the cycle is about 2.9.

At high pressure, specifically 964 kpa (139.7 psia), R134a vapor is condensed at 38°C (100°F) thereby rejecting heat to a relatively low temperature heat sink, 38°C (100°F), such as the environment in the summer and the room interiors in the winter, or to a hot water system for tap water heating year around. When R124 is expanded to 335 kpa (48.5 psia), it cools to 4°C (40°F) thereby providing a 4°C (40°F) heat sink useful for cooling room interiors in summer or a heat sink for the acceptance of low temperature heat from the environment during the winter.

Because the embodiments of this invention are capable of regenerating up to about 99% of the sensible heat, the primary net heat required is that portion of the cycle where the thermal capacitance of the system, i.e. BTU/F, is higher during heat-up than during cool-down. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 3 is high during heat-up 57°C (134°F) to 204°C (400°F) due to the added heat of desorption. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 3 is also high during cool-down 162°C (324°F) to 38°C (100°F) due to the added heat of adsorption. Therefore the only region where the heating thermal capacitance is significantly higher than the cooling thermal capacitance is during heating from 162°C (324°F), point C, to 204°C (400°F), point D, and the amount of R134a removed during such heating is about 0.694—0.482 or 0.212 gram of R134a per gram of carbon sorbent.

The heat of adsorption of R134a on AX-21 carbon sorbent has been measured and found to be about 9.5 Kcal/mole. The heat of refrigeration of R124 is known as high as about (0.705 X 4.7)/(0.212 X 9.5), or about 1.65. Based on the above, the fraction of the heat of adsorption which is regenerated is (0.705—0.212)/0.705 or about 0.70, i.e. about 70% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

R124/AX-21 Cycle

For the cycle shown in FIG. 4, the adsorption system is heated from 38°C (100°F), point A, to 58°C (137°F), point B, thereby pressurizing the system from a low pressure or $P_L$ of 153 kpa (22.2 psia) to a high pressure or $P_H$ of 434 kpa (62.9 psia). When heated an additional amount from 58°C (137°F), point B, to 204°C (400°F), point D, R124 is desorbed from the carbon sorbent at a constant high pressure of 434 kpa (62.9 psia). During cooling from 204°C (400°F), point D, to 168°C (334°F), point E, the system pressure is reduced without adsorbing significant amounts of R124. When the system is further cooled from 168°C (334°F), point E, to 38°C (100°F), point A, R124 is adsorbed at a constant low pressure of 153 kpa (22.2 psia). In this example the pressure ratio, or $P_H/P_L$, of the cycle is about 2.8.

At high pressure, specifically 434 kpa (62.9 psia), R124 vapor is condensed at 38°C (100°F) thereby rejecting heat to a relatively low temperature heat sink, 38°C (100°F), such as the environment in the summer and the room interiors in the winter, or to a hot water system for tap water heating year around. When R124 is expanded to 153 kpa (22.2 psia), it cools to 4°C (40°F) thereby providing a 4°C (40°F) heat sink useful for cooling room interiors in summer or a heat sink for the acceptance of low temperature heat from the environment during the winter.

Because the embodiments of this invention are capable of regenerating up to about 99% of the sensible heat, the primary net heat required is that portion of the cycle where the thermal capacitance of the system, i.e. BTU/F, is higher during heat-up than during cool-down. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 4 is high during heat-up 58°C (137°F) to 204°C (400°F) due to the added heat of desorption. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 4 is also high during cool-down 168°C (334°F) to 38°C (100°F) due to the added heat of adsorption. Therefore the only region where the heating thermal capacitance is significantly higher than the cooling thermal capacitance is during heating from 168°C (334°F), point C, to 204°C (400°F), point D, and the amount of R124 removed during such heating is about 0.752—0.550, or 0.202 gram of R124 per gram of carbon sorbent.

The heat of adsorption of R124 on AX-21 carbon sorbent has been measured and found to be about 10.7 Kcal/mole. The heat of refrigeration of R124 is known as high as about (0.705 X 4.7)/(0.212 X 9.5), or about 1.65. Based on the above, the fraction of the heat of adsorption which is regenerated is (0.705—0.212)/0.705 or about 0.70, i.e. about 70% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

R124/AX-21 Cycle

For the cycle shown in FIG. 4, the adsorption system is heated from 38°C (100°F), point A, to 58°C (137°F), point B, thereby pressurizing the system from a low pressure or $P_L$ of 153 kpa (22.2 psia) to a high pressure or $P_H$ of 434 kpa (62.9 psia). When heated an additional amount from 58°C (137°F), point B, to 204°C (400°F), point D, R124 is desorbed from the carbon sorbent at a constant high pressure of 434 kpa (62.9 psia). During cooling from 204°C (400°F), point D, to 168°C (334°F), point E, the system pressure is reduced without adsorbing significant amounts of R124. When the system is further cooled from 168°C (334°F), point E, to 38°C (100°F), point A, R124 is adsorbed at a constant low pressure of 153 kpa (22.2 psia). In this example the pressure ratio, or $P_H/P_L$, of the cycle is about 2.8.

At high pressure, specifically 434 kpa (62.9 psia), R124 vapor is condensed at 38°C (100°F) thereby rejecting heat to a relatively low temperature heat sink, 38°C (100°F), such as the environment in the summer and the room interiors in the winter, or to a hot water system for tap water heating year around. When R124 is expanded to 153 kpa (22.2 psia), it cools to 4°C (40°F) thereby providing a 4°C (40°F) heat sink useful for cooling room interiors in summer or a heat sink for the acceptance of low temperature heat from the environment during the winter.

Because the embodiments of this invention are capable of regenerating up to about 99% of the sensible heat, the primary net heat required is that portion of the cycle where the thermal capacitance of the system, i.e. BTU/F, is higher during heat-up than during cool-down. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 4 is high during heat-up 58°C (137°F) to 204°C (400°F) due to the added heat of desorption. The thermal capacitance for FIG. 4 is also high during cool-down 168°C (334°F) to 38°C (100°F) due to the added heat of adsorption. Therefore the only region where the heating thermal capacitance is significantly higher than the cooling thermal capacitance is during heating from 168°C (334°F), point C, to 204°C (400°F), point D, and the amount of R124 removed during such heating is about 0.752—0.550, or 0.202 gram of R124 per gram of carbon sorbent.

The heat of adsorption of R124 on AX-21 carbon sorbent has been measured and found to be about 10.7 Kcal/mole. The heat of refrigeration of R124 is known as high as about (0.705 X 4.7)/(0.212 X 9.5), or about 1.65. Based on the above, the fraction of the heat of adsorption which is regenerated is (0.705—0.212)/0.705 or about 0.70, i.e. about 70% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.
Control valves 216A-F are also controlled by controller 140 so that only one of the valves 216A-F is open at a time for a predetermined period of time and the remaining valves are closed, thereby defining a heating cycle. In FIG. 5, which depicts phase 1 of six phases, valve 216C is open thereby permitting heat to be transferred from the third heat transfer fluid in second channel 206C to the first heat transfer fluid in first channel 204C so that it too is heated to a temperature of about 204° C. (400° F.) and thereby heats the sorbent in chamber 106C also to about 204° C. (400° F.). In phase 1 the remaining valves 216A,B,D-F are closed thereby preventing heating of the first heat transfer fluid in first channels 204A,B,D-F by the circulating third heat transfer fluid in heating loop 212. The phases and temperatures of embodiment 200 are the same as those described above for embodiment 100 shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 6 is a third embodiment of this invention, generally designated by numeral 230, having four compressors 102A, 102B, 102C and 102D and a single pump 232 which conveys a first portion of first heat transfer fluid through both the cooling loop 234 and the train 238 of heat conductive passageways 104A, 104B, 104C and 104D. Train 238 has train inlet 125 and train outlet 239 which is also the outlet of heat conductive passageway 104D. The primary heating means 108A, 108B, 108C and 108D has been generally indicated as in FIG. 1. Means 108 can be similar to that described for embodiments 106 and 200 or any other suitable method of adding heat during a heating cycle to the compressors. This embodiment has four phases because there are four compressors. It should be understood, however, that systems with six compressors are preferred to systems with four because more heat is regenerated. FIG. 6 depicts the first phase in which heating device 108D is active and control valve 136D is open while heating devices 108A, 108C and 108D are inactive and valves 136A, 136B and 136C are closed. In this embodiment expected temperature in the phases are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>Temp (°C)</th>
<th>Temp (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102A</td>
<td>66-116</td>
<td>150-330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>204-177</td>
<td>400-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>177-71</td>
<td>350-160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>38-66</td>
<td>100-150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above calculated temperature profiles of the first heat transfer fluid as it flows through train 128 of compressors is shown in FIG. 9 which is a computerized simulation of the system and process. The above profile pertains to a first phase, i.e. phase 1, in the operation of the system of embodiment 100. In general the total number of phases will be equal to the number of compressors. For the system of FIG. 1 the number of phases are six which, when completed, defines a cycle. When a phase is completed the next phase begins and the temperature profiles in the compressors shift as follows:

Phase 2, valve 136A open and heating device 108C heating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compressor</th>
<th>Temp (°C)</th>
<th>Temp (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102B</td>
<td>66-116</td>
<td>150-330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102C</td>
<td>204-177</td>
<td>400-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102D</td>
<td>177-71</td>
<td>350-160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When phase 4 is completed the cycle is completed and a new cycle begins with phase 1; and, the control valve phases, the heating device activation phases, and the phase temperature profiles repeat as set forth above.

FIG. 7 is a fourth embodiment of this invention generally designated by numeral 240 having four compressors 102A, 102B, 102C and 102D and a single pump 242 which conveys a first portion of first heat transfer fluid through the cooling loop 244 and a second portion of the first heat transfer fluid through the train 246 of heat conductive passageways 104. Train 246 has train inlet 125 and train outlet 247 which is also the outlet of heat conductive passageway 104D. Although this embodiment is also depicted with four compressors it should be understood that systems with six compressors are preferred to systems with four because more heat is regenerated. The primary heating means, i.e. elements 108A, 108B, 108C and 108D, is generally indicated as in FIG. 1. Means 108 can be similar to that described for embodiments 100 and 200, or any other suitable method of adding heat during a heating cycle to the compressors. Since this embodiment has four phases there are four compressors. FIG. 7 depicts the first phase of four phases in which heating device 108B is active and control valve 136D is open while heating devices 108A, 108C and 108D are inactive and valves 136A, 136B and 136C are closed. In this embodiment expected temperatures in the four phases are the same as those set forth above for embodiment 230. When phase 4 is completed the cycle is completed and a new cycle begins with phase 1; and, the control valve phases, the heating device activation phases, and the phase temperature profiles repeat as set forth above with regard to embodiment 230.

In embodiment 240 the working fluid or refrigerant side has a separate working fluid loop for each compressor rather than one evaporator 114 as in the previously discussed embodiments. For example, the working fluid is desorbed from compressor 102A at a high pressure is permitted by check valve 170A to flow into conduit 160A to radiator or condenser 150A, whereupon heat is discharged to the environment. The working fluid is then expanded through J-T valve 150A and then introduced into evaporator 154A whereupon liquid is col-
lected. At the point in the heating cycle when the pressure
in compressor 102A is lowered sufficiently, the
working fluid is evaporated in evaporator 114A and the
vapor is permitted by check valve 172A to enter into
compressor 102A through line 166A. As depicted in FIG.
7, each compressor has its own working fluid
condenser, J-T valve and evaporator which function in the
same manner as described for compressor 102A. It
should be understood, however, that the working fluid
or refrigerant side can be as in shown in FIGS. 1 and 6
rather than as shown in FIG. 7 depending on the partic-
ular intended use of the system.

FIG. 8 is a fifth embodiment of this invention gener-
ally designated by numeral 250 having four compres-
sors 102A, 102B, 102C and 102D and a single pump 252
which conveys a first heat transfer fluid through both
the cooling loop and the train of heat conductive pas-
sageways 108A, 108B, 108C and 108D. In this embodi-
ment it is to be noted that indirect heat exchangers 120
are not required. The primary heating means 108A,
108B, 108C and 108D has been generally indicated as in
FIG. 1. Means 108 can be similar to that described for
embodiments 100 and 200 or any other suitable method
of adding heat during a heating cycle to the compres-
sors. This embodiment has four phases because there are
four compressors. It should be understood, however,
that systems with six compressors are preferred to sys-
tems with four because more heat is regenerated. FIG.
8 depicts the first phase in which heating device 108B is
active and control valves 136D is open while heating
devices 108A, 108C and 108D are inactive and valves
136A, 136B and 136C are closed. In this embodiment
there is a second set of control valves 254A, 254B, 254C
and 254D and a corresponding set of check valves
256A, 256B, 256C and 256D. Therefore the train of heat
conductive passageways 104A-D also includes valves
136A-D, valves 254A-D and valves 256A-D.

In phase 1 heating device 108B is activated and heat-
ing the sorbent in chamber 109B. Simultaneously with
such heating, the first heat transfer fluid after being
cooled in radiator 142, is conveyed by pump 252 to
control valve 136D which is open; valves 136A-C
being closed. The cooled first heat transfer fluid then
enters heat conductive passageway 104D. Since valve
254D is closed, the line pressure forces check valve
256D open so that the heat transfer fluid then enters
heat conductive passageway 104A. Since valve 254A
is closed, the line pressure forces check valve 256A open
so that the heat transfer fluid then enters heat conduc-
tive passageway 104B. Since valve 254B is closed, the
line pressure forces check valve 256B open so that the
heat transfer fluid then enters heat conductive passage-
way 104C. Since valve 254C is open, the higher line
pressure in conduit 258 prevents check valve 256C from
opening so that the heat transfer fluid then flows
through valve 254C and back to radiator 142. Valves
136A-D and 254A-D and primary heating means
108A-D are all controlled by controller 140 so that a
determined valve from set 136 and 254 will remain
open a predetermined period of time which corresponds
to the heating cycle of a predetermined activated heat-
ing device 108. In this embodiment the first heat con-
ductive passageways in the train of heat conductive passageways varies depending upon which one of the
four phases of the cycle is active. In phase 1, working
fluid is being desorbed in chambers 109B and 109C, and
adsorbed in chambers 109D and 109A.

In embodiment 250 the expected temperatures in the
four phases are the same as those set forth above for
embodiment 230. When phase 4 is completed the cycle
is completed and a new cycle begins with phase 1, and,
the control valve phases, the heating device activation
phases, and the phase temperature profiles repeat as set
forth above with regard to embodiment 230.

In embodiment 250 the working fluid or refrigerant
side has not been shown since it can be as shown in
FIGS. 1 and 6 or as shown in FIG. 8 depending on the
particular intended use of the system.

In all of the above described examples the tempera-
ture profiles in the several compressors were based on
the use of R134a as the working fluid and the cycle
shown in FIG. 3. Other working fluids can be used.
Examples of useful heat transfer fluids are the Dow-
therm TM brand fluids and water. Other heat transfer
fluids can also be used if desired.

In general, for all embodiments, it should be noted
that by keeping the pressure ratio $P_{H}/P_{L}$ close to unity,
it is possible to regenerate almost all of both the sensible
heat and the heat of adsorption. That is systems which
have $P_{H}/P_{L}$ very close to unity will take very little
power to operate.

It should be noted that by keeping the pressure ratio
or $P_{H}/P_{L}$ low the temperature overlap of the sorb-
ing and desorbing operations high that it is possible
to regenerate at least some of the heat of adsorption.
Therefore in one embodiment of this invention the
$P_{H}/P_{L}$ is no greater than about 3 and the temperature
overlap is at least about 77 Celsius (170 Fahrenheit)
degrees.

Detailed computerized thermal models have shown
that the final COPs for the embodiments of this inven-
tion can be at least about 90% of the ideal COPs. The
improved results of this invention are due primarily to
the low thermal gradients in the compressors achieved
through the improved regenerative heat systems of this
invention, whereas the large thermal gradients existing
in the prior art systems cause inherent large system
energy losses. The elimination of such thermal gradients
allows a much higher regeneration efficiency for the
system. In all systems, however, there are minor losses
due to parasitic heat loss from insulated surfaces and
small regenerator inefficiencies.

While the preferred embodiments of the present in-
vention have been described, it should be understood
that various changes, adaptations and modifications
may be made thereto without departing from the spirit
of the invention and the scope of the appended claims.
It should be understood, therefore, that the invention is
not to be limited to minor details of the illustrated in-
vention shown in preferred embodiment and the figures
and that variations in such minor details will be appar-
tent to one skilled in the art.

Therefore it is to be understood that the present dis-
closure and embodiments of this invention described
herein are for purposes of illustration and example and
that modifications and improvements may be made thereto without departing from the spirit of the inven-
tion or from the scope of the claims. For example, con-
ventional flow systems components such as accumula-
tors and additional pumps and the like can be included
in the systems if desired. The claims, therefore, are to be
accorded a range of equivalents commensurate in scope
with the advances made over the art.
INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

The regenerative adsorbent heat pump processes and systems of this invention are useful for air conditioning rooms and buildings and can also be used for heating in the winter and producing hot water throughout the year, and in general, for pumping heat from a low temperature to a higher temperature.

What is claimed is:

1. A regenerative sorbent heat pump process for cooling an interior space and for simultaneously regenerating at least a portion of the heat of adsorption comprising:
   (a) confining a sorbent in a plurality of compressor zones, the number of compressor zones being at least four;
   (b) introducing a working fluid vapor from an evaporation zone into at least one of the number of compressor zones and sorbing the working fluid vapor on the sorbent therein over a predetermined first temperature range and a predetermined first pressure or $P_H$;
   (c) desorbing working fluid vapor from the sorbent in at least one of the remaining number of compressor zones and removing working fluid vapor therefrom over a predetermined second temperature range which is higher than the predetermined first temperature range and at a predetermined second pressure or $P_L$ which is higher than the predetermined first pressure, a part of the predetermined first temperature range and a predetermined second temperature range;
   (d) condensing working fluid vapor removed from said at least one of the remaining number of the compressor zones at $P_H$ and transferring heat from the working fluid to the environment thereby forming a working fluid liquid;
   (e) evaporating the working fluid liquid and forming the working fluid vapor in the evaporation zone at $P_L$ by transferring heat from an interior space to the evaporation zone thereby cooling the interior space;
   (f) circulating a heat transfer fluid in series flow through the compressor zones and preventing the heat transfer fluid from directly contacting the sorbent;
   (g) removing heat from the heat transfer fluid and transferring it to the environment;
   (h) adding heat from a heat source to a predetermined one of the compressor zones over a predetermined period of time;
   (i) repeating step (h) sequentially in each of the compressor zones;
   (j) continuously transferring heat from the sorbent in the compressor zones which are sorbing working fluid vapor to the heat transfer fluid and from the heat transfer fluid to the sorbent in the compressor zones which are desorbing working fluid vapor thereby regenerating heat, and;
   (k) maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low so that at least a portion of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

2. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio between about 1.1 and about 10.

3. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio between about 1.1 and about 5.

4. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio between about 1.1 and about 3.

5. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low that about 25% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

6. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low that about 50% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

7. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low that about 70% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

8. The process of claim 1, further comprising maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low that about 100% of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

9. The process of claim 1, wherein the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about $-18^\circ$ C. to no more than about 204$^\circ$ C., wherein the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about 38$^\circ$ C. to no more than about 427$^\circ$ C., and, wherein the predetermined first and predetermined second temperature ranges overlap at least about 28 Celsius degrees.

10. The process of claim 1, wherein the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about $-18^\circ$ C. to no more than about 204$^\circ$ C., wherein the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about 38$^\circ$ C. to no more than about 316$^\circ$ C., and, wherein the predetermined first and predetermined second temperature ranges overlap at least about 56 Celsius degrees.

11. The process of claim 1, wherein the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about $-18^\circ$ C. to no more than about 204$^\circ$ C., wherein the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about 38$^\circ$ C. to no more than about 232$^\circ$ C., wherein the predetermined first and predetermined second temperature ranges overlap at least about 83 Celsius degrees.

12. The process of claim 1, wherein the predetermined first temperature range is from at least about 10$^\circ$ C. to no more than about 177$^\circ$ C., wherein the predetermined second temperature range is from at least about 38$^\circ$ C. to no more than about 232$^\circ$ C., and, wherein the predetermined first and predetermined second temperature ranges overlap at least about 83 Celsius degrees.

13. The process of claim 1, wherein the working fluid is selected from the group consisting of fluorne substituted ethanes, and, fluorine and chlorine substituted ethanes.

14. The process of claim 1, wherein the working fluid is selected from the group consisting of 2-chloro-1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane, 1,1-dichloro-2,2,2-trifluoroethane, 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane, ammonia, and water.

15. The process of claim 1, wherein the sorbent is selected from the group consisting of activated carbons, zeolites, silica gels and alumina.

16. A regenerative sorbent heat pump process for cooling an interior space and for simultaneously regenerating at least a portion of the heat of adsorption comprising:
   (a) confining a sorbent in a plurality of compressor zones, the number of compressor zones being at least four;
   (b) continuously introducing a working fluid vapor from an evaporation zone into at least one of the number of compressor zones and sorbing the working fluid vapor on the sorbent therein over a predetermined first temperature range and a predetermined first pressure or $P_H$;
   (c) continuously desorbing working fluid vapor from the sorbent in at least one of the remaining number of the compressor zones and desorbing the working fluid vapor on the sorbent therein over a predetermined second temperature range and a predetermined second pressure or $P_L$.
A regenerative sorbent heat pump system comprising:

- a working fluid being operable for being sorbed by a sorbent;
- a plurality of compressors, the number of compressors being at least four, each of the compressors having a sorbent contained within the compressor, and a heat conductive passageway having an inlet and an outlet, the heat conductive passageway for flowing a heat transfer fluid through the compressor and for indirectly transferring heat between the sorbent and the heat transfer fluid without the heat transfer fluid being in contact with the sorbent;
- means for removing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from each of the compressors; condensing means for transferring heat from the working fluid to a low temperature heat sink, and,

- of compressor zones and removing working fluid vapor therefrom over a predetermined second temperature range which is higher than the predetermined first temperature range and at a predetermined second pressure or $P_H$ which is higher than the predetermined first pressure, a part of the predetermined first temperature range overlapping a part of the predetermined second temperature range;
- continuously condensing working fluid vapor removed from said at least one of the remaining number of the compressor zones at $P_L$ and transferring heat from the working fluid to the environment thereby forming a working fluid liquid;
- continuously evaporating the working fluid liquid and forming the working fluid vapor in the evaporation zone at $P_L$ by transferring heat from an interior space to the evaporation zone thereby cooling the interior space;
- continuously circulating a heat transfer fluid in series flow through the compressor zones and preventing the heat transfer fluid from directly contacting the sorbent;
- continuously removing heat from the heat transfer fluid before it flows to a predetermined one of the compressor zones and transferring the removed heat to the environment;
- repeating step (g) sequentially for each of the compressor zones;
- adding heat from a heat source to a predetermined one of the compressor zones over a predetermined period of time;
- repeating step (i) sequentially in each of the compressor zones;
- continuously indirectly transferring heat from the sorbent in the compressor zones which are sorbing working fluid vapor to the heat transfer fluid and from the heat transfer fluid to the sorbent in the compressor zones which are desorbing working fluid vapor thereby regenerating heat; and,
- maintaining the $P_H/P_L$ ratio sufficiently low so that at least a portion of the heat of adsorption is regenerated.

The process of claim 17, further comprising repeating step (g) sequentially for each of the compressor zones.

The process of claim 17, wherein adding heat from a heat source to a predetermined one of the compressor zones over a predetermined period of time is performed by adding heat to a third heat transfer fluid, and, indirectly transferring heat from the third heat transfer fluid to the first heat transfer fluid before it enters the predetermined one of the compressor zones.

The process of claim 19, further comprising repeating step (g) sequentially for each of the compressor zones.
for condensing working fluid vapor to form a low

temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid;

evaporating means for converting low temperature, high

pressure working fluid liquid to low tempera-
ture, low pressure working fluid vapor, and, for

transferring heat from a low temperature source

external of the system to the working fluid;

liquid conveying means for conveying low tempera-
ture, high pressure working fluid liquid from the

condensing means to the evaporating means;

vapor conveying means for conveying low tempe-

rature, low pressure working fluid vapor into each of

the compressors;

a plurality of indirect heat exchange means, the num-

ber of indirect heat exchange means being equal to

the number of the compressors, each of the indirect

heat exchange means having a first channel for

flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second channel

for flowing a heat transfer fluid, the channels being

isolated from fluid communication with each other;

the first channel being in heat conductive commu-
nication with the second channel, each of the chan-
nels having an inlet and an outlet;

a train formed by connecting in alternating order, the

first channels of the indirect heat exchange means

to the heat conductive passageways, the train hav-
ing an inlet which is also the inlet of the first chan-
nel of the first-in-the-series of indirect heat ex-
change means of the train, and, the train having an

outlet which is also the outlet of the heat conduc-
tive passageway of the last-in-the-series of com-
pressors of the train;

first pumping means for pumping a first heat transfer

fluid around the first train, the outlet of the first

pumping means being connected to the train inlet

and the train outlet being connected to the first

pumping means inlet;

second pumping means for pumping a second heat

transfer fluid;

connecting means for connecting the outlet of the

second pumping means to the inlet of the second

channel of each of the internal heat exchange means,

and for connecting the outlet of each of the second

channels thereof to the second pumping means in-
let;

flow control means for directing the second heat

transfer fluid from the second pumping means to

the second channel of a predetermined one of the

indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined

order thereby defining a flow cycle, and, for en-
abling heat transfer between the first heat transfer

fluid in the first channel thereof and the second

heat transfer fluid in the second channel thereof;

primary heating means for heating each of the com-
pressors;

heat control means for controlling the heating period

of the primary heating means in each of the com-
pressors thereby defining a heating cycle; and,

heat discharge means for transferring heat from

the second heat transfer fluid in the connecting means

from the second channels to the second pump

means, to a low temperature heat sink thereby

providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump sys-

tem.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the number of 65

compressors is four.

23. The system of claim 21, wherein the number of com-

pressors is six.

24. The system of claim 21, further comprising heat ex-

changer means for the indirect transfer of heat be-

tween the low temperature, high pressure working fluid

liquid in the liquid conveying means and the low tem-

perature, low pressure working fluid vapor in the vapor

conveying means.

25. The system of claim 21, further comprising means

for coordinating the flow cycle and the heating cycle.

26. The system of claim 21, further comprising auxil-

iary heat exchanger means for indirectly exchanging

heat between the first heat transfer fluid flowing to

the train and the first heat transfer fluid flowing from

the train.

27. The system of claim 21, further comprising means

for transferring heat from the first heat transfer fluid

flowing from the train to a low temperature heat sink.

28. The system of claim 21, further comprising means

for transferring heat from the first heat transfer fluid

flowing from the auxiliary heat exchanger means to a

low temperature heat sink, and,

auxiliary heat exchanger means for indirectly ex-
changing heat between the first heat transfer fluid

flowing to the train and the first heat transfer fluid

flowing from the auxiliary heat exchanger means.

29. The system of claim 21, wherein the working fluid

is sorbed over a predetermined first temperature range

from at least about —18° C. to no more than about 204°

C. wherein the working fluid is desorbed over a prede-

termined second temperature range from at least about

38° C. to no more than about 427° C., and, wherein the

predetermined first and predetermined second tempera-

ture ranges overlap at least about 28 Celsius de-

grees.

30. The system of claim 21, wherein the working fluid

is selected from the group consisting of fluorine substi-

tuted ethanes, fluorine and chlorine substituted ethanes,

and, wherein the sorbent is selected from the group

consisting of activated carbons.

31. The system of claim 21, wherein the primary heat-

ing means comprises a heating device between each of

the compressors in the train and between the first

pumping means outlet and the train inlet, the heating

devices for heating the first heat transfer fluid be-

fore it is introduced into the compressor for which it is in-

tended, the thusly heated first heat transfer fluid thereby

heating said compressor.

32. The system of claim 21, further comprising a plurality

of second indirect heat exchange means, the number of

second indirect heat exchange means being equal to

the number of the compressors, each of the second

indirect heat exchange means having a first chan-

nel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second

channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, the channels

thereof being isolated from fluid communication with

each other, the first channel thereof being in heat con-
ductive communication with the second channel

thereof, each of the channels thereof having an inlet and

an outlet;

wherein the train includes the first channels of the

second indirect heat exchange means connected,

relative to the heat conductive passageways, in

alternating order before each of the heat conduc-
tive passageways; and,

further comprising third pumping means for pumping

a third heat transfer fluid;

second connecting means for connecting the outlet of

the third pumping means to the inlet of the second

channel of each of the second internal heat ex-
change means, and for connecting the outlet of
each of the second channels thereof to the third pumping means inlet; and,
flow control means for directing the third heat transfer fluid from the third pumping means to the second channel of a predetermined one of the second indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined order thereby defining a second flow cycle, and,
for enabling heat transfer between the first heat transfer fluid in the first channel thereof and the third heat transfer fluid in the second channel thereof; and,
wherein the primary heating means includes a heating device in the second connecting means for heating the third heat transfer fluid before it is introduced into the second channel of a predetermined one of the second indirect heat exchange means; and,
wherein the heat control means includes means for controlling the temperature of the third heat transfer fluid heated by the heating devices.

33. A regenerative sorbent heat pump system comprising:

a working fluid being operable for being sorbed by a sorbent;
a plurality of compressors, the number of compressors being at least four, each of the compressors having
a sorbent contained within the compressor, and
a heat conductive passageway having an inlet and an outlet, the heat conductive passageway for flowing a heat transfer fluid through the compressor and for indirectly transferring heat between the sorbent and the heat transfer fluid without the heat transfer fluid being in contact with the sorbent;
means for removing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from each of the compressors;
condensing means for transferring heat from the working fluid to a low temperature heat sink, and, for condensing working fluid vapor to form a low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid;
evaporating means for converting low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid to low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor, and, for transferring heat from a low temperature source external of the system to the working fluid;
liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid from the condensing means to the evaporating means;
vapor conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor into each of the compressors;
a plurality of indirect heat exchange means, the number of indirect heat exchange means being equal to the number of the compressors, each of the indirect heat exchange means having a first channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, the channels being isolated from immediate fluid communication with each other, the first channel being in heat conductive communication with the second channel, each of the channels having an inlet and an outlet;
a train formed by connecting in alternating order, the first channels of the indirect heat exchange means to the heat conductive passageways, the train having an inlet which is also the inlet of the first channel of the first-in-the-series of indirect heat exchange means of the train, and, the train having an outlet which is also the outlet of the heat conductive passageway of the last-in-the-series of compressors of the train;
pumping means for pumping a heat transfer fluid;
first connecting means for connecting the outlet of the pumping means to the inlet of each of the second channels;
second connecting means for connecting the outlet of each of the second channels to the train inlet;
third connecting means for connecting the train outlet to the pumping means inlet;
flow control means for directing the heat transfer fluid from the pumping means to the second channel of a predetermined one of the indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined order thereby defining a flow cycle, and, for enabling heat transfer between the heat transfer fluid in the first channel thereof and the heat transfer fluid in the second channel thereof;
primary heating means for heating each of the compressors;
heat control means for controlling the heating period of the primary heating means in each of the compressors thereby defining a heating cycle; and,
heat discharge means for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid in the second connecting means to a low temperature heat sink thereby providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump system.

34. The system of claim 33, further comprising auxiliary heat exchanger means for indirectly exchanging heat between the heat transfer fluid in the second connecting means and the heat transfer fluid in the third connecting means.

35. The system of claim 34, further comprising means for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid flowing from the auxiliary heat exchanger means in the third connecting means to a low temperature heat sink.

36. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid in the third connecting means to a low temperature heat sink.

37. The system of claim 33, wherein the primary heating means comprises a heating device between each of the compressors in the train and between the first pumping means outlet and the train inlet, the heating devices for heating the first heat transfer fluid before it is introduced into the compressor for which it is intended the thusly heated first heat transfer fluid thereby heating said compressor.

38. A regenerative sorbent heat pump system comprising:

a working fluid being operable for being sorbed by a sorbent;
a plurality of compressors, the number of compressors being at least four, each of the compressors having
a sorbent contained within the compressor, and
a heat conductive passageway having an inlet and an outlet, the heat conductive passageway for flowing a heat transfer fluid through the compressor and for indirectly transferring heat between the sorbent and the heat transfer fluid without the heat transfer fluid being in contact with the sorbent;
means for removing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from each of the compressors;
condensing means for transferring heat from the working fluid to a low temperature heat sink, and, for condensing working fluid vapor to form a low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid;
evaporating means for converting low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid to low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor, and, for transferring heat from a low temperature source external of the system to the working fluid; liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid from the condensing means to the evaporating means; vapor conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor into each of the compressors; a plurality of indirect heat exchange means, the number of indirect heat exchange means being equal to the number of the compressors, each of the indirect heat exchange means having a first channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, and a second channel for flowing a heat transfer fluid, the channels being isolated from fluid communication with each other, the first channel being in heat conductive communication with the second channel, each of the channels having an inlet and an outlet; a train formed by connecting in alternating order, the first channels of the indirect heat exchange means to the heat conductive passageways, the train having an inlet which is also the inlet of the first channel of the first-in-the-series of indirect heat exchange means of the train, and, the train having an outlet which is also the outlet of the heat conductive passageway of the last-in-the-series of compressors of the train; first pumping means for pumping a primary portion of a heat transfer fluid around the first train, the outlet of the first pumping means being connected to the train inlet and the train outlet being connected to the first pumping means inlet; second pumping means for pumping a secondary portion of the heat transfer fluid; connecting means for connecting the outlet of the second pumping means to the inlet of the second channel of each of the internal heat exchange means, and for connecting the outlet of each of the second channels thereof to the second pumping means inlet; flow control means for directing the secondary portion of the heat transfer fluid from the second pumping means to the second channel of a predetermined one of the indirect heat exchange means in a predetermined order thereby defining a flow cycle, and, for enabling heat transfer between the primary portion of the heat transfer fluid in the first channel thereof and the secondary portion of the heat transfer fluid in the second channel thereof; primary heating means for heating each of the compressors; heat control means for controlling the heating period of the primary heating means in each of the compressors thereby defining a heating cycle; means for transferring heat from the primary portion of the heat transfer fluid flowing from the train to a low temperature heat sink; and, heat discharge means for transferring heat from the secondary portion of the heat transfer fluid in the connecting means from the second channels to the second pump means, to a low temperature heat sink thereby providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump system.

39. The system of claim 38, wherein the primary pumping means is also the secondary pumping means.

40. The system of claim 38, wherein the primary heating means comprise a heating device between each of the compressors in the train and between the first pumping means outlet and the train inlet, the heating devices for heating the first heat transfer fluid before it is introduced into the compressor for which it is intended the thusly heated first heat transfer fluid thereby heating said compressor.

41. The system of claim 38, further comprising auxiliary heat exchanger means for indirectly exchanging heat between the primary portion of the heat transfer fluid flowing to the train and the primary portion of the heat transfer fluid flowing from the train.

42. A regenerative sorbent heat pump system for regeneration of at least a portion of the heat of adsorption comprising: a working fluid being operable for being sorbed by a sorbent over a predetermined first temperature range thereby producing a heat of adsorption, and, for being desorbed from the sorbent over a predetermined second temperature range which is higher than the predetermined first temperature range, a part of the predetermined first temperature range overlapping a part of the predetermined second temperature range thereby enabling regeneration of at least a portion of the heat of adsorption; a plurality of compressors, the number of compressors being at least four, each of the compressors having a sorbent contained within the compressor, and a heat conductive passageway having an inlet and an outlet, the heat conductive passageway for flowing a heat transfer fluid through the compressor and for indirectly transferring heat between the sorbent and the heat transfer fluid without the heat transfer fluid being in contact with the sorbent; means for removing high temperature, high pressure working fluid vapor from each of the compressors; condensing means for transferring heat from the working fluid to a low temperature heat sink, and, for condensing working fluid vapor to form a low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid; evaporating means for converting low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid to low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor, and, for transferring heat from a low temperature source external of the system to the working fluid; liquid conveying means for conveying low temperature, high pressure working fluid liquid from the condensing means to the evaporating means; vapor conveying means for conveying low temperature, low pressure working fluid vapor into each of the compressors; first connecting means for forming a loop of heat conductive passageways by connecting the outlet of one heat conductive passageway to the inlet of another heat conductive passageway and proceeding with such inlet-to-outlet connections until the outlet of the last heat conductive passageway is connected to the inlet of the first heat conductive passageway thereby forming a loop of heat conductive passageways; pumping means for pumping a heat transfer fluid; second connecting means for connecting the outlet of the pumping means to the inlet of each of the heat conductive passageways;
third connecting means for connecting the outlet of each of the heat conductive passageways to the pumping means inlet;
flow control means for directing the heat transfer fluid from the pumping means to the inlet of a predetermined one of the heat conductive passageways, then around the loop passing through each of the heat conductive passageways only once, and then to the pumping means;
phase timing means for redirecting the heat transfer fluid after a predetermined time interval, from the pumping means to another one of the heat conductive passageways thereby beginning a new phase, and for repeating such redirecting after such predetermined time intervals to other of the heat conductive passageways, until the heat transfer fluid is directed from the pumping means to each of the heat conductive passageways thereby completing a flow cycle;
primary heating means for heating each of the compressors;
heat control means for controlling the heating period of the primary heating means in each of the compressors; and,
heat discharge means for transferring heat from the heat transfer fluid in the third connecting means to a low temperature heat sink thereby providing a regenerative sorbent heat pump system operable for regeneration of at least a portion of the heat of adsorption.

43. The process of claim 42, wherein the primary heating means comprises a heating device between each of the compressors in the loop for heating the heat transfer fluid in the first connecting means before the heat transfer fluid is introduced into the heat conductive passageway of the compressor for which it is intended thereby heating such compressor.

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