



Charge Your Smartphone and Power Your Home with Micro-Windmills

By: [David Russell Schilling](#) | January 21st, 2014



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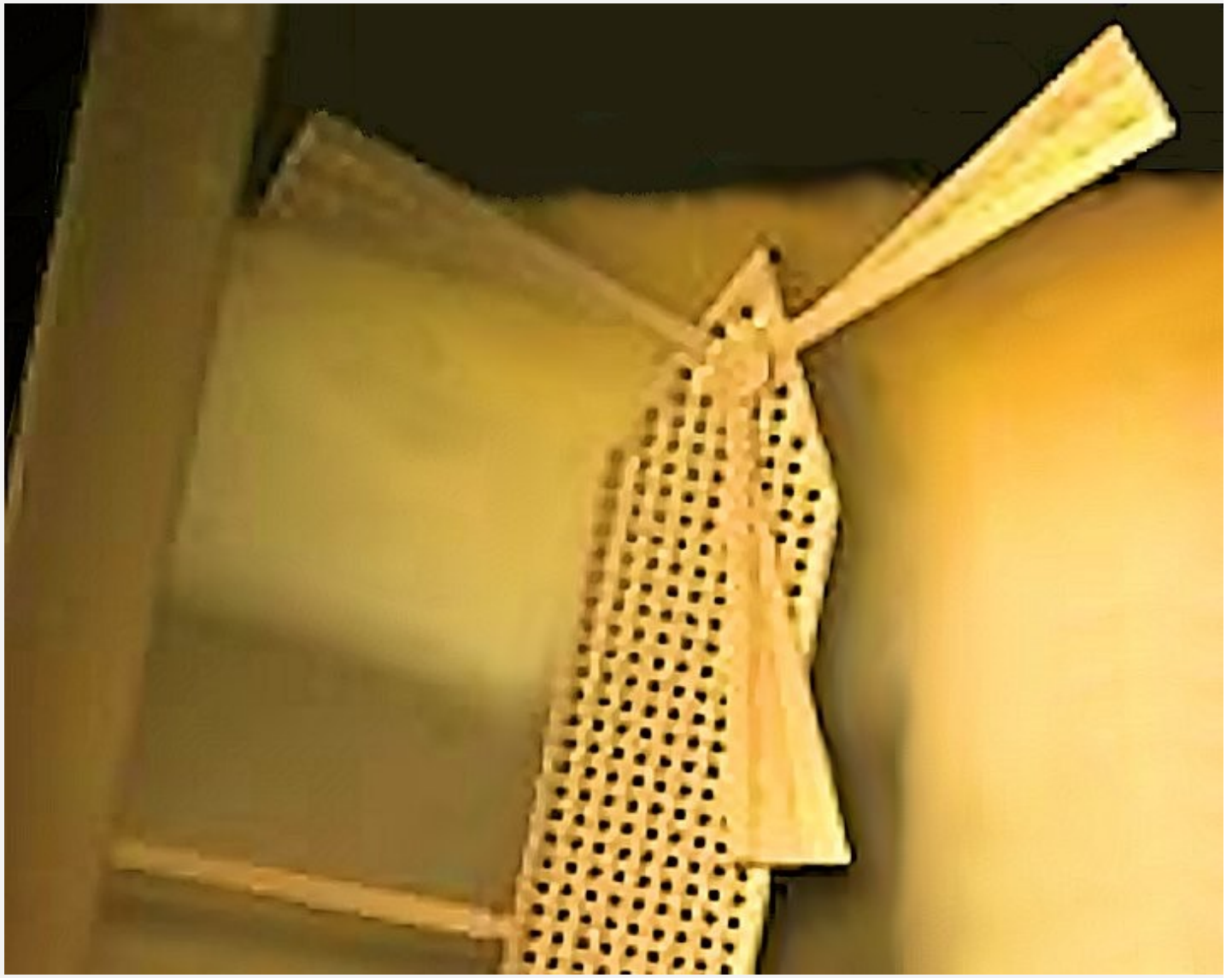


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Wind Mems Technology (Image Courtesy <http://www.uta.edu>) 1.8mm at widest point

In the world of wind turbines the news seems to suggest that bigger is better. However, as engineers are able to reliably manufacture miniature objects, things like wind turbines can be built very small and put on almost anything.

And who wants a huge windmill behind their house? Wouldn't it be better to fit houses with thousands of microscopic windmills that are invisible but still do the job?

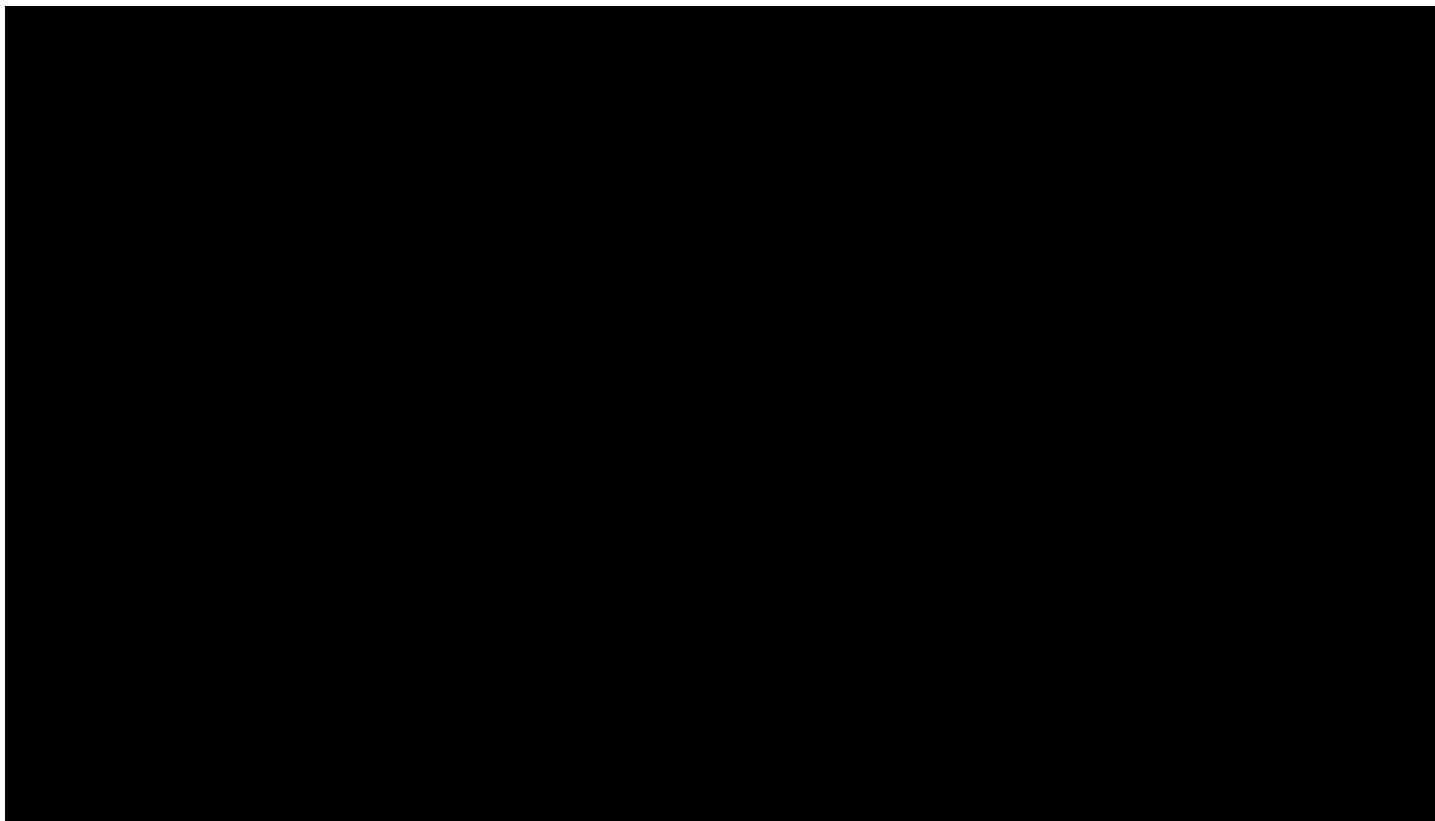


Wind Mems Technology (Image Courtesy www.uta.edu)

Research associate Smitha Rao and electrical engineering professor J.C. Chiao at the University of Texas, Arlington, have come up with a novel way to recharge smartphones and perhaps, one day, power homes. Using miniature wind turbines, small enough to fit 10 on a grain of rice, these researchers envision smartphone users waving a cellphone in the air or holding it up to a stiff breeze on a windy day to generate enough electricity to charge a battery to make a call or send a text message.

1,000 Tiny Windmill “Robots” Could Save Your Life

Each tiny windmill is just 1.8 mm at its widest point. Hundreds or even thousands of these windmills could be installed on the surface of a smart phone sleeve, providing enough electricity to recharge a dead cellphone battery. A company in Taiwan, WindMEMS Technology, currently involved in metallic fabrication, has already acquired the rights to sell the technology.



David Schilling

David lives in the North End of Boston, Massachusetts, and regularly visits MIT, Harvard, Boston University, Northeastern, Boston's leading companies and labs, the stacks at Boston Atheneum and Boston Public Library to uncover and research story ideas. You can also find David on [Google+](#).



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