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Volkswagen commissioned this month a pilot battery energy storage unit with reused modules from pre-production Volkswagen ID.3 and Volkswagen ID.4.

The PCS is equipped with 96 reused MEB cell modules and offers a total of 570 kWh of net capacity (about 5.94 kWh per module on average).

The main purpose of the pilot battery second life project is to develop a sustainable solution for older batteries with some capacity fade, which still can be used for quite some time as an energy storage system, before going into recycling.

The PCS in Zwickau supports the local fast-charging station with four 150 kW chargers, lowering the power surges, as well as enabling better use of the adjacent photovoltaic installation.

Volkswagen notes that the power storage containers might play a vital role to promote the buildup of fast charging infrastructure in residential areas or in general in places with constrained power (like 11 kW or 22 kW).

"The advantage is that fast-charging infrastructure can be built nearly anywhere, even if in places with a low-capacity grid connection."

"As a large battery storage unit, the PSC offers a cost-effective alternative to a transformer station. It enables large quantities of energy to be provided in a short time without overburdening the electricity grid. Another advantage is that the temporary storage of energy allows for high basic costs that would otherwise be incurred during standby operation, even when no vehicles are charging, to be avoided."

Many other manufacturers in the past were also developing various battery second life applications.

We expect that this type of energy storage system will quickly gain popularity, as there will be an increasing number of battery modules and pack with a partially decreased capacity (60-70% of the initial value).

There is no sense in prematurely sending the batteries to recycling if they can be reused for some time (let's say 10 or more years) and help expand the charging infrastructure or in other applications.

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