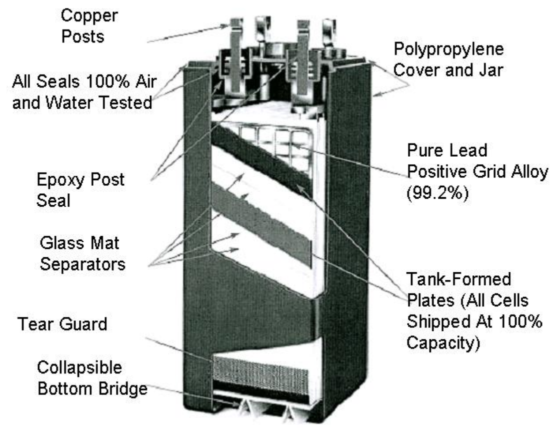
Batteries

Technology Description



Batteries are likely the most widely known type of energy storage. They all store and release electricity through electrochemical processes and come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some are small enough to fit on a computer circuit board, while others are large enough to power a submarine. Some batteries are used several times a day while others may sit idle for 10 or 20 years before they are ever used. Obviously, for such a diversity of uses, a variety of battery types are necessary. But all of them work from the same basic principles.

System Concepts

Battery electrode plates, typically consisting of chemically reactive materials, are placed in an electrolyte, which facilitates the transfer of ions in the battery. The negative electrode gives up electrons during the discharge cycle. This flow of electrons creates electricity that is supplied to any load connected to the battery. The electrons are then transported to the positive electrode. This process is reversed during charging. Batteries store and deliver direct current (DC) electricity. Thus, power-conversion equipment is required to connect a battery to the alternating current (AC) electric grid.

Representative Technologies

- The most mature battery systems are based on lead-acid technology. There are two major kinds of lead acid batteries: flooded lead acid batteries and valve-regulated-lead-acid (VRLA) batteries.
- There are several rechargeable, advanced batteries under development for stationary and mobile applications, including lithium-ion, lithium polymer, nickel metal hydride, zinc-air, zinc-bromine, sodium sulfur, and sodium bromide.
- These advanced batteries offer potential advantages over lead acid batteries in terms of cost, energy density, footprint, lifetime, operating characteristics, reduced maintenance, and improved performance.

Technology Applications

- Lead-acid batteries are the most common energy storage technology for stationary and mobile applications. They offer maximum efficiency and reliability for the widest variety of stationary applications: telecommunications, utility switchgear and control, uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), photovoltaic, and nuclear power plants. They provide instantaneous discharge for a few seconds or a few hours.
- Installations can be any size. The largest system to date is 20 MW. Lead-acid batteries provide power quality, reliability, peak shaving, spinning reserve, and other ancillary services. The disadvantages of the flooded lead-acid battery include the need for periodic addition of water, and the need for adequate ventilation because the batteries can give off hydrogen gas when charging.
- VRLA batteries are sealed batteries fitted with pressure-release valves. They have been called low-maintenance batteries, because they do not require periodic adding of water. They can be stacked horizontally as well as vertically, resulting in a smaller footprint than flooded lead-acid batteries. Disadvantages include higher cost and increased sensitivity to the charging cycle used. High temperature results in reduced battery life and performance.
- Several advanced “flow batteries” are being developed. The zinc-bromine battery consists of a zinc positive electrode and a bromine negative electrode separated by a microporous separator. An aqueous solution of zinc/bromide is circulated through the two compartments of the cell from two separate reservoirs. Zinc-bromine batteries are currently being demonstrated in a number of hybrid installations, with microturbines and diesel generators. Sodium bromide/sodium bromine batteries are similar to zinc-

bromine batteries in function and are under development for large-scale, utility applications. The advantages of flow-battery technologies are low cost, modularity, scalability, transportability, low weight, flexible operation – and all components are easily recyclable. The major disadvantage is a relatively low cycle efficiency.

- Other advanced batteries include the lithium-ion, lithium-polymer, and sodium-sulfur batteries. The advantages of lithium batteries include their high specific energy (four times that of lead-acid batteries) and charge retention. Sodium sulfur batteries operate at high temperature and are being tested for utility load-leveling applications.

Current Status

- Energy storage systems for large-scale power quality applications (~10 MW) are economically viable now, with sales from one manufacturer doubling from 2000 to 2001.
- Lead-acid battery annual sales tripled between 1993 and 2000. The relative importance of battery sales for switchgear and UPS applications shrunk during this period from 45% to 26% of annual sales by 2000. VRLA and flooded battery sales were $5.34 million and $1.71 million, respectively, in 2000.
- Lead-acid battery manufacturers saw sales drop with the collapse of the telecommunications bubble in 2001. They saw significant growth in sales in 2000, due to the demand from communications firms, and invested in production and marketing in anticipation of further growth.
- Many manufacturers have been subject to mergers and acquisitions. A few dozen manufacturers in the United States and abroad still make batteries.
- Government and private industry are currently developing a variety of advanced batteries for transportation and defense applications: lithium-ion, lithium polymer, nickel metal hydride, sodium metal chloride, sodium sulfur, and zinc bromine.
- Rechargeable lithium batteries already have been introduced in the market for consumer electronics and other portable equipment.
- There are two demonstration sites of ZBB's Zinc Bromine batteries in Michigan and two additional ones in Australia.
- Utility-grade batteries are sized 17-40 MWh and range in efficiency from 70% to 80%. Such batteries have power densities ranging from 0.2 to 0.4 kW/kg and 30-50 Wh/kg in energy density.
- Batteries are the most common energy storage device.
- About 150 MW of utility peak-shaving batteries were in use in Japan in 2003.
- In 2003, construction began on two 10-MW flow battery systems – one in the U.K. and the other in the United States.

Technology History

- Most historians date the invention of batteries to about 1800, when experiments by Alessandro Volta resulted in the generation of electrical current from chemical reactions between dissimilar metals.
- Secondary batteries date back to 1860, when Raymond Gaston Planté invented the lead-acid battery. His cell used two thin lead plates separated by rubber sheets. He rolled the combination up and immersed it in a dilute sulfuric acid solution. Initial capacity was extremely limited because the positive plate had little active material available for reaction.
- Others developed batteries using a paste of lead oxides for the positive plate active materials. This allowed much quicker formation and better plate efficiency than the solid Planté plate. Although the rudiments of the flooded lead-acid battery date back to the 1880s, there has been a continuing stream of improvements in the materials of construction and the manufacturing and formation processes.
- Because many of the problems with flooded lead-acid batteries involved electrolyte leakage, many attempts have been made to eliminate free acid in the battery. German researchers developed the gelled-electrolyte lead-acid battery (a type of VRLA) in the early 1960s. Working from a different approach, Gates Energy Products developed a spiral-wound VRLA cell, which represents the state of the art today.

Technology Future
• Lead-acid batteries provide the best long-term power in terms of cycles and float life; and, as a result, will likely remain a strong technology in the future. • Energy storage and battery systems, in particular, will play a significant role in the Distributed Energy Resource environment of the future. Local energy management and reliability are emerging as important economic incentives for companies. • The growing market for hybrid vehicles and the potential for "plug-in hybrid" vehicles--that could supply power to the grid as well as draw power from the grid—may increase future demand for batteries. • A contraction in sales of lead-acid batteries that began in 2001 was expected to continue over the next few years until "9/11" occurred. Military demand for batteries may drastically alter the forecast for battery sales. • Battery manufacturers are working on incremental improvements in energy and power density. The battery industry is trying to improve manufacturing practices and build more batteries at lower costs to stay competitive. Gains in development of batteries for mobile applications will likely crossover to the stationary market. • A 10 MW-120 MWh sodium bromide system is under construction by the Tennessee Valley Authority. A 40 MW nickel cadmium system is being built for transmission-line support and stabilization in Alaska.

Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory. *U.S. Climate Change Technology Program. Technology Options: For the Near and Long Term.* DOE/PI-0002. November 2003 (draft update, September 2005).

Batteries

Market Data

Recent Battery Sales Source: Battery Council International, Annual Sales Summary, October 2001.

	1993	2000	Growth
Flooded Batteries (Million $)	156.9	533.5	340%
VRLA Batteries (Million $)	79.6	170.6	214%
Total Lead-Acid Batteries (Million $)	236.5	704.1	298%

Percent Communications	58%	69%
Percent Switchgear/UPS	45%	26%

Market Predictions Source: Sandia National Laboratories, Battery Energy Storage Market Feasibility Study, September 1997.

Year	MW	($ Million)
2000	496	372
2005	805	443
2010	965	434

Technology Performance

Grid-Connected Energy Storage Technologies Costs and Efficiencies

Source: Sandia National Laboratories, *Characteristics and Technologies for Long- vs. Short-Term Energy Storage,* March 2001.

Energy-Storage System	Energy Related Cost ($/kWh)	Power Related Cost ($/kW)	Balance of Plant ($/kWh)	Discharge Efficiency
Lead-acid Batteries				
low	175	200	50	0.85
average	225	250	50	0.85
high	250	300	50	0.85
Power-Quality Batteries	100	250	40	0.85
Advanced Batteries	245	300	40	0.70

Technology Performance

Off-Grid Storage Applications, Their Requirements, and Potential Markets to 2010 According to Boeing

Source: Sandia National Laboratories, Energy Storage Systems Program Report for FY99, June 2000.

Application	Single Home: Developing Community	Developing Community: No Industry	Developing Community: Light Industry	Developing Community: Moderate Industry	Advanced Community or Military Base
Storage-System Attributes					
Power (kW)	0.5	8	40	400	1 MW
Energy (kWh)	3	45	240	3,600	1.5 MWh
Power					
Base (kW)	0.5	5	10	100	100
Peak (kW)		< 8	< 40	< 400	< 1000
Discharge Duration	5 to 72 hrs	5 to 72 hrs	5 to 24 hrs	5 to 24 hrs	0.5 to 1 hr
Total Projected Number of Systems	47 Million	137,000	40,000	84,000	131,000
Fraction of Market Captured by Storage	> 50	> 50	~ 30	~ 10	< 5
Total Number of Storage Systems to Capture Market Share	24 Million	69,000	12,000	8,000	< 7,000

Technology Performance

Advanced Batteries Characteristics

Source: DOE Energy Storage Systems Program Annual Peer Review FY01, Boulder City Battery Energy Storage, November 2001.

Energy Storage System	Sodium Sulfur	Vanadium Redox	Zinc Bromine
Field Experience	Over 30 Projects, 25 kW to 6 MW, Largest 48 MW	Several Projects 100kW to 3 MW (pulse power), Largest 1.15 MWh	Several Projects, 50 kW to 250 kW, Largest 400 kWh
Production Capacity	160 MWh/yr	30 MWh/yr	40 to 70 MWh/yr
Actual Production	50 MWh/yr	10 MWh/yr	4.5 MWh/yr
Life	15 yrs	7 to 15 yrs	10 to 20 yrs
Efficiency	72%	70to 80 %	65 to 70%
O&M Costs	$32.5k/yr	$50k/yr	$30 to $150k/yr