



Press Release No. 2/01
5. March 2001



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Fuel Cells instead of batteries for everybody

Iceland starts market study on hydrogen economy

Fuel cells and hydrogen as replacement for batteries are not publicly available in Iceland. This is a market study which is limited to six months at first and aims at exploring the customer potential in a practical way.

According to an announcement made on 3. March in Reykjavik the fuel cells will be delivered by the US company DCH Technology (Valencia, California). The membrane cells, distributed under the name ENABLE, output 12 W at 12 V, have about the size of a soda can, and a weight of 640 g. They were shown on the last Hannover Fair and found a lot of interest.

Skeljungur Ltd. (Shell Iceland) distributes the cells and various kinds of hydrogen storage (gas cylinders, hydride storage) in its filling stations. There will be a depot in Reykjavik where hydrogen is generated by electrolysis to refill the storages. The hydrogen price was said to be significantly below what is typical for commercial vendors.

Since electric power in Iceland is generated almost completely from renewable sources (hydropower, geothermy), neither the cell itself is clean nor the hydrogen production generate CO₂ or other harmful emissions.

The project is part of the strategy of the Icelandic government to use renewable energies instead of fossil fuels. Torsteinn Sigfusson, chairman of Icelandic New Energy, said: „The market study will allow Icelanders to become intimately involved with fuel cells, and the clean energy they provide. They will learn how they work, how easy they are to fuel, and thus how easy and safe they are to meet their portable power needs.“ DCH Chairman David Haberman pointed out that this is the first time ever that a wholly commercial enterprise is comprehensively addressing the hydrogen energy market as a viable business.

DWV press release 2/01 of 5. March 2001

Published by the German Hydrogen Association, Berlin

Editor: Dr. Ulrich Schmidtchen, Berlin



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