

Harold Schobert and the JP-900 Jet Fuel Program

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It is truly a pleasure to have been asked to contribute to this Storch Award symposium honoring Professor Harold Schobert. Some 12 years ago, I was approached by Harold who asked me if I was interested in joining a multi-disciplined research group that he was forming. He explained that the research group was going to attempt to make a new generation of thermally stable coal-based jet fuels that could withstand temperatures of 900°F (JP-900) and that my expertise as a polymer physical chemist could be useful in understanding the carbonaceous reactions that occur upon thermal degradation. My immediate reaction was, “he’s crazy”! 900°F, that’s almost 500°C! Surely there is no organic fuel that can withstand such temperatures. However, I agreed to join the group (I was a little short of research funds at the time!), and in this seminar I will describe how, with a little luck and perseverance, a JP-900 fuel was successfully developed.

A full manuscript will be published in Fuel.