

[Back to Article](#)[Click to Print](#)

Thursday, Aug. 30, 2007

Dashboard

GREEN ENERGY

Eco-Friendly Batteries

Energy doesn't grow on trees. That is why scientists are hard at work trying to find alternative sources of fuel. On Aug. 23, Sony announced its green-battery prototype, which is made out of a vegetable-based plastic and is powered by converting sugar into electricity. "We need to always be thinking green," says Derek Lovley, a UMass-Amherst microbiologist who does his part by researching mud-microbe batteries. Other sources tapped into:

RECHARGEABLE Nearly 150 years ago, a French physicist designed a reusable battery using lead dipped in acid. Today, outlet-ready rechargeables are ubiquitous--and a lot safer.

BACTERIAL Scientists have used sugar-eating microbes from the ocean to convert food into electricity. In theory, a cup of sugar could power a 60-watt bulb for 17 hours.

NANOTECHNOLOGY The size of a stamp, this "paper battery" gets juice from tiny atoms known as carbon nanotubes that are dunked in liquid electrolytes to help conduct power.

ALCOHOL Researchers are working on a battery that uses the reaction between alcohol and enzymes as electricity. Ethanol is ideal, but vodka or beer could do in a bind.

[Click to Print](#)**Find this article at:**

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1657823,00.html>

Copyright © 2007 Time Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Add TIME Headlines to your Site](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Customer Service](#)