



Electrically Conducting Porphyrin and Porphyrin-Fullerene Electropolymers

AzTE Case #M07-051

Inventors

Dr. Devens Gust

Professor

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Dr. Paul Anthony Liddell

Research Scientist

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Dr. Miguel Andres Gervaldo

Postdoctoral Associate

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Intellectual Property Status

Patent pending

Contact

Bill Loux

Director of Business Development

Arizona Technology Enterprises, LLC (AzTE)

480.884.1996 main

480.884.1992 desk

Email: bloux@azte.com

Background

Conducting polymers are used in applications such as photovoltaic cells, sensors and similar devices. The standard organic solar cells contain such polymers, mixed with an organic or inorganic electron conducting phase, along with metal oxides and a low work function metal. The commonly used polymers are polyacetylenes, polyphenyleneethynylenes (PPE), polyphenylenevinylenes (PPV), polythiophenes, and polyanilines. The polymers have different properties based on their organic structures and substituent groups. The substituents influence the physical and chemical properties and alter the performance of the polymers. However, these polymers have very low efficiencies which arise due to the deficiencies in their chemical properties.

Invention Description

Researchers at Arizona State University have developed an entirely new class of electrically conducting polymers based on the electropolymerization of monomers consisting of porphyrin or porphyrin-fullerene units. The invention also discloses a method of synthesis of these monomer units and their electropolymerization. The porphyrin macrocycles form an integral part of the polymer backbone, and they are involved in the conductivity mechanism by forming delocalized structures.

These compounds can be synthesized easily and have the capability to absorb light in the UV and visible region. The absorption range of the polymer can be tuned to maximize the efficiency in the solar spectrum. These polymers have superior chemical properties which allow effective conduction of holes and electrons and slow their recombination. The efficiency offered by these porphyrin based polymers makes them an efficacious replacement to the existing materials used in a variety of applications.

Potential Applications

- Photovoltaic cells, sensors and solar cells
- Organic light emitting diodes (OLEDs)
- Batteries and other portable power generation devices
- Porphyrins can be used as water splitting and fuel generation catalysts in fuel cells
- Sensors, potentiometric detectors and related electronic applications
- Useful as electrochromic materials due to their coloration changes when voltages are applied

Benefits and Advantages

- Provides effective hole conduction leading to high efficiencies
- Slows recombination of holes and electrons following charge separation
- Eliminates the formation of cut-off "islands" of conducting phases and concentration of charges
- Offers the capability for tuning the absorption spectrum for efficient use of the solar spectrum