



AFRL-RB-WP-TM-2008-3165

HIGH TEMPERATURE THERMOCOUPLE INSTALLATION METHODS FOR HYPERSONIC VEHICLES

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**Advanced Structural Concepts Branch
Structures Division**

**MARCH 2008
Interim Report**

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YY) March 2008		2. REPORT TYPE Interim		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) 22 August 2005 – 04 March 2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE HIGH TEMPERATURE THERMOCOUPLE INSTALLATION METHODS FOR HYPERSONIC VEHICLES				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER In-house	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER 0602201	
6. AUTHOR(S) John Feie (AFRL/RBSA) Larry Kretz (AFRL/RBSV)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER A0AX	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER 0A	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Advanced Structural Concepts Branch (AFRL/RBSA) Experimental Validation Branch (AFRL/RBSV) Structures Division, Air Force Research Laboratory Air Vehicles Directorate Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH 45433-7542 Air Force Materiel Command, United States Air Force				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER AFRL-RB-WP-TM-2008-3165	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air Force Research Laboratory Air Vehicles Directorate Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH 45433-7542 Air Force Materiel Command United States Air Force				10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY ACRONYM(S) AFRL/RBSA	
				11. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER(S) AFRL-RB-WP-TM-2008-3165	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES PAO Case Number: WPAFB 08-0594, 29 Feb 2008. This report, which contains color, is a slide show that was presented at the 2008 American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Dayton-Cincinnati Aerospace Sciences Symposium .					
14. ABSTRACT This presentation discusses the joint effort between the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and NASA Langley Research Center to establish a process for bonding type C and type K thermocouples to high temperature materials. Bonded samples of both type C and type K thermocouples will be tested in a combined thermal-vibration environment. A baseline and alternate installation method will be tested. The instrumented specimens will be mounted on a shaker and heated with quartz lamps. The specimens will be exposed to three different environments: a launch vibration spectrum, a re-entry vibration spectrum, and a high temperature degradation environment. The installation methods that are capable of withstanding these three environments will be considered for use in hypersonic flight testing.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS instrumentation, thermocouples, hypersonic vehicle, high temperature, thermal vibration testing					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT: SAR	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 18	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON (Monitor) John P. Feie 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code) N/A
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified			



High Temperature Thermocouple Installation Methods for Hypersonic Vehicles

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Dayton-
Cincinnati Aerospace Sciences Symposium

4 March, 2008

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Introduction



- **Hypersonic Vehicle History and Background**
- **Air Force Performance Goals**
- **Hypersonic Vehicle Thermocouple Instrumentation History and Limitations**
- **Recent Thermocouple R & D at the AFRL**
- **Verification and Testing of TC Installation Methods**
- **Results and Conclusions**



Hypersonic Vehicle Thermal Structures Test Challenges



- **Air Force Requirements for Hypersonic Vehicles**
 - Space Access
 - Hypersonic Cruise
- **High Speed = Extreme Environment**
 - Acoustics
 - Heating
 - Flight Loads
- **Extreme Environment = Advanced Materials & Structures**





Hypersonic Vehicle Thermal Structures Test Challenges



Performance Goals

- Rapid turn 48 hrs
- 3X lower ops cost
- Vehicle reliability 0.995
- All Wx availability 90%
- 250 Sortie Airframe
- 100 Sortie Propulsion & Systems



BASELINE
EELV, Shuttle,
Aircraft Ops



Near Term (09)

- Rapid turn 24 hrs
- 10X lower ops cost
- Vehicle reliability 0.999
- All Wx availability 95%
- 500 Sortie Airframe
- 250 Sortie Propulsion & Systems



Mid Term (15)

- Rapid turn 4 hrs
- 100X lower ops cost
- Vehicle reliability 0.9998
- All Wx availability 98%
- 1,000 Sortie Airframe
- 500 Sortie Propulsion & Systems



Far Term (25)

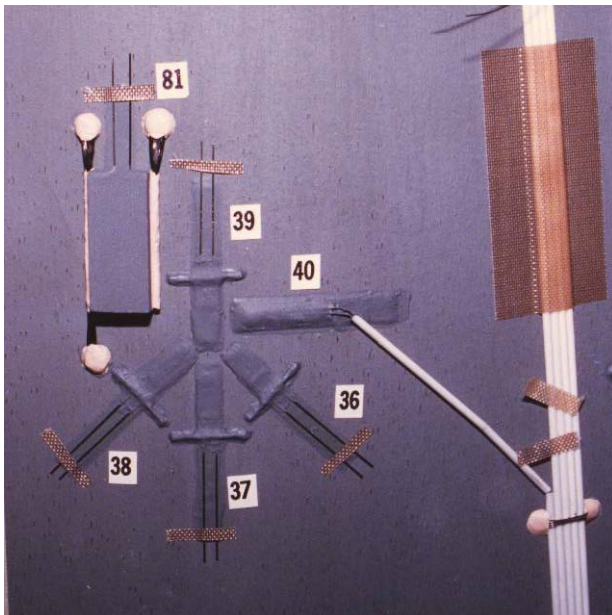


Hypersonic Vehicle Thermal Structures Test Challenges



Instrumentation Difficulties

- Temperature Capability
- Attachment Methods
- Specimen Compatibility
- Compatibility with Loading Systems



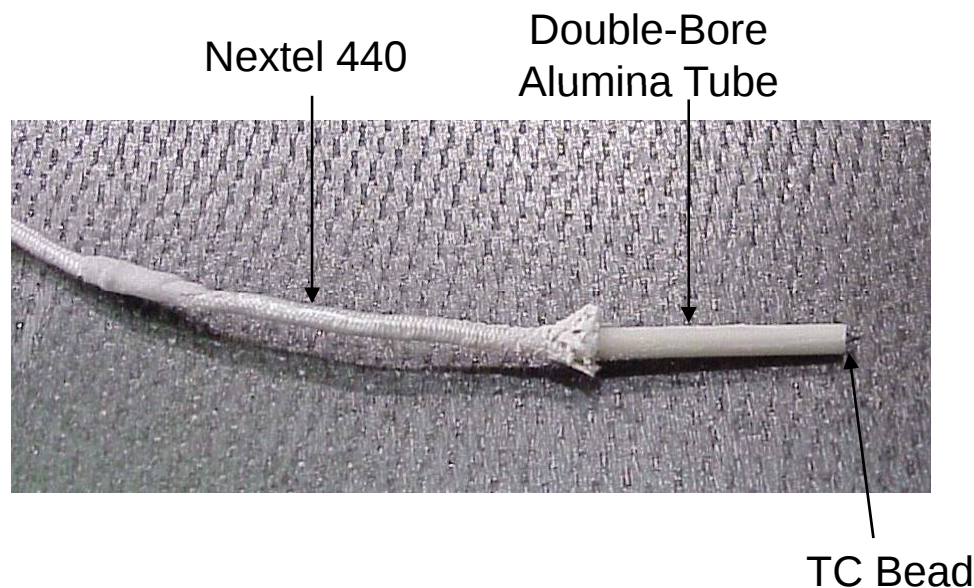
- Instrumentation did not adhere
- Sheath/Lamp arcing
- Emissivity change
- Coating damage



Carbon-Carbon Thermocouple Surface Installation



- Surface TC's mounted through-the-thickness of aeroshell
- Type C, Nextel 440 insulation
- TC is potted at surface with ceramic cement
- Thermocouple mounting procedure successfully developed and tested to $>3000^{\circ}\text{F}$ in a 1 inch thick C-C specimen at AFRL



TC potted slightly below C-C Surface
(to be covered with graphite)



Surface TC also potted at backface

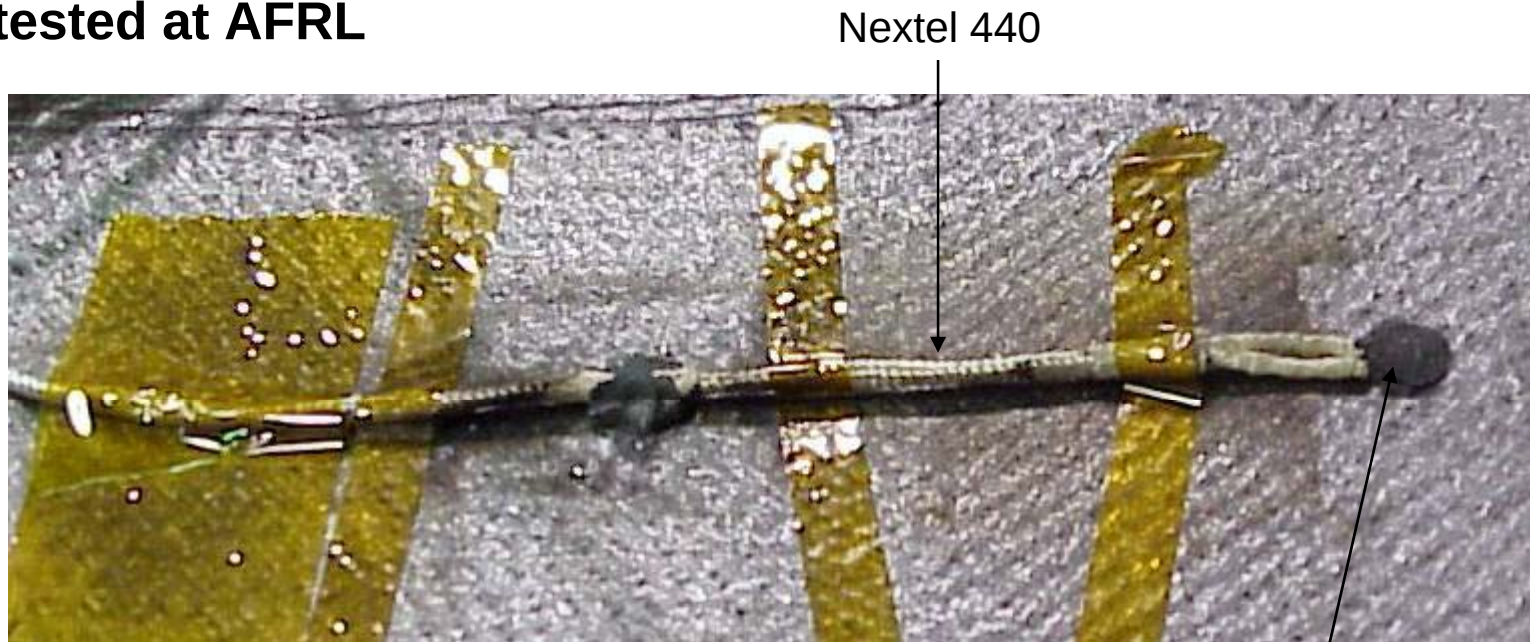




Carbon-Carbon Thermocouple Surface Installation

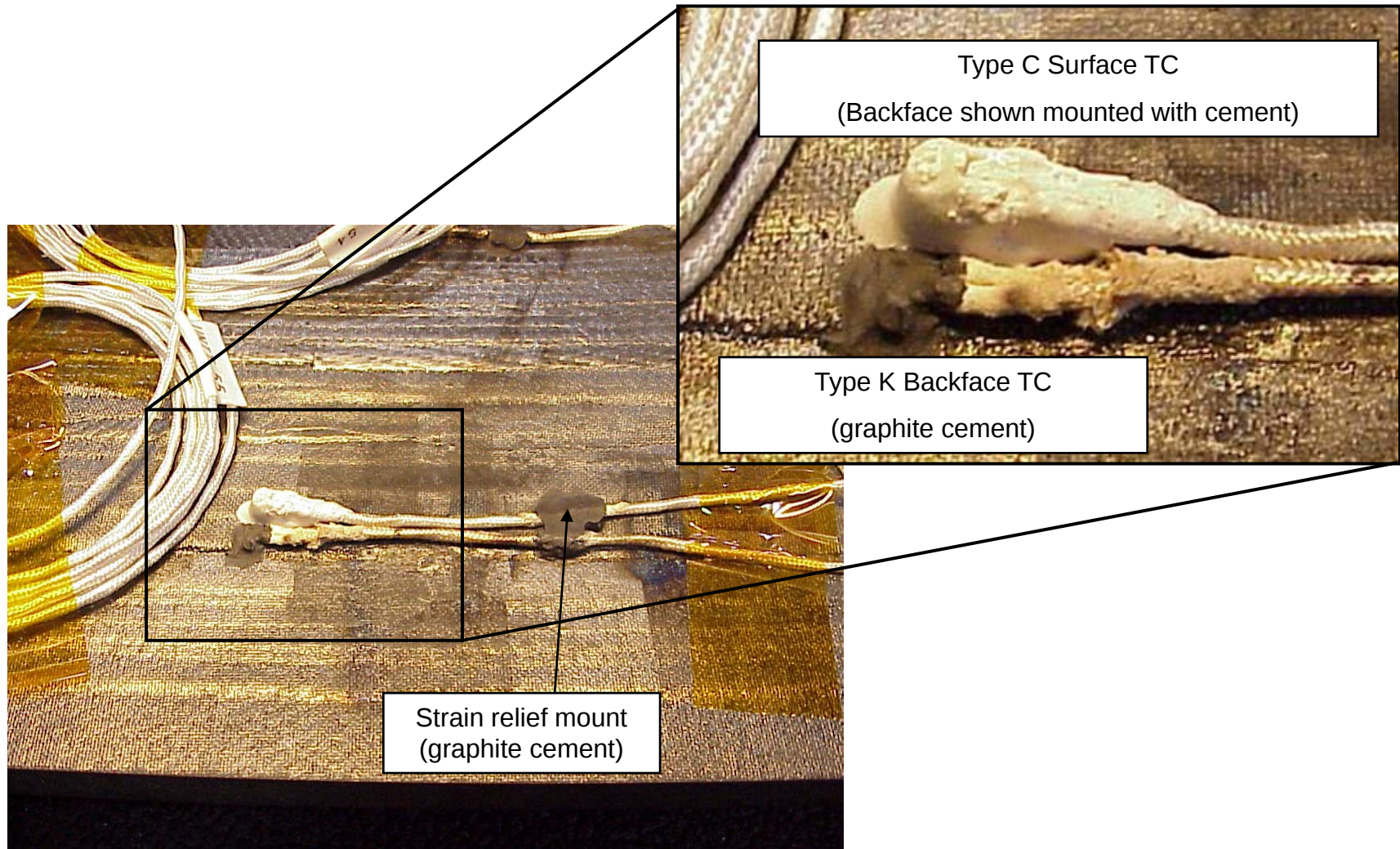


- Backface TC's mounted to aeroshell surface
- Type K, Nextel 312 insulation
- Thermocouples mounted using graphite cement
- Thermocouple mounting procedure successfully developed and tested at AFRL





Thermocouple Mounting





Verification of TC Installation Methods



- Quartz lamp heaters used to simulate thermal environment ($> 2000^{\circ}\text{F}$)
- Specimen mounted to shaker to simulate vibration environment ($> 15\text{ g's}$)
- Insulation needed to keep shaker head near room temperature
- 3" and 8" coupons tested
- Thermocouples imbedded into coupon and backfilled with graphite cement

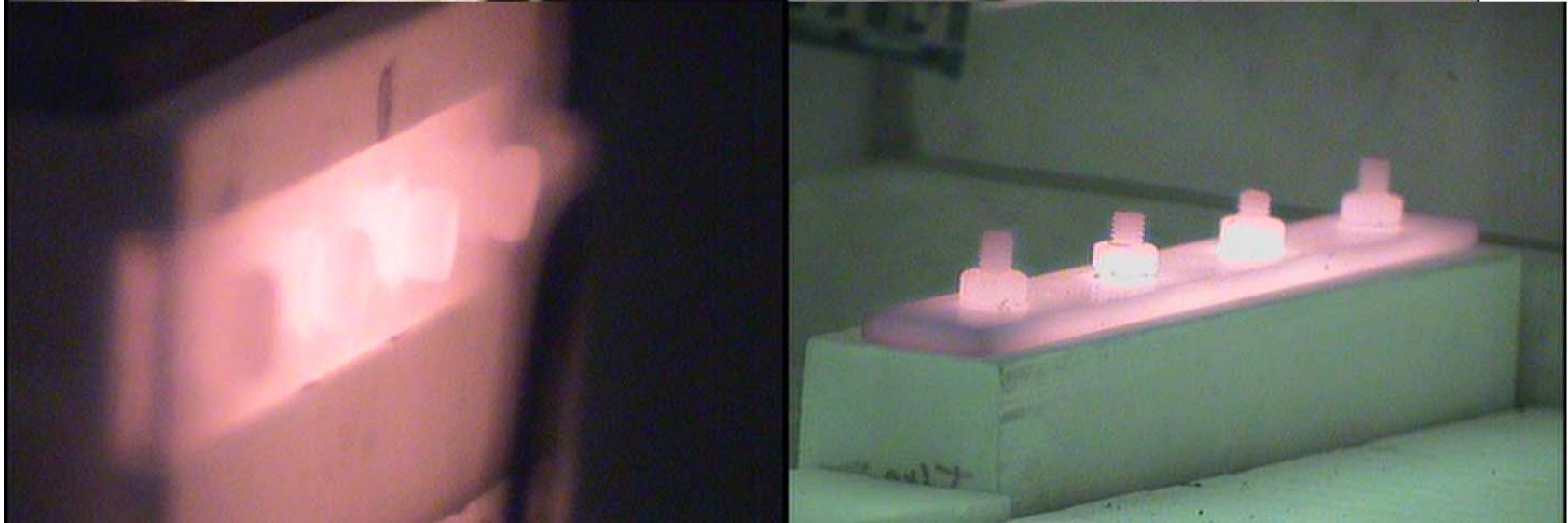
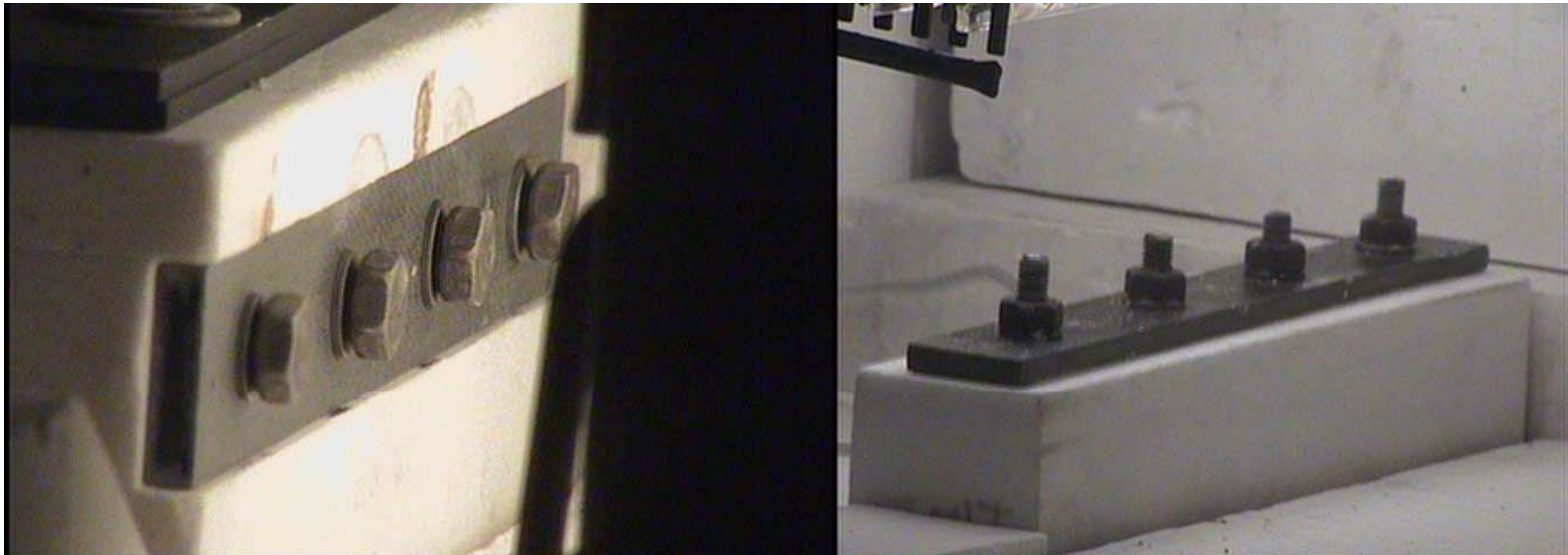


- Coated specimens failed, due to melting of coating
- Melted, corrosive coating attacked the insulation requiring the test to be aborted





Thermal Vibration Testing





Results and Conclusions



- **Hypersonic vehicle flight involves extreme thermal and vibration loads**
- **Extreme environment and advanced materials require development of new methods for instrumentation installation**
- **High temperature cements offer potential solution**