



# Energy storage solutions kingston

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The innovative storage battery maker Zinc8 Energy Solutions announced last Friday that it had signed a letter of intent to occupy space at iPark87, formerly TechCity. The firm's operations at that location could create as many as 500 well-paying manufacturing jobs, Zinc8 CEO Ron MacDonald said.

"Could" is a word indicating conditionality. What's the likelihood that will happen? And how long will it take until it happens?

Right now, Zinc8 is a promising fish in a big research-and-development pond, the storage and dispatch of energy. Zinc8's niche consists of the storage of energy for relatively significant periods of time.

This past January, Zinc8, with NYSERDA support, promised eight hours of storage to the 32-building Fresh Meadows Community Apartments of Queens. The company is demonstrating the potential of its long-duration zinc-air storage technology via a number of contracts in New York State.

There's a local example of energy storage less than an hour's drive from Kingston. Built in the late 1970s, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) pump storage plant in Prattsville stores and generates energy in a cumbersome way. Water from the Schoharie Creek is pumped up a mountain in times of slack demand for electricity, stored in a reservoir, and released to power four large turbines at the foot of the mountain at a time of peak demand in New York City.

What if powerful batteries could do the same job as pump storage does, but do it more cost-effectively and with fewer negative environmental consequences?

Billions of dollars are at stake. If producers of intermittent energy -- or constant energy used intermittently -- could provide power on a continuous basis at an affordable price, they would find a wide variety of potential customers to whom to demonstrate the capabilities of long-duration zinc-air storage technology. The technology could be particularly useful for producers of intermittent energy, like wind and solar projects.

How does this technology work? Power from the grid or renewable source is used to generate zinc particles. Oxygen is released to the atmosphere as a by-product. The zinc particles are stored in potassium hydroxide (KOH) electrolyte until required. When power is needed, the zinc particles are recombined with oxygen to generate electricity. The zinc oxide byproduct is returned to storage for later regeneration.

Lithium-ion batteries have long been among the problem areas in today's economy. The trillion-dollar federal Bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Law passed in August of last year allocated seven billion dollars to



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improving the country's battery supply chain. In addition, the \$369-billion Inflation Reduction Act recently signed into law includes "green" tax credits and a system of targeted incentives to encourage investment in clean power.

The big money for new battery technology has attracted competitors the way honey attracts flies. IBM promised revolutionary changes three years ago but didn't deliver. Other very large companies could decide to jump in themselves or to invest in similar firms.

The International Zinc Association, which has a program called the Zinc Battery Initiative (ZBI), includes several long-duration battery storage firms.

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