Graphene: Enabling better batteries for electric vehicles

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Why Graphene?

Graphene is an ultra-thin form of graphitic carbon which can be added to new or existing materials.

It can make materials stronger, lighter and more functional, thereby increasing performance and sustainability.

In electric vehicles there are numerous applications with great promise in production and operation.

This presentation reviews how graphene can solve a major problem in next-gen Li-ion batteries where increasing amounts of silicon are sought.
Higher capacity through silicon anode

The electric mobility industry needs higher capacity batteries for longer range

- Silicon anode is theoretically capable of >10x energy capacity of graphite anode in Li-ion battery
- But today, silicon is being blended into graphite in only small amounts (3-5% weight) due to major and fundamental issues
- Higher energy capacity can translate to longer range of electric vehicles or less weight (smaller batteries), so solving silicon issues can have big impact on EV use and production
Higher capacity through silicon anode

Silicon anodes have profound issues to overcome in practical use

- Silicon changes volume by 300% in charge/discharge cycles (compared to graphite 10%)
- Volume change leads to a range of issues including:
  - pulverization/breakage
  - delamination from current collector
  - build-up of thick, solid electrolyte interface (SEI) decreasing lithiation kinetics and ‘robbing’ lithium from cathode and electrolyte
- So the more silicon, the shorter battery life, and failure ensues (rapidly)

Choi & Aurbach 2016 https://www.nature.com/articles/natrevmats201613#f2
Graphene to the rescue

Ultra-thin carbon nanomaterial enabling practical silicon anodes

- Graphene additives or composites can enable silicon anodes to stabilise and extend cycle life
- Graphene can work in various modes including protective coatings and nano-structures to control pulverisation during volume change, retain kinetics and moderate SEI formation

Samsung, Nature Communications 8:1561. Graphene balls for lithium rechargeable batteries with fast charging and high volumetric energy densities.
Silicon Anode Composite: Talnode-Si®

Graphene silicon composite electrode additive for ‘drop-in’ blending with current graphite anodes

- Nanostructure Porous Graphene Silicon composite electrode additive for existing graphitic anodes
- Produced by mechanical method (not CVD) using external silicon supply and Talga graphene
- Production method includes dry mixing and blending with graphene, utilizing off-the-shelf industrial technology for commercial scalability
- First cycle efficiency up to 91% dependent on silicon loading, good cycle life & reversible coulombic efficiency in the range 99.7%-99.9%
High Capacity Anode

Talga graphene-enhanced silicon anode blended into commercial graphite anode

- The silicon content in Talnode-Si is ~30% Wt Silicon
- Enables a range of loadings in existing anode blends
- Commercial impact is potential longer range of electric vehicle, or same range with less weight from smaller battery

**Lithiation:** 1st cycle: 0.1C to 5mV then stays at 5mV until 0.01C, other cycles: 0.2C to 5mV then stay at 5mV until 0.025 C.

**De-lithiation:** 1st cycle: 0.1C to 1.0V, other cycles: 0.2C to 1.0V.
Thanks!

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