

APPLICATION NOTE

LD16-02



Analysis of hydrocarbons, CO₂, N₂O in Oxygen with the MultiDetek2 compact GC system using Nitrogen as carrier gas and the PlasmaDetek-E detection technology



▲ MultiDetek2

▲ PlasmaDetek2

LDETEK SOLUTION:

The hydrocarbon analysis for the production of high purity Oxygen on air separation plants is essential for safety of the operations and quality of the product. For a very long time, the flame ionisation detector has been used for detection of trace hydrocarbons in different gas mixtures. This detector has now many different designs all based on carbon ions collection. The FIDs require a mixture of Air and Hydrogen to generate the flame used for ionisation. It is also necessary to have extra safety based on Hydrogen gas handling. All these points result in increase of operating and start-up costs as demonstrated in Figure 1.

LDetek has developed a detection system based on plasma emission detector (PlasmaDetek E) for the analysis of trace hydrocarbons in different gas mixtures. This PED technology offers enhanced sensitivity and selectivity to hydrocarbons using Nitrogen as single discharge/carrier gas. Other emission and ionisation detection technologies are known in the market for the analysis of hydrocarbons using Argon or Helium as discharge/carrier gas. However, these systems don't offer the selectivity and sensitivity to allow running a single injection through a column without having interferences from residual Oxygen. Other techniques offering NMHC detection are also available and are sufficient in certain cases. Nevertheless, the NMHC detection doesn't give the ability to focus on the measurement of critical impurities like low concentration acetylene in Oxygen production. Using the MultiDetek2 combined with the PlasmaDetek E with Nitrogen carrier gas, the system can be customized for the range and LDL that are specifically required for each impurity. This way, it is possible to configure the system according to each air separation plant specification. As shown in figures 2 and 3, low detection is possible using Nitrogen as carrier gas with PED technology. No need of complex valve and column chromatography configuration for flushing out the background gases.

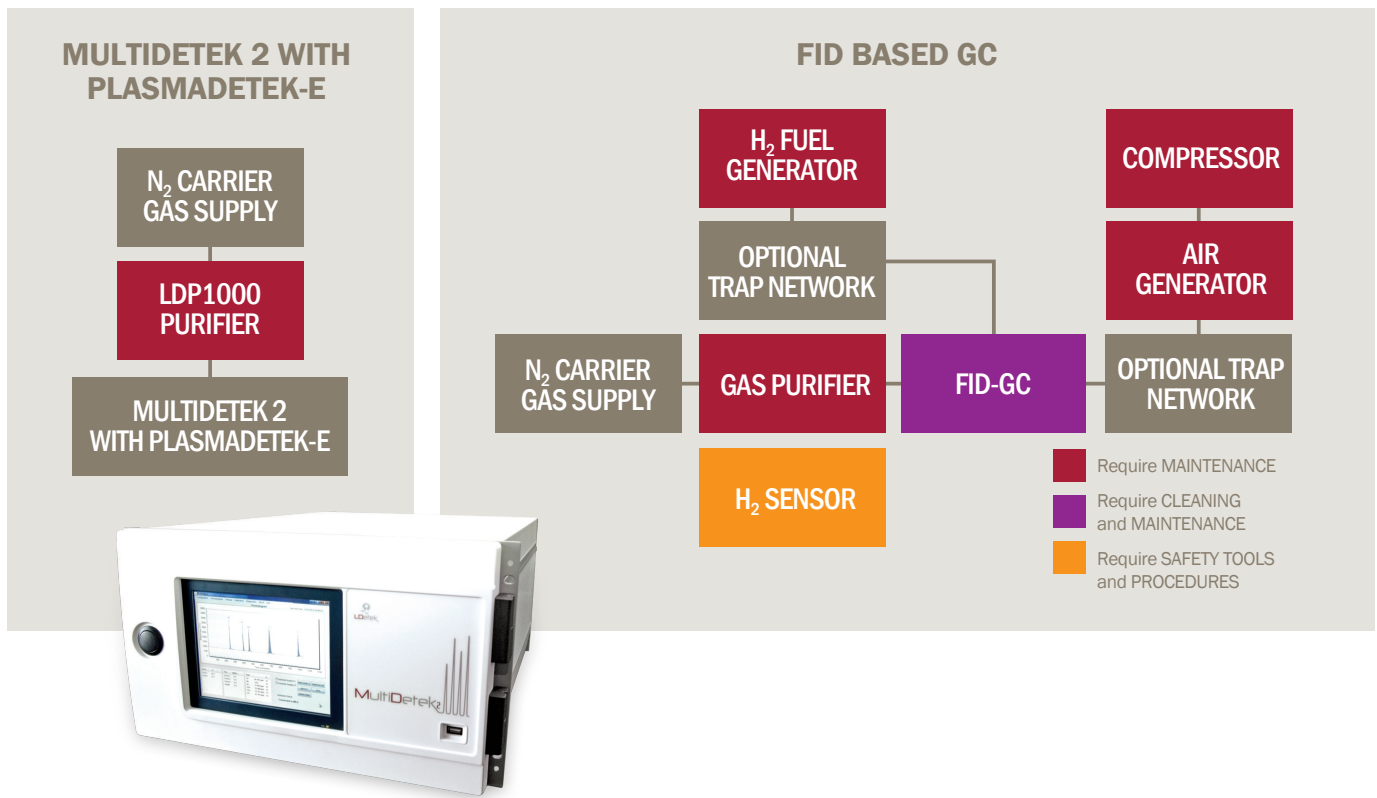


Figure 1 : Comparison between FID based GC and MultiDetek2 compact GC with PlasmaDetek-E

RESULTS:

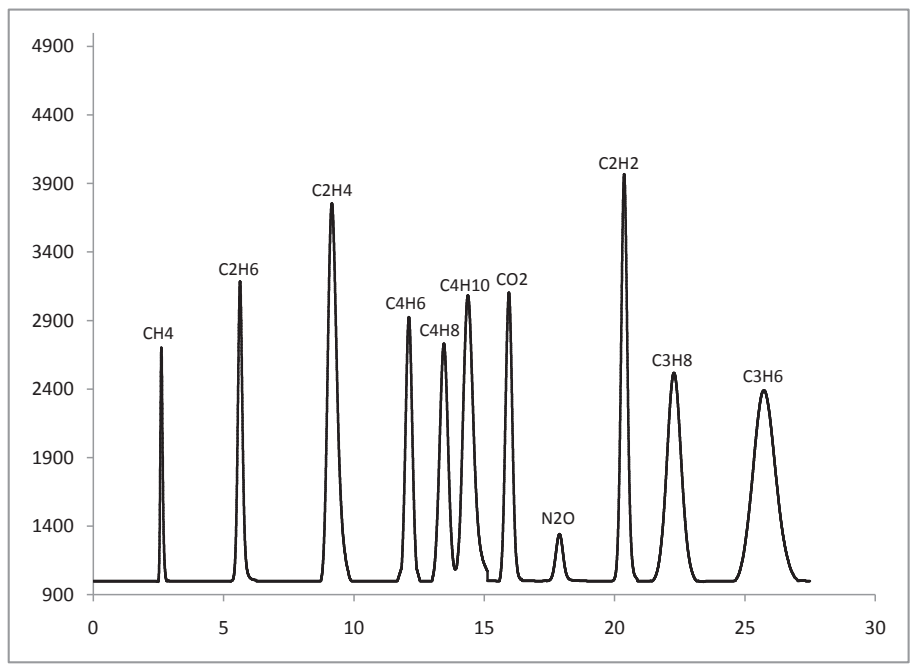


Figure 2 : Chromatogram of trace impurities in balance Oxygen

COMPONENT	CONCENTRATION	PEAK HEIGHT	NOISE	LDL (3X NOISE)
CH4	18.1 ppm	2760 mV	2.1 mV	0.041 ppm
C2H6	8.6 ppm	3308 mV	4.0 mV	0.031 ppm
C2H4	8.2 ppm	3888 mV	4.3 mV	0.027 ppm
C4H6	2.1 ppm	2969 mV	11.0 mV	0.023 ppm
C4H8	1.8 ppm	2798 mV	11.8 mV	0.023 ppm
C4H10	2.1 ppm	3190 mV	11.5 mV	0.023 ppm
CO2	4.1 ppm	3199 mV	11.0 mV	0.042 ppm
N2O	0.8 ppm	1401 mV	3.0 mV	0.005 ppm
C2H2	1.1 ppm	4098 mV	10.5 mV	0.007 ppm
C3H8	8.9 ppm	2559 mV	4.1 mV	0.043 ppm
C3H6	8.7 ppm	2501 mV	3.9 mV	0.041 ppm

Note: other LDL could be obtained with different injection volume and chromatographic conditions

Figure 3 : LDL based on 3 times noise ratio

CONCLUSION:

With Nitrogen gas used as carrier, the MultiDetek2 with Plasmadetek-E becomes the ideal gas measuring instrument for trace detection of hydrocarbons on the air separation plants for high purity Oxygen monitoring. Keeping the start-up and operating costs low and offering enhanced hydrocarbon detection, LDetek is proud to offer its robust and easy to operate system.



Where **innovation** leads to **success**

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