

# APPLICATION NOTE

# LD12-5

## Improving Gas Chromatograph measurements with the use of the LDP1000 gas purifier.

When measuring low level of impurity by gas chromatography, the carrier gas quality is quite important. Since the carrier gas is the reference gas for the device, good precaution to provide pure carrier is required. Using a grade 5 (99.999% pure) or grade 6 (99.9999%) is not enough in some cases. Even more, it is well known that many problems can simply come from the use of a bad quality gas cylinder or leakage on pressure regulator after cylinders manipulation. By using the LDP1000, it gives the certitude it catches all impurities coming from the carrier gas lines although you have sources of contamination.

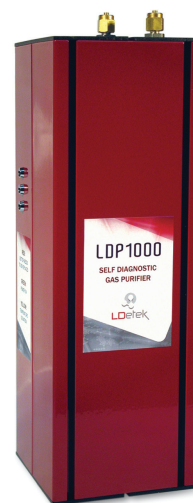
The LDP1000 purifies noble gases, nitrogen or hydrogen at level that give the best reference for any gas chromatograph and GC/MS. It's non-evaporable zirconium-based getter alloy is contained in a 316L Stainless Steel bloc to ensure high purity and safe operating mode. It removes impurities down to ppt level (total impurities).

### > LDP1000 DESIGN

The LDP1000 gas purifier is designed to be used with any noble gases, nitrogen or hydrogen. Its changeable getter gives the possibility to avoid changing the whole unit but only the consumable parts inside. That is a cost effective solution for long term use.

Having an accurate temperature control for such purifier is critical. The LDP1000 is based on a microcontroller unit that regulates the temperature of the getter to ensure stability on the purity and maximum purification. An over temperature protection is also in place to ensure safety of the unit

Its mechanical design allows to use it on a table in a laboratory as well as in the industry with its holding plates. The bypass plate option gives also the necessary installation for maintenance purpose to avoid contamination and flow shutdown to the gas chromatograph.



LDP1000 gas purifier

### > AMBIENT US HEATED PURIFIERS

Since the entirety of the alloy volume is used, the heated LDP1000 adds to the purifier capacities and life time in comparison to any conventional ambient purifiers and/or traps. Heating the alloy makes the impurity molecules diffuse into the bulk of the getter particles instead of only relying on surface absorption like ambient purifiers. Moreover, the LDP1000 technology has the capacity to remove nitrogen, hydrogen and methane in noble gases.

## > CONTAMINATION INFLUENCE

It is well known that a contaminated carrier gas in a gas chromatograph has a big impact on the stability, sensitivity and performances of the system. Picture 1 shows the impact on the nitrogen reading while having a contaminated carrier gas.

Having a carrier gas contaminated, but less than the sample gas to measure, we lose sensitivity by the amount of the contamination. From the picture 1, we clearly see that we lose about 50% response with a sample/contamination ratio of 2. That affects significantly the detection limit of the system.

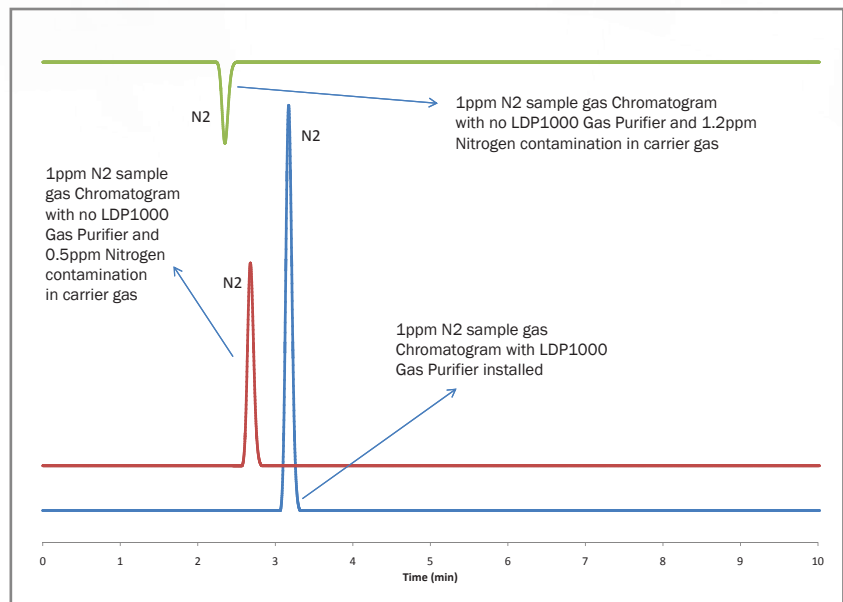
It is even worse when the contamination is higher than the sample to measure. Since the sample is more pure than the carrier gas, you get a negative peak for the impurity. The measurement is completely erroneous and cannot be used.

The LDP1000 ensures that the carrier gas of the system is at its best purity you can get. This way, the gas chromatograph can have the best performances for all its measurements.

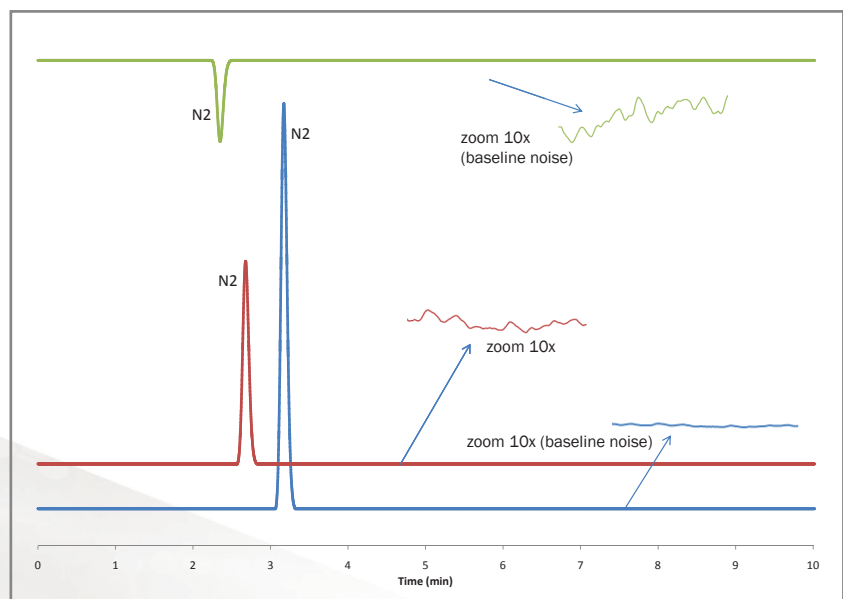
Referring to picture 2, the impact of bad carrier quality on a gas chromatograph system is clearly demonstrated. The chromatograms used to do the demonstration are the same that the ones used in picture 1 which are contaminated with different level of air.

The noise level increases with the level of air contamination. That makes the signal/noise ratio lower. That has also a direct impact on the performances of the system by degrading the columns stability and separation. It can even lead to capillary column destruction.

Having the LDP1000 installed on gas chromatograph keeps the system stable and extends the lifetime of the whole system hardware by removing any trace of particles and air contaminants.



Picture 1: N2 contamination influence



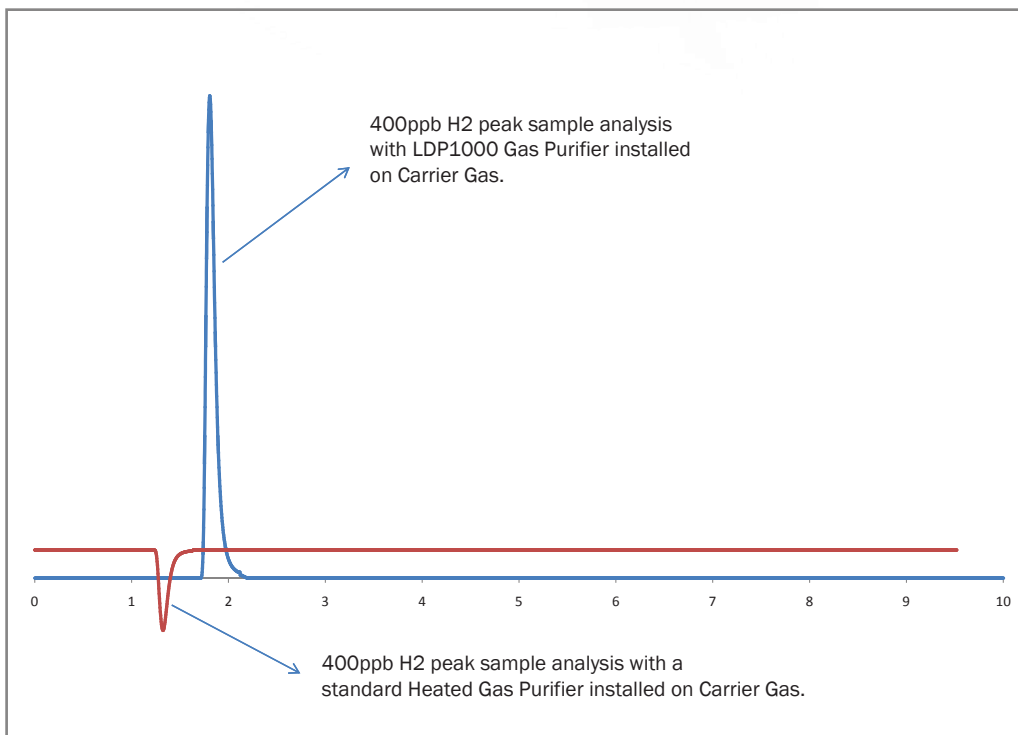
Picture 2: contamination influence on noise level

## > TWO BEDS OF PURIFICATION

To ensure high purity, the LDP1000 noble gas version has two beds of purification. The first stage has an elevated temperature grabbing all components except some low level hydrogen. At this temperature, some H<sub>2</sub> can be released from this bed. The amount of H<sub>2</sub> can be as high as a few hundreds ppb with the use of one stage of purification only.

By having a second bed of purification operating at a different temperature, the hydrogen out of the first stage can then be totally trapped.

Both bed temperatures are controlled by a microprocessor ensuring stability and efficiency of the purifier.



**Picture 3:** Hydrogen influence on measurement with different purifiers

Having H<sub>2</sub> released from the first bed could influence your H<sub>2</sub> measurement considerably. Such phenomenon is known in the gas chromatography industry when measurement of low level hydrogen is necessary. A part of the hydrogen comes from the cracking of methane and non-methane hydrocarbons. The cracked by-products are then sorbed by the getter. However, the sorption capacity for H<sub>2</sub> isn't high enough caused by high temperature which makes some low level hydrogen come out of the getter.

Picture 3 shows the effect of H<sub>2</sub> presence coming out of a purifier in the carrier gas when only one stage of purification is used. Then, if the sample gas is more pure than the carrier gas, you will reduce sensitivity and even get negative reading for hydrogen in some cases, as illustrated on picture 3. With its two beds of purification, the LDP1000 removes completely the presence of H<sub>2</sub> in the carrier which is ideal for low measurement.

## > LEDS INDICATION & RS232 COMMUNICATION

The LDP1000 has intelligent features to be able to monitor some information:



Picture of the LDP1000 LED

- **Green LED**  
Indicates that the LDP1000 is powered ON
- **Yellow LED**  
Indicates if one of the beds has a temperature deviation
- **Red LED**  
Indicates that the lifetime of the purifier has expired. Getter needs to be replaced.

Those indications are very useful to know that your system is fully working or the purifier is not the cause of any performance issue you can have with your gas chromatograph. The diagnostic and control of those LED's is fully managed by the microcontroller and the different sensors in place.

A RS-232 serial port is also installed by default on the LDP1000. This feature gives the possibility to monitor the temperature of the 2 beds of purification. This is very useful for troubleshooting the device.

## > CONCLUSION

With the LDP1000, the carrier gas quality becomes indisputable. With its specific mechanical and electrical design, the gas purity level has never been so good and stable. It is a must for the gas chromatography and GC/MS industry. Moreover, with its changeable getter, this may be the last gas purifier you will ever buy. The LDP1000 is the cost effective solution you need.





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