

Custom Solutions Group LLC

1419 Avenue A

Katy, TX 77493

Telephone: 281-574-9999

Fax: 707-215-0932

E-Mail: service@customsolutionsgroup.org

www.customsolutionsgroup.org

Electronic Gases

Electronic gases are gases used by the semiconductor industry. These gases are used to clean, etch, and build surfaces for the manufacture of micro-chips and other electronic components. Some electronic gases are also used for the manufacture of solar cells. Common electronic gases include, but are not limited to:

Ammonia

Arsine

Boron Trichloride

Boron Trifluoride

Carbon Dioxide

Carbon Monoxide

Chlorine

Chlorine Trifluoride

Diborane

Dichlorosilane

Disilane

Fluorine

Germane

Hydrogen Bromide

Hydrogen Chloride

Hydrogen Fluoride

Hydrogen Selenide

Nitric Oxide

Nitrous Oxide

Phosphine

Silane

Silicone Tetrachloride

Silicone Tetrafluoride

Trichlorosilane

Tungsten Hexafluoride



A variety of halocarbons are also used in electronics manufacturing. Blends with inert and permanent gases like helium, neon, hydrogen, argon, nitrogen, krypton, and xenon, are also common.

Custom Solutions Group LLC provides a wide variety of high quality solutions for electronics gas chromatography. For the analysis of trace impurities in high purity gas, the Pulsed Discharge Helium Ionization Detector (PDHID) is the preferred, universal, trace detector. Other more selective trace detectors, such as the Flame Ionization Detector (FID), the Electron Capture Detector (ECD), and element-specific detectors, are also used for more selective trace analysis. Fractional percent and percent level blends are often analyzed via Thermal Conductivity Detector (TCD). Because most electronic gases are either highly toxic or highly flammable, special features and precautions are applied for analytical integrity and environmental safety. Most systems require the analysis of hydrogen, argon/oxygen, nitrogen, methane, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide, as impurities. All systems emphasize simplicity, serviceability, functionality and the highest quality construction, Made-in-the-U.S.A.

Trace Impurities Analysis via Pulsed Discharge Helium Ionization Detector (PDHID)

The Pulsed Discharge Helium Ionization Detector (PDHID) is the premier, trace gas detector in use in the world today. The PDHID is a non-radioactive, mostly non-destructive, universal detector that can analyze permanent gas impurities down to low parts-per-billion. For organics, the PDHID can achieve linearity of up to five orders of magnitude, and because it operates via the well-known Hopfield emission, it can analyze almost any compound, except for neon. For neon, Custom Solutions Group modifies the operation of the PDHID for greater neon ionization efficiency. The Model D2 also has a non-radioactive electron capture mode for the selective analysis of trace electron capturing compounds. This model is switchable between the electron capture and helium ionization modes. All helium ionization modes can be doped for greater selectivity, including: (1) argon doping for organics, (2) krypton doping for unsaturates, and (3) xenon doping for polyaromatic hydrocarbons.

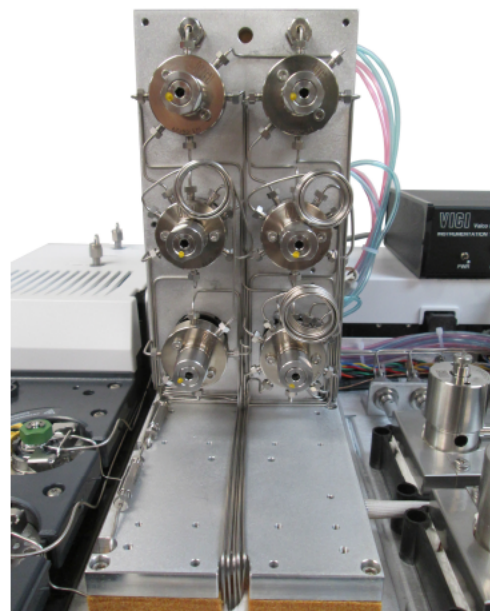


Figure 1 – Separate Sample Inlets and Outlets

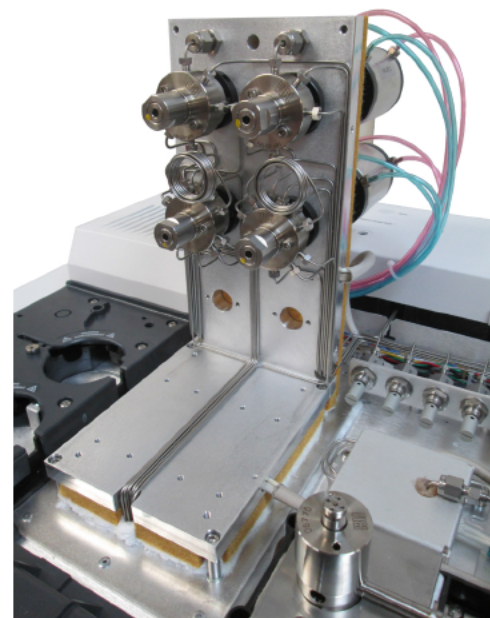


Figure 2 – TCD and PDHID for Gas Blends

Trace Impurities Analysis via Other More Selective Trace Detectors

Because the PDHID produces such a large response for the bulk gas, it is often necessary to backflush or foreflush the bulk gas to vent. If that is not possible, then a more selective trace detector can be used. The Flame Ionization Detector (FID), which is often coupled with a methanizer for the trace analysis of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, is frequently used to provide more selectivity than the PDHID for organic compounds. Methanizers are high temperature, nickel oxide catalysts in a hydrogen atmosphere. They convert traces of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide to methane. The methane is subsequently analyzed via FID, thus lowering detection limits compared to TCD. The nickel oxide catalyst in the methanizer is protected from contamination by either backflush or methanizer bypass.

Other trace detectors include: (1) the Electron Capture Detector (ECD), which is highly selective toward electron capturing compounds, (2) the Sulfur Chemiluminescence Detector (SCD), which is highly selective toward trace sulfur compounds, (3) the Nitrogen Chemiluminescence Detector (NCD), which is highly selective toward trace nitrogen-containing compounds, (4) the Photo Ionization Detector (PID) which is highly selective for aromatics, and (5) the Reduction Compound Photometer (RCP), which produces a highly selective trace response for hydrogen and carbon monoxide. Two other detectors, the Flame Photometric Detector (FPD) and the Pulsed Flame Photometric Detector (PFPD) are commonly used in the sulfur and phosphorous modes, but the PFPD has a couple of dozen unique, elemental operating modes. Each of these detectors has its own advantages and disadvantages. Custom Solutions Group listens to our clients and works with our clients to determine what combination of detection is best to meet the client's analytical need and budget.

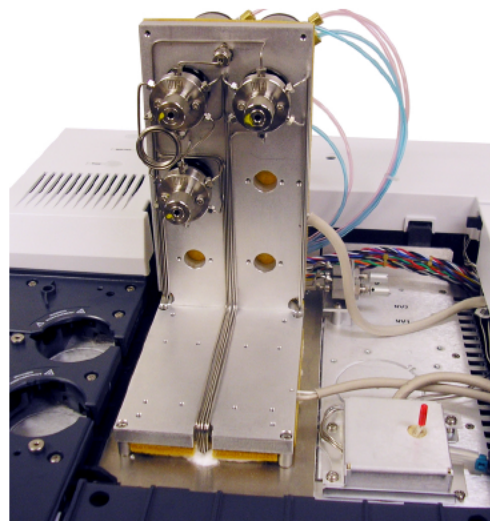


Figure 4 – Hastelloy C22 for Chlorine Analysis

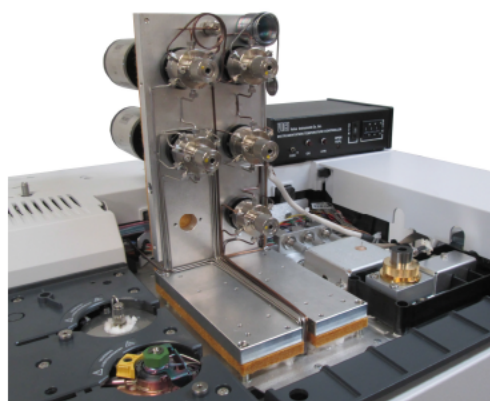


Figure 5 – Methanizer/FID and TCD

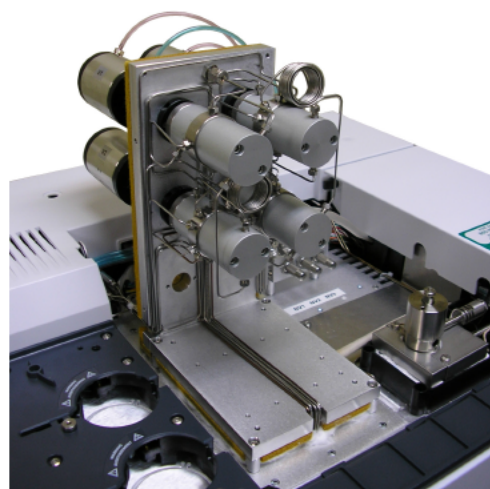


Figure 6 – System for Corrosives

Special Features and Precautions

Because most electronic gases are either highly toxic or highly flammable, special features and precautions are applied for analytical integrity and environmental safety. First, for toxic and flammable gas systems, all Valco valves are installed with helium purges or in helium purged enclosures. The helium purge prevents the contamination of the sample by atmospheric, thus guaranteeing accuracy and precision down to low parts-per-billion. Second, the helium purge also protects against the escape of toxic, fugitive emissions into the surrounding environment. Special attention is paid to controlled vents for sample bypass, sample out, split vents, backflush-to-vent, foreflush-to-vent, helium purge out, and detector vents. Also, highly corrosive gas systems utilize special materials like Hastelloy C22 and electroform nickel for all installed components that may come into contact with the corrosive gas. All valves that are used for trace systems with the PDHID are certified for use with the PDHID via helium mass spectrometer leak test. For the best possible background and the best possible sensitivity, only UHP helium is used on the PDHID. The UHP helium is then purified by a primary helium getter, and cleaned up again downstream of the carrier gas controls via secondary helium getters. Lastly, most electronic gases should not come into contact with air—ever. To this end, helium or argon purges are used to prevent back diffusion of air into the sample lines.

For trace analysis, all columns are specially treated and conditioned to prevent the adsorption of active compounds. Silcosteel, where applicable, is commonly used for tubing, also to prevent the adsorption of active compounds at trace levels.

All of these special features and precautions are intended to make Custom Solutions Group electronic gas analyzers the best in the world.

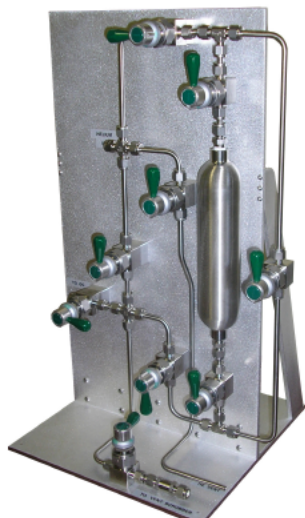


Figure 7 – Hazardous Liquid Sampling Panel

Special Services and Analytical Automation

Custom Solutions Group provides special services and analytical automation for our electronic gas clients. Special services include statistical gauge repeatability and reproducibility studies, analytical validation services, and IQ/OQ certifications. Custom Solutions Group can also provide automated and customized certificates of analysis, thus eliminating data transfer errors, inefficient uses of labor, and delays in reporting and shipments.

All Custom Solution Group electronic gas analyzers can be adapted to automated, unattended operation and on-line, continuous use. Because of the hazardous nature of most electronic gases, gas sampling manifolds must be well-designed, well-built, and cleaned and passivated for specific uses. Custom Solutions Group can assist electronic gas manufacturers to ensure there is a clean, pre-conditioned, valid sample delivered to the GC.

Figure 7 shows an example of a simple sampling panel for the introduction and injection of a hazardous gas-liquid to GC. The panel allows the gas-liquid to be pressurized to liquid and a single phase sample introduced to the GC. This is necessary for both accuracy and precision with these types of samples. The panel also allows for the safe venting of all hazardous samples to scrubber, with no dead legs, no dead volume, and no interaction of the sample with air. Applicable gas-liquids include: liquid chlorine, trichlorosilane, and tetrachlorosilane.

Electronic Gas Blends

Electronic gas blends are normally analyzed via Thermal Conductivity Detector (TCD). The TCD is rugged, linear over a wide range of concentrations, and universal in response. The PDHID is only used when blend concentrations go too low. Most TCD's are operated via helium carrier; however, due to thermal conductivity effects for binary mixtures of helium and hydrogen, argon and nitrogen are the preferred carrier gases for helium and hydrogen analysis, especially for high and broad ranges of helium and hydrogen. The separations on these systems are matrix-dependent. Silanized materials are used for silane and chlorosilane analysis. Molecular sieves are protected by backflush and series-bypass.

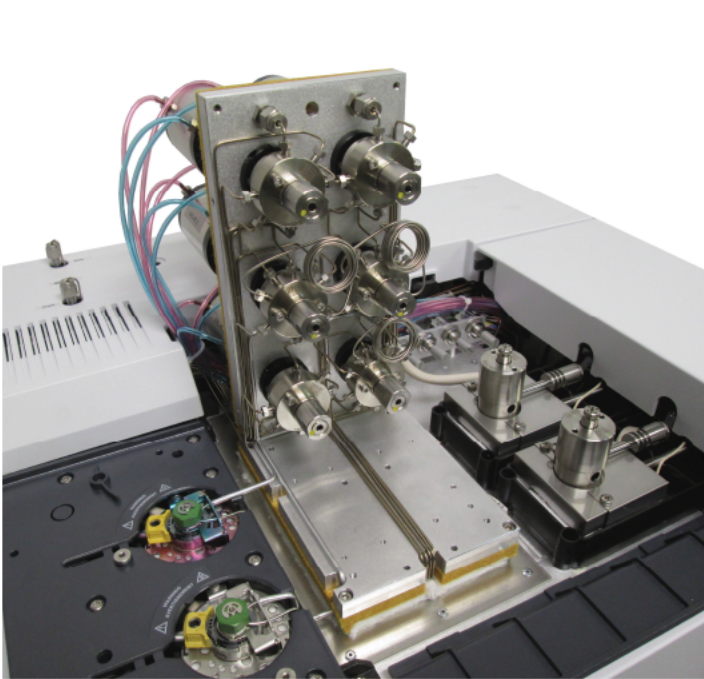


Figure 8 – Helium Mass Spectrometer Certified Valco Valves Purged with Helium or Argon



Figure 9 – Rear Mounting of Pulsed Discharge Modules with Custom Sampling Panels

Conclusion

Custom Solutions Group offers the widest variety of high quality solutions in electronics gas chromatography. Custom Solutions Group analyzers feature simplicity, serviceability, functionality and the highest quality construction, Made-in-the-U.S.A.

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Agilent Technologies

Channel Partner