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MAIN TOPICS

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

- Solar and Hybrid Thermal Systems
- Solar Photovoltaic Systems
- Solar Radiation Measurement and Sun-tracking
- Geothermal Energy Applications
- Phase Change Materials (PCM) Applications
- Wind Energy
- Biotechnologies
- Hydrogen Energy
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ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS

- Energy Materials Science

ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

- Mechanical Engineering and Technologies
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FOREWORD

The Fourth International Scientific Conference “Alternative Energy Sources, Materials & Technologies AESMT’21” was held between 14th and 15th June 2021 in Ruse, Bulgaria. Representatives of 34 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Yemen) sent their works to the conference. Selected reports (69 works) have been published as short papers in the proceeding of the conference.

It is my pleasure to be an editor of the presented short papers, which focus on new international scientific results in the field of Alternative Energy Sources, Materials and Technologies (Solar and Hybrid Thermal Systems, Solar Photovoltaic Systems, Solar Radiation Measurement and Sun-tracking, Geothermal Energy Applications, Phase Change Materials (PCM) Applications, Wind Energy, Biotechnologies, Hydrogen Energy, Ocean/ Tidal Energy, Energy Materials Science, Mechanical Engineering and Technologies, Electrical Engineering, Low-Carbon Technologies, Energy Efficiency).

Prof. Aleksandar Georgiev, PhD (European Polytechnic University, Pernik, Bulgaria)

Chair of the AESMT’21 conference

CONTENTS

SOLAR AND HYBRID THERMAL SYSTEMS

<i>A. Toleukhanov, Ye. Belyayev, T. Amanzholov, A. Seitov, A. Aliuly, Ye. Yerdesh, M. Mohanraj, R. M. Singh.</i> Thermal performance calculation of solar assisted ground source heat pump	9
<i>B. Kiloglu, G. Karaca Dolgun, O. V. Güler, A. Keçebas, Aleksandar Georgiev.</i> Thermodynamic performance of a heat pump based concentrating parabolic trough photovoltaic thermal system for a micro CHP.....	11
<i>D. Nikolic, J. Skerlic, A. Radojevic, A. Miškovic, R. Tamašauskas, J. Šadauskiene.</i> Influence of different parameters of solar systems on building exergy optimization.....	13
<i>D. T. Cofas, P. A. Cofas, S. Mahmoudinezhad.</i> Overview of Hybrid Photovoltaic-Thermoelectric Systems.....	15
<i>Jingyong Cai, Lijie Xu, Tao Zhang.</i> Heating performance of multi-functional heat pump system with solar-air composite heat source.....	17
<i>Michele Bottarelli, Silvia Cesari, Eleonora Baccega.</i> Role of phase change materials in backfilling of shallow ground heat exchangers.....	19
<i>N. D. Vassileva.</i> Modelling the process of charging water tanks with heat from solar collectors using TRNSYS.....	21
<i>Q. Li, Y. G. Zhang, X. Ding, Y. H. Tai.</i> Experimental investigation on the operating parameters of a solar storage tank.....	23
<i>Q. Li, X. Ding, Y. G. Zhang, T. Liu, W. F. Gao, W. X. Lin.</i> Effect of vertical buoyant jet in a thermally stratified solar water tank.....	25
<i>V. Incili, G. Karaca Dolgun, A. G. Georgiev, A. Keçebas, N. S. Çetin.</i> Performance evaluation of a hybrid micro-CHP integrated PV-Stirling engine for local heating system.....	27
<i>Yousef N. Dabwan, Gang Pei.</i> Augmentation of Intercooled Gas Turbine Performance in Hot Regions Using Inlet Air Cooling.....	29
<i>Zaiguo Fu, Yang Li, Qunzhi Zhu.</i> Assessment on the applicability of solar-assisted heating system with electric thermal storage in different geographical areas of China.....	31
<i>Zhaomeng Li, Jie Ji, Jing Li, Xudong Zhao, Guiqiang Li, Zhiying Song, Xin Wen.</i> Investigation on the effect of the working medium filling ratio on a novel loop-heat-pipe PV/T system with spiral-falling concentric copper tubes.....	33
<i>Zijing SUN, Qunzhi ZHU.</i> Effects of heat storage system on the operating load and economy of PV heat pump heating systems.....	35

SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS

<i>Gady Golan, Moshe Azoulay, Gilad Orr.</i> Recycling of rejected silicon wafers and dies for high grade and efficient solar cells.....	37
<i>R. Çelikel, M. Yilmaz, A. Gündoğdu.</i> New MPPT Method for PV Power Systems Under Partial Shading Conditions.....	39
<i>V. Z. Manusov, A. K. Kirgizov, M. Kh. Safaraliev, I. Zicmane, S. Beryozkina, Sh. M. Sulonov.</i> Stochastic model of forecasting electric power generation of a solar photoelectric panel.....	41

SOLAR RADIATION MEASUREMENT AND SUN-TRACKING

<i>C. Bayón-Cueli, A. Barbón, L. Bayón, A. Fernández-Conde.</i> Energetic analysis of single-axis trackers installed in a sloping terrain.....	43
<i>I. St. Stoyanov, T. B. Iliev.</i> Seasonal Fluctuation Index of the Solar Radiation in Ruse Region, Bulgaria.....	45

<i>Xiaoqiao Huang, Yonghang Tai, Junsheng Shi.</i> Prediction of hourly electricity consumption for a University Campus based on LSTM.....	47
<i>Xiaoqiao Huang, Yonghang Tai, Junsheng Shi.</i> Prediction of hourly photovoltaic power based on conditional generative adversarial network and Bi-LSTM.....	49

GEOHERMAL ENERGY APPLICATIONS

<i>A. Galgaro, A. Carrera, E. Di Sipio, G. Dalla Santa, A. Ramos Escudero, J. M. Cuevas, R. Pasquali, B. Sanner, A. Bernardi.</i> Scale drillability maps as a tool to select the drilling technology to install Borehole Heat Exchange (BHE) probes.....	51
<i>B. Kunovska, D. Djunakova, N. Chobanova, J. Djounova, A. Angelova, Z. Stojanovska, K. Ivanova.</i> Daily variation of the indoor radon in Bulgarian spas using geothermal water.....	53
<i>Hossein Javadi, Javier Fermín Urchueguía Schölzel, Borja Badenes, Ali Nejad Ghafar, Lenin Guillermo Lemus Zúñiga, Miguel Ángel Mateo Pla, Ojas Arun Chaudhari.</i> Innovative research methodology of borehole heat exchangers incorporating advanced materials for use as thermal energy storage (BTES).....	55
<i>L. Aresti, A. Skaliontas, G. Florides, P. Christodoulides.</i> Environmental Impact of a Ground Source Heat Pump system of in a Mediterranean residential building – a Preliminary Assessment.....	57
<i>P. N. Gerginov, N. T. Stoyanov, A. D. Benderev, S. Valtchev.</i> Opportunities and approaches for the use of thermal waters in Central Northern Bulgaria.....	59

PHASE CHANGE MATERIALS (PCM) APPLICATIONS

<i>Bin Xu, Xing Xie, Xing-ni Chen.</i> Implicit methods for solving heat transfer model: Applications on phase change materials and thermochromic windows.....	61
<i>Silvia Cesari, Giuseppe Emmi, Michele Bottarelli.</i> An experimental data-driven control strategy for PCM integrated radiant floor systems.....	63

WIND ENERGY

<i>B. Li, V. S. Olawoore, Y. Shuai, W. H. Cai.</i> Numerical Investigation of Synthetic Jet Assisted Flow Control Over Horizontal Axis Wind Turbines.....	65
<i>N. Khasanzoda, I. Zicmane, S. Beryozkina, M. Kh. Safaraliev, Sh. M. Sultonov, A. K. Kirgizov.</i> Fuzzy models for management and evaluation of power wind systems on the basis of probability characteristics.....	67
<i>N. Khasanzoda, M. Kh. Safaraliev, I. Zicmane, S. Beryozkina, J. B. Rahimov, J. S. Ahyoev.</i> Optimization of wind unit's operation in isolated power systems under smart grid concept.....	69
<i>P. T. Gkeka-Serpetsidaki, S. Papadopoulos, T. Tsoutsos.</i> Estimation of the optical disturbance of offshore wind farms.....	71
<i>Zh. E. Baizhuma, R. K. Manatbayev, A. K. Yershina, A. G. Georgiev, A. Zhumabayev.</i> Performance evaluation of the G-shaped Vertical Axis Wind Turbine using commercial software.....	73

BIOTECHNOLOGIES

<i>Ance Plavniece, Aleksandrs Volperts, Galina Dobele, Aivars Zhurinsh, Ivar Kruusenberg, Katlin Kaare, Kaspars Kaprans, Ingars Lukosevics, Janis Kleperis.</i> Activated Biochar Pre and Post N-doping for energy applications.....	75
--	----

HYDROGEN ENERGY

<i>M. Kramer, L. Eitzinger-Lange, M. Leeb, A. Meindl, G. C. Brunauer.</i> Investigations into the viability of utilizing locally produced green hydrogen for seasonal energy storage for alpine heavy-duty vehicles – Simulation based on Austrian communities.....	77
<i>Zaiguo Fu, Jin Lu, Jiang Liu, Zhuoxiong Zeng, Weiguo Pan.</i> Numerical simulation of combustion characteristics of methane mixed with hydrogen in the combustor of a counter-flow micro gas turbine.....	79

ENERGY MATERIALS SCIENCE

<i>Azeem Mustafa, Yong Shuai, Bachirou Guene Lougou, Samia Razzaq.</i> Modeling the electrochemical conversion of CO ₂ to CO in a microfluidic cell.....	81
<i>B Guene Lougou, Y Shuai, H Zhang, B Jiang, Y Getahun Dessie, J Zhao.</i> (Mn, Co) oxide redox cycles-based high-temperature thermochemical energy storage.....	83
<i>C. Dulucheanu, T. L. Severin, D. A. Cerlinca, L. Irimescu, J. Javorova.</i> Mechanical properties of some dual-phase steels with low manganese content.....	85
<i>Cong Wang, Xu Ji, Biangfeng Yang, Jiangyang Han, Delong Yang.</i> Study on adsorption characteristics of carbon based composite desiccant.....	87
<i>G. Orr, G. Golan.</i> Crystalline quality in aluminum single crystals, characterized by X-Ray diffraction and Rocking-Curve analysis.	89
<i>J. X. Flores-Lasluisa, F. Huerta, D. Cazorla-Amorós, E. Morallón.</i> Manganese-based materials for the oxygen reduction reaction	91
<i>Jie Liu, Xianze Ao, Kegui Lu, Bin Zhao, Gang Pei.</i> Scalable Polymer-based Film for Continuous Sub-ambient Radiative Cooling.	93
<i>Lin Fu, Tairan Fu, Kai Chen.</i> Synthesis and thermal properties of silica aerogel composites reinforced with various fibers.....	95
<i>R. A. Umirzakov, Bulbul Ongar, A. G. Georgiev.</i> Development and research of a highly efficient drying plant for oilseeds.....	97

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGIES

<i>A. S. Askarova, S. A. Bolegenova, V. Yu. Maximov, S. A. Bolegenova, M. T. Beketayeva, Z. A. Bakyt.</i> The method of improving the environmental situation by modeling of pollutants in combustion systems of the Republic of Kazakhstan.....	99
--	----

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

<i>P. N. Borza, M. Machedon-Pisu, S. Vlase, F. Hamza-Lup.</i> Electric hybrid storage systems and their applications	101
--	-----

LOW-CARBON TECHNOLOGIES

<i>A. Mezulis, P. Lesnicenoks, J. Kleperis, I. Dimanta.</i> Developing the technical solutions for use of biofuels and hydrogen fuel additive in Latvia.....	103
<i>A. S. Askarova, S. A. Bolegenova, A. O. Nugymanova, A.S. Tagaibek.</i> Influence of thermochemical activation of fuel on the combustion process in furnace chambers of thermal power plants.....	105
<i>Ahmad Faraj, Mostafa Mortada, Jalal Faraj, Haitham S. Ramadan, Ziad M. Ali, Mahmoud Khaled.</i> Enhancing the Thermal Performance of Vehicle Cooling Modules Using Diffusers.....	107

<i>Bianfeng Yang, Xu Ji, Cong Wang, Qianrong Yue.</i> Performance evaluation of a twice evaporative cooling air conditioning system based on desiccant bed.....	109
<i>Chengfeng Xu, Xianze Ao, Bin Zhao, Gang Pei.</i> A new type of spectrally selective spectrum for better radiative sky cooling.....	111
<i>P. Lesnicens, J. Kleperis, A. Knoks, L. Jekabsons.</i> Electrocatalytic CO ₂ conversion to hydrocarbons – renewables for industry.....	113
<i>Tianxiang Hu, Trevor Hocksun Kwan, Gang Pei.</i> An All-day Cooling System that Combines Solar Absorption Chiller and Radiative Cooling.....	115

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

<i>G. S. Lu, L. Ming, Y. Zhang, L. Zhao, G. L. Li, C. Z. Hu.</i> Research on Characteristics of Direct Contact Heat Exchange Refrigeration System Under Different Energy Storage	117
<i>I. Berezovskaya, Sa. Bolegenova, O. Vorobyova, M. Ryspayeva, Sy. Bolegenova, Ye. Shotaeva, Z. Begaly.</i> Numerical study of heat and mass transfer processes in the internal combustion chamber by method of computer simulation.....	119
<i>L. Costiuc, I. Costiuc.</i> Dynamic modelling of the condenser type heat-exchanger.....	121
<i>L. Lopez, A. Giusti, E. Gutheil, H. Olguin.</i> A comparison of the total heat release and soot formation rates of ethanol and n-butanol flames in a counterflow configuration.....	123
<i>M. Milanovic, M. Komatina, N. Manic.</i> Thermomechanical aspects of juice industry residues.....	125
<i>M. Y. Shi, L. Ming, Y. Zhang, J. Li, M. Gao, Z. H. Deng, R. Liu, G. S. Lu.</i> Flow field analysis and structure optimization of heat pump drying oven.....	127
<i>N. S. Milutinovic, N. R. Rudonja, M. D. Gojak, G. S. Živkovic.</i> Energy and exergy assessment of an ORC power plant with geothermal hot water and wood biomass-Serbian case.....	129
<i>S. Birkelbach, S. Bilir Mahcicek.</i> Thermal Behaviour Simulation and Analysis of Adaptive Facades.....	131
<i>S. Zerbib, N. Shahar, G. Golan.</i> Flow Measurements Using Enthalpy Sensing.....	133
<i>T. Zhang, Z. W. Yan, J. Y. Cai.</i> Structural Optimization of a Low-Temperature Heat Pump Sludge Drying System.....	135
<i>Xing Xie, Xing-ni Chen, Bin Xu, Gang Pei.</i> Effect of cool storage zone on thermal comfort during occupancy: A case study of public buildings with high window-wall ratio in Guangzhou.....	137
<i>Xing Xie, Yu-qian Zhao, Fei Xia, Bin Xu, Yang-liang Wang, Gang Pei.</i> Effect of surface emissivity on indoor thermal comfort with the radiant wall heating system.....	139
<i>Zahra Wehbi, Ahmad Faraj, Jalal Faraj, Haitham S. Ramadan, Ziad M. Ali, Mahmoud Khaled.</i> A Short Review on Waste Water Heat Recovery Systems: Types and Applications.....	141
<i>Zhangwei Feng, Chengyun Xin, Jianmei Zhang, Tuo Zhou, Tairan Fu.</i> Investigation of air-side thermal and hydraulic performances of integrally-formed spiral fin-and-tube heat exchangers.....	143
<i>Zibaei Freidoon.</i> Facing Global Warming.....	145

Daily variation of the indoor radon in Bulgarian spas using geothermal water

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The territory of Bulgaria is abounding on geothermal springs. International studies report that elevated levels of radon have been found in some geothermal waters. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas formed as the decay product of radium. Currently radon is recognized as the second cause of lung cancer in the population after tobacco. The radon levels in spas buildings using geothermal water depends on the following factors: soil underneath, weather conditions and time of day, thermal water and the ventilation. The purpose of the study is analysis the daily variation of radon concentration in balneotherapy premises using mineral water in Bulgarian spas. The concentrations vary widely (from 8 – to 5485 Bq m⁻³) in different spa and during the day. A statistically significant difference (WS, p <0.0001) between day and night radon concentrations for all spa buildings was found. The comparison of the radon values in premises with and without ventilation system shown the statistically significant difference (MW, p<0.0001).

Keywords: Indoor radon, geothermal water, daily variation, Bulgarian spas, spectra

INTRODUCTION

The territory of Bulgaria is abounding in thermal springs [1, 2]. Traditionally, one of the applications is in the field of balneology. Radon (²²²Rn) is a naturally occurring radioactive gas formed as the decay product of radium (²²⁶Ra). In the open atmosphere the radon concentration varies between 10 and 100 Bq.m⁻³, depending on weather conditions and time of day [3]. The variation of the radon concentration shows a pronounced maximum during the night and early in the morning hours. The radon levels in buildings depend on the following factors: soil underneath, weather conditions and time of day, thermal water and the ventilation. The concentration of radon varies considerably depending on various parameters: ¹source (topography, soil characteristics, type of buildings); ²metrological parameters (pressure, humidity, temperature, time) and ³other variables such as habits and mode of life of the inhabitants. It is known that a large number of spas used for thermal therapy have a higher concentration of radon [4, 5]. The requirements of ICRP and WHO include the control of indoor exposure due radon with reference level for the annual average activity concentration up to 300 Bq.m⁻³ for dwellings and public buildings. This article presents the results of direct measurements of indoor radon in premises using geothermal water for treatment in 11 spas in Bulgaria. The aim of the study is to analyze the variations of the day and night

indoor radon concentrations in the treatment rooms of the spas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Objects of study

Eleven branches on Specialized Hospitals for Rehabilitation - National Complex (SHR-NC), whose location is throughout the territory of Bulgaria, were surveyed. These sites use geothermal water for treatment and we accepted to call them a spa. In five spas there is a ventilation system that works for several hours during the day.

Radon measurements

Direct measurements of radon concentrations in spas air with Alpha Guard PQ2000, AlphaE and TERA (TSR3D) system were performed. The spectra of the premises for a period of 24 hours were considered for analysing the indoor radon variations during the day and night.

All the data were compiled into Microsoft Excel spread sheets, and the statistical analysis was performed with the software IBM SPSS Statistics, v. 23. Descriptive analysis and non-parametric tests (Wilcoxon Signed ranks test and Mann-Whitney test) are applied for data processing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The spectra of the premises in which geothermal water is used for treatment are considered, divided into day and night radon concentration. In a larger

number of rooms (9 numbers) the indoor radon at night are lower than during the day which has been established as regularity for external radon since the 90s [3]. Measurements of radon levels in rooms with available ventilation system (5 premises) and without such (6 premises) are considered. The descriptive statistic of direct measurements of indoor radon concentration in spa premises is presented in Tab.1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistic of indoor radon concentrations measured in 11 premises with mineral water

Groups premises	AM CRn	SD CRn	Min CRn	Max CRn	CV
	Bq.m ⁻³	Bq.m ⁻³	Bq.m ⁻³	Bq.m ⁻³	%
CRn-nighth	324	725	10	4397	224
CRn-day	463	1065	8	5485	230
With ventilation	181	294	9	1102	162
Without ventilation	570	1178	8	5485	207

The indoor radon varies widely (from 8 to 5485 Bq.m⁻³) in different spas rooms and during the day. The evaluated value of AM=181 Bq.m⁻³ for premises with ventilation is more than twice lower in comparison than those without ventilation system AM=570 Bq.m⁻³.

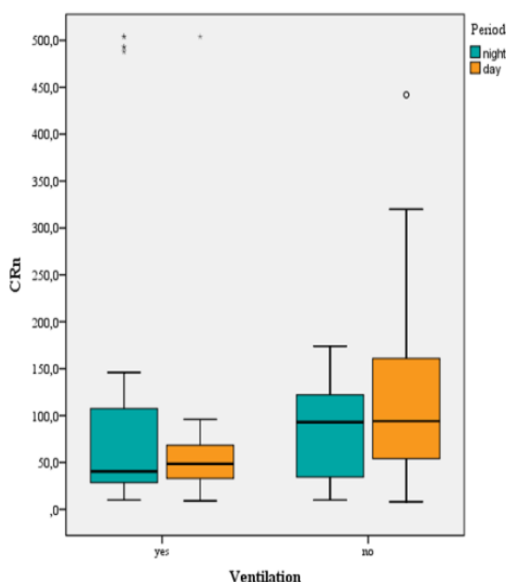


Fig.1. Distribution of the indoor radon depending on the period and of the presence ventilation system

Fig.1 presents the results of the studied groups: daily (orange) and night values (blue) of radon and the presence of ventilation ("yes" with a ventilation

system and "no" without one. A statistically significant difference was found of radon values during the day and night (WS, $p < 0.001$). The difference is statistically significant and when comparison of indoor radon values of the premises with the presence of ventilation system and without ventilation system (MW, $p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS

Radon that enters in spa buildings may reach high concentration. One of the effective way to improve the air quality in the premises using geothermal water is to install a mechanical ventilation system. Such places must be subjected to a special investigation, taking into account the whole mobility of radon.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOMENCLATURE

AM CRn – arithmetic mean of radon;
 SD CRn – standard deviation of radon;
 Min – minimum;
 Max – maximum;
 CV – coefficient of variation;
 WS – Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test;
 MW – Mann-Whitney test.

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