

Press Release

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Paving the Way to the Finished Product

Certification Standards for a Safe Fuel Cell Technology

The market launch of fuel cell systems is picking up speed. With the objective to develop standards for the approval, certification and standardization of hydrogen and fuel cell components and systems, an expert platform made up of three German research institutes has now been formed. The participating institutions are the Center for Fuel Cell Technology (ZBT) in Duisburg, the Fraunhofer Institute of Solar Energy Systems ISE in Freiburg as well as NEXT ENERGY in Oldenburg.

The accredited Testing Laboratory for Fuel Cell Technology (PBT) at ZBT in Duisburg as well as the Test Lab Fuel Cells at Fraunhofer ISE offer testing according to the standards for fuel cell modules and micro fuel cells. "These tests are required for the certification of fuel cell products and provide a legal cover for manufacturers," explains Joachim Jungsbluth, head of the PBT in Duisburg. Dr. Jürgen Wolf, Head of the Test Lab Fuel Cells at Fraunhofer ISE adds: "At our testing centers, we are pleased to be able to offer companies direct access to the required tests."

PBT, Fraunhofer ISE and NEXT ENERGY have been involved in the German and international standardization committees for many years. Moreover, Dr. Alexander Dyck, Division Director of Fuel Cells at NEXT ENERGY comments, "With our active cooperation in the standardization committees, we want to strengthen the interests of the German fuel cell industry in the international arena."

In a recently organized workshop attended by more than 45 experts from industry, research and special interest groups, information about experiences with approval and

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certification as well as standardization work was presented. The discussion emphasized the huge number of documents required in the certification process. All manufacturers of certificated fuel cell products recommend that technical advisers be integrated at a very early phase in the product planning. Here can Fraunhofer ISE, NEXT ENERGY and PBT offer their expertise. The communication with component manufacturers assists the approval of the components due to the mutual adaptation of established testing methods. Further, clarifications with respect to product liability are also expedited more easily.

At NEXT ENERGY in Oldenburg, a follow-up workshop is planned for spring 2013. The workshop aim is to gain information about the different certification facilities and the services offered. Another focus is to promote the informational exchange on complex themes.



Walk-in climate chamber used for tests on fuel cell stacks and systems
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