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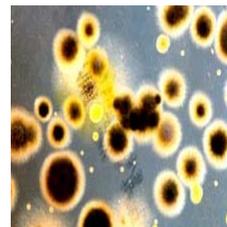
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Electric germs

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People in remote areas could benefit from fuel cells that contain bacteria that grows prolifically on the graphite anodes of fuel cells and can conduct electricity through the biofilm it forms.



Professor Derek Lovley from the University of Massachusetts in the US found that isolating a bacterium generated power in fuel cells efficiently. *Geobacter sulfurreducens* is bacteria that grew prolifically on the graphite anodes of fuel cells and formed a sticky biofilm (pilin) on the anode surface that conducted electricity.

Presenting his findings at the Society for General Microbiology's meeting at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Professor Lovley said: "The filaments form microscopic projections called pili that act as microbial nanowires. Using this bacterial strain in a fuel cell to generate electricity would greatly increase the cell's power output."

Monitoring devices powered by the bacteria could be useful in remote places where it is difficult to replace batteries.

Cell power

Meet Role Models involved in [fuel cell technology](#).

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Date Published: September 07, 2009

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More on energy efficiency...

Brand new 1930s house is built to test energy efficiency

E.ON, one of Britain's big six energy suppliers, is teaming up with the University of Nottingham to build a replica 1930s house which will be used to test technologies aimed at improving the energy performance of Britain's ageing housing stock.

Energy efficiency schemes 'could save British business £2.5bn a year'

British businesses could save themselves £2.5bn over the next 12 months if they implemented energy efficiency schemes that would also cut 22m tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere, according to new analysis amid soaring oil and gas bills plus fears of recession.