Intro to Electricity

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What Make Electricity Interesting

- We somehow start with a fuel (Counting wind, geothermal and sunlight in this).
- Transport it from where we found it to a generating facility.
- Turn it into electricity losing some energy as heat.
- Run it along long wires to where people want to use it, losing yet more energy.
- From there send it out to every small location (losing more), and
- Because electricity is not *easily* stored, adjust the rate at which we generate electricity moment-by-moment to make sure there is just enough.

This is a logistical miracle.

Basic Units

- $Watts = AmpsVolts$ first thing everyone learns.
  - Pro tip on units, if it is someones name, capitalize it.
  - Volt is analogous to height.
  - Amp is analogous to a weight.
  - Watt is what it happens when that weight is dropped from that height.
  - DC is easy; AC is "complex"
- AC because it is a wave, has a few more components.
  - Real Power, measured in W, it is what does the work.
  - Reactive power, measured in volt-amps (var),"r" tells you it is reactive, is what pushes the electricity around.
  - Apparent Power, is in volt-amps too (VA) is when you add the two together in a vector sense.
  - Power Factor is the Real(W)/Apparant(VA), the sign is interesting because assumes induction.

What?

Caveat IANAE and I will do thing like call current amps and the like. Also, this is the simple, single phase, view with lots of simplifications. Reality is for engineers.

- The alternating part of AC is what causes the complication.
  - You can talk about instantaneous power but
  - Tend to talk about average power.
- With a resistive load, think light bulb, amps and volts are in sync
- Inductors and Capacitors throw amps and volts out of sync
  - Capacitors store energy in electric fields. Think a very bursty battery.
    - Amps peak *before* volts
  - Inductors store energy in magnetic fields. Think about an electromagnet in a motor.
    - Amps peak *after* volts

AC Power to a Resistive Load

AC Power to a Inductive Load

AC Power to a Capacitive Load

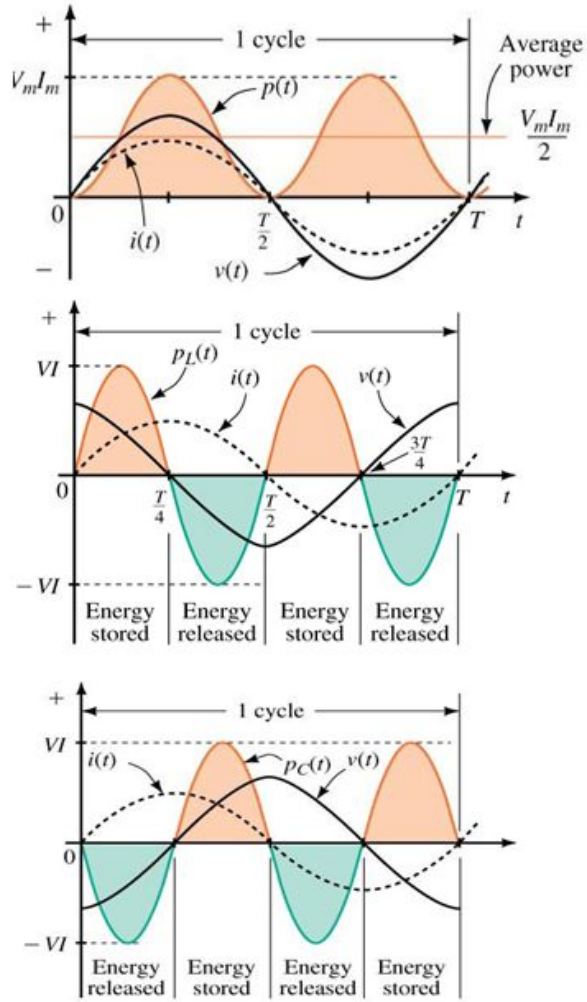

Figure 1:

source: http://slideplayer.com/slide/5297074/

Power Factor

- Measure it
  - Henrys are the unit for inductance/capacitance and engineers use that in calculations
  - There are also power factor meters
  - You can also check out the difference between amps and volt on ocilliscope.
- Low numbers mean the utility needs to generate more power than customer uses.
  - Can happen with low load, like a motor barely moving, but you still need the electromagnet
  - Common solution is to install capacitors somewhere to cancel out the inductor

Why do we care about reactive power and power factors?

- Engineers have to design systems to accomodate not just the real, but real plus reactive, i.e., apparant power.
- Reactive power has to be generated.
- Not residential tariffs, but commercial and industrial tariffs charge for reactive power or have penalties for low power factors.

kW vs kWh

- kW is instantanious and called power
- kWh is the integral over time and called energy.
- 100 W light bulb uses 100 Wh $= 1/10$ kWh per hour

Lets Generate Some Electricity

- Turbine – spin something in a magnetic field to induce a current.
- Lots of ways to spin a turbine
  - Coal, grind it up, burn it, make steam, use steam to spin the turbine.
  - Nuclear, use the heat to make steam, use steam to spin a turbine.
  - Biomas, burn stuff to ...
  - Gas, burn it to spin a turbine ...
  - Diesel
  - Oil
  - Solar thermal, use the sun to make steam ...
  - Water, falling water hits a turbine and spins it
  - Wind, spin a turbine
  - etc.
- Or don't spin a turbine and go for photovoltaic, PV.

Characteristics

- Ramp rate, how fast power (kW) can change kW/min
- Heat rate, BTU in/ BTU out, only used for generation that uses a fuel