

Scalable Vapor Condenser for Power Generation (#7101)

A device and method for rapid vapor condensation to minimize energy loss, for applications ranging from electronics to power plants.

Georgia Tech inventors have significantly increased vapor condensation rates by as much as 60% by applying acoustic actuation (sound waves), such that acoustic energy is transferred to vapor bubbles in direct contact with the surrounding subcooled liquid, causing those bubbles to condense. This acoustic actuation affects the vapor-liquid interface and leads to the formation of small scale surface waves that increase the total rate of vapor condensation. This method is applicable over a broad range of vapor bubble scales, regardless of the size and curvature of the liquid-vapor interface. Ultimately, the increased condensation rate of the vapor can allow for a reduction of subcooling in the condenser, and therefore increase efficiency gains for the overall thermodynamic cycles found in power plants and elsewhere.

Benefits/Advantages

- **Reduced cost** – reduction of sub-cooling in the condenser allows increased thermodynamic efficiency gains for cycles
- **Reduced complexity** – simpler components, unlike conventional condenser technologies
- **Scalable** – applicable to utility scales ranging from small electronic devices to large power plants

Potential Commercial Applications

- Large-scale thermoelectric power plants
- High-power electronic hardware
- Portable electronics, where condensers can operate at atmospheric and sub-atmospheric pressures

Background/Context for This Invention

Common condensers – devices that condense vapor into liquid form – are required in a wide variety of settings and industrial applications. For example, the electric power generation industry currently uses shell-and-tube condensers. Their function (in a thermal power plant) is to condense the exhaust steam to obtain maximum efficiency, so as to minimize energy loss, and to convert the steam into reusable water. However, many problems exist with current condenser technology, including the rate at which the vapor is condensing, low efficiency, condenser size, system complexity, and necessary maintenance. In turn, there is an estimated total loss of more than \$1 billion per year for U.S. power plants due to surface condenser problems [1].

[1] Bharathan , Desikan. “An Assessment Contact Condens the Use of Direct with Wet Utility Steam ' Cooling Systems Power Plants.” Nrel, www.nrel.gov/docs/legosti/old/4514.pdf.

Dr. Ari Glezer

George W. Woodruff Chair in Thermal Systems and Professor - Georgia Tech School of Mechanical Engineering

Dr. Marc Smith

Professor – Georgia Tech School of Mechanical Engineering

Thomas Boziuk Boziuk

Graduate Research Assistant – Georgia Tech School of Mechanical Engineering

More Information

U.S. Application Filed - [20170115064A1](#)

U.S. Patent Issued - [10670341B2](#)

Publications

For more information about this technology, please visit:

<https://licensing.research.gatech.edu/technology/scalable-vapor-condenser-power-generation>

Images:

The automated sequential delivery of multiple fluids. A varying number of delay gates imprinted in the branches are shown in the figure.

COVID-19 and flu saliva test on paper: (A) The automatic sequential delivery of multiple reagents required for virus test; (B) Water pouring into the device triggers the virus assay, allowing the presence of SARS-CoV-2 and influenza A & B viruses to be visually identified by the color changes in the corresponding detection spot

