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Technology

UTA Researchers Create Super Tiny Micro-Windmills

By **Brantley Hargrove** Wed., Jan. 15 2014 at 1:13 PM

Categories: **Technology**

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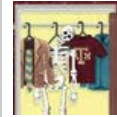
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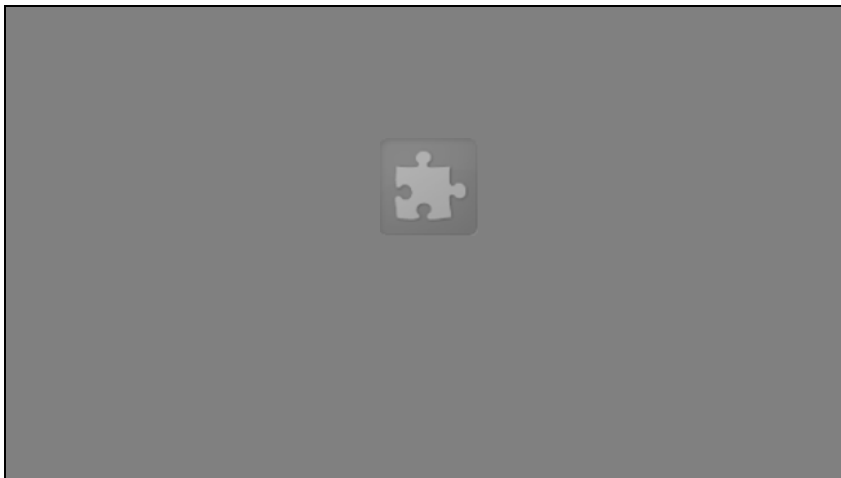


Think of it as the intersection between origami and semiconductor manufacturing. Researchers at the University of Texas at Arlington have invented a nickel-alloy windmill so tiny that 10 of them could be comfortably anchored to a grain of rice.

Smitha Rao and J.-C Chiao successfully tested the device, composed entirely of aerodynamic, two-dimensional materials, using strong artificial winds. An immediate application could be to charge the battery of a smartphone. Embed hundreds, if not thousands, of the tiny turbines on the sleeve of a phone, then "when the phone is out of battery power, all you need to do is to put on the sleeve, wave the phone in the air for a few minutes and you can use the phone again," Chiao says.

The micro-technology is apparently so promising that an agreement has been reached with a Taiwanese company hoping to commercialize the windmills. Because they are relatively cheap to manufacture, the researchers believe the potential applications are limitless. Think panels containing thousands of the devices used to harvest the wind to power outdoor lights and wireless devices, for starters.

The video below shows one of the micro-windmills in action.



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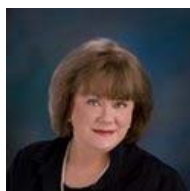


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mcdallas
This is awesome! Now I can get water to all my miniature horses!

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ozonelarryb
Put em on every microphone that a politician might use, so we can get some benefit from all the hot air to offset the damage to our eardrums and grey matter.

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At this very moment, there are thousands of tiny activists lining up to protest the fact that these tiny windmills might negatively impact insect life and tell us how the wind never blows when we really need it, anyhow.

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ChrisYu
@TheCredibleHulk that's right, we call it the 'Stamp Out Tiny Windmills' campaign.

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They should put those in car paint.
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The faster you go, the faster you go.

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@Montemalone
I guess that you never heard of the 1st Law of Thermodynamics.
Besides, everybody knows that you goes don't go.

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TheCredibleHulk
@ThePosterFormerlyKnownasPaul @Montemalone
Nonsense. If we've learned anything from our monied upper-class in this country, we've learned this: All you really need to get around the law is a good thermodynamic lawyer and a sympathetic judge.

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