What Is The UltraBattery®?
The UltraBattery is unique from a traditional lead battery design. The UltraBattery combines the advantages of an Advanced VRLA (a carbon-enhanced Valve Regulated Lead-Acid) battery with the advantages of an asymmetric supercapacitor. This enables the optimal balance of an energy storing lead battery with the quick charge acceptance, power discharge, and longevity of a capacitor. While capacitors accept and deliver high levels of power, they can’t store much energy, and therefore, are quickly depleted. They are often used in conjunction with batteries to provide both power and energy. Using the two together usually requires electronic controllers and complex algorithms to balance power and energy between both units. The UltraBattery eliminates the need for additional electronic control and multiple energy storage devices since both energy storage and capacitor functions are integrated into one battery unit.

How Does The UltraBattery® Compare To Traditional Automobile Batteries?
Traditionally, lead-acid batteries for automotive use are designed to provide power for cranking the engine. The vast majority of time the battery is maintained in a high state of charge so that it will have enough engine starting power. However, as traditional vehicle designs evolve to rely on an electric motor to meet peak acceleration needs while recapturing the energy from braking, the battery is required to operate under different power demands and recharging capabilities. Conventional lead batteries, even those of an Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM) or Gelled Electrolyte VRLA design, will have limited longevity when operated under these conditions.

The UltraBattery is designed to operate at a Partial State of Charge (PSOC). From start-stop features to regenerative breaking and power assistance, the UltraBattery is required to accept and deliver large current pulses in PSOC conditions.

The UltraBattery enhanced design extends the battery’s longevity in a type of service that would severely shorten a traditional battery’s life due to sulfation. Under laboratory evaluation, the UltraBattery meets or exceeds the targets of power, available energy, cold cranking, and self-discharge set by the US FreedomCar for both minimum and maximum power-assist HEV systems.
What Applications Benefit Most From The UltraBattery® Design?

The UltraBattery is ideal for HEVs which utilize regenerative energy breaking events to help recharge the battery and power assist functions to help conserve fuel consumption. The UltraBattery can accept and deliver higher current pulses than an Advanced AGM VRLA battery product, and performs better under High-Rate Partial State of Charge (HRPSOC) conditions.

In fact, UltraBattery prototypes were tested by the Advanced Lead Acid Battery Consortium (ALABC) on the General Motors’ Millbrook Proving Grounds in England (see figure 1). The battery pack of a Moderate HEV was replaced with an UltraBattery pack. The UltraBattery pack’s volume was no greater than the Nickel-Metal Hydride (Ni-MH) battery pack that was replaced. The UltraBattery pack performed exceptionally well with no maintenance or module balancing. Measured fuel economy and CO₂ emissions were essentially equal to the traditional Ni-MH battery pack.

Two moderate hybrid UltraBattery cars with modified UltraBattery packs are also making significant inroads toward the hybrid electric vehicle market.

One of these UltraBattery cars, supported by the DOE and ALABC, has reached over 100,000 miles in some of the country’s hottest conditions in Phoenix, Arizona. Not only has it performed exceptionally well with an over 2-year old pack in high heat, but it is also running in a fleet operation that creates extreme severe service conditions with no significant loss in module capacity.

A second UltraBattery car undergoes consistent road testing and battery system analysis at East Penn’s manufacturing complex in Lyon Station, PA. The 3-year old battery pack, with over 75,000 miles, was evaluated during its milestone of 50,000 miles.

The battery pack showed no performance degradation. In fact, the individual module voltages actually converged as they aged. This further proves UltraBattery technology can diminish the complexity and expense of other battery technologies and their battery monitoring systems.

East Penn has developed other UltraBattery pack solutions for 48-volt systems. This pack is being designed for easy integration. Its Battery Management System is characterized for optimized use with the UltraBattery design. As a complete custom system integrator, East Penn has the experience and resources to develop other types of special packs and voltage configurations for customized needs.

Renewable energy sources like wind and solar are currently being tested with the UltraBattery product because of its ability to perform well under a High-Rate Partial State of Charge (HRPSOC). Wind and solar energy generation applications may have constraints on power generation including maximum generation levels and rates of change of power generation. The power storage management enabled by the UltraBattery helps to maximize the efficiency of its energy generation. The UltraBattery has been under evaluation in a simulated wind application test at Sandia National Laboratories. It performed exceptionally well in terms of extended cycle life and power capacity (see figure 2). More testing is currently being performed at Sandia National Laboratories showing promising result for the UltraBattery in other wind and photovoltaic applications.

The UltraBattery provides the most effective technology (cost and practicality) to build storage solutions to support electrical grid stabilization. The UltraBattery’s superior performance under HRPSOC conditions is ideal for providing frequency regulation ancillary and demand management services to optimize grid efficiency.
Why Use The UltraBattery® Over Other Alternative Battery Chemistries?

The UltraBattery product is very “Green.” Green in an environmental sense because it can be recycled the same way as any other lead battery product, and green in a monetary sense because it has one of the lowest cost-per-power ratios. In fact, the cost is significantly less than Lithium Ion and Nickel-Metal Hydride products. This allows one of the most cost effective solutions for many HEV, renewable wind and solar, electrical grid ancillary services, and Motive Power applications.

An innovative recycling infrastructure has been developed to virtually recycle 100% of a lead battery, and regulations ensure that these products are returned to appropriate locations. This applies for the UltraBattery as well. Other battery chemistries can’t come close to the recycling advances and developed infrastructure to reclaim the lead-acid product. The innovative processes for recycling lead-acid batteries and the facilities that support it have progressively advanced over the years to become one of the greatest recycling success stories in the global marketplace.

The UltraBattery has proven itself test after test in terms of cycle life performance over Ni-MH batteries. The cycling performance of the UltraBattery was evaluated against Ni-MH cells using a simplified discharge and charge profile to simulate HEV driving conditions (see figure 3). The EU CAR power-assist was used to simulate Moderate HEV driving conditions (see figure 4).

The battery was subjected to each of the tests repetitively until the voltage reached the specified cut-off voltage. These screening tests give valuable insight into the UltraBattery’s potential cycle life performance.

The UltraBattery technology is also one of the most cost effective and safest solutions for larger battery installations (like those for renewable wind and solar power generation) compared to alternative battery technologies. The charging and discharging of lead batteries at rates from a few milliamperes to many thousands of amperes is performed safely on a daily basis. Lead batteries operate safely at wide ranging ambient temperatures and in every geographical location from hot desert conditions to cold arctic environments. These attributes prove that lead chemistry is an abuse tolerant, versatile, and safe technology, which is especially critical when there is a large amount of battery power in one location.

While East Penn continues to explore new alternative battery technologies, the company also strongly believes there is an evolving role for lead technology in a growing number of applications. UltraBattery technology as well as other advancements in new battery technology helps prove that East Penn’s beliefs are well founded.

The company is excited to further explore the UltraBattery as it serves the HEVs of today, and the future Electric Vehicles of tomorrow. The UltraBattery’s future role in smart electrical grid technology will be a significant asset to the efficiency of its development as well as assimilation of wind and solar power. The UltraBattery is an exciting new power solution that will have the most immediate impact on cost effective energy conservation and environmental protection efforts.
World’s Largest and Most Modern Single-Site Battery Manufacturing Facility

Since 1946, East Penn has been producing high quality batteries and battery accessories for the automotive, commercial, marine, industrial, stationary, and specialty markets.

Facilities at its 520-acre manufacturing complex at Lyon Station, PA include four automotive battery plants, an industrial battery plant, a specialty battery plant, a state-of-the-art oxide facility, an innovative recycling infrastructure, and dozens of vertically integrated capabilities and other support facilities. An additional manufacturing facility in Corydon, IA helps accommodate widespread growth. East Penn owns and operates a wire, cable, and battery accessory plant and a multiple facility distribution center just miles away from its Lyon Station complex.

New high-tech facilities and computer monitoring and control systems have made the company an industry leader in advanced battery manufacturing.

East Penn’s quality manufacturing is recognized worldwide and has met the global requirements of ISO 9001 and ISO/TS 16949 certification standards. East Penn is also a leader in innovative recycling and has met global environmental requirements of ISO 14001 certification standards.

Staffed with a long-term management team, East Penn is an independent company committed to the future and dedicated to producing high-class products and service to assure complete satisfaction, above and beyond the industry standard, to our partners and customers worldwide.