

New technology is being developed that would tap the floor as an energy source



Dragging your feet across a carpet creates finger-zapping static electricity. There is a technology in development that would make walking on your floor a form of alternative energy.



The technique uses wood pulp and chemically treated cellulose nanofibers, which produce an electrical charge when they come into contact with untreated fibers. The nanofibers are able to produce electricity, when embedded within flooring, which may be harnessed to power lights or charge batteries.





Xudong Wang is an associate professor of materials science and engineering. One of his graduate students, Chunhua Yao, has recently published their findings in the journal Nano Energy. Perhaps the best part of their finding is the affordable cost.



Wood pulp is an inexpensive waste product of several industries. Flooring that incorporates this new technique could be as affordable as conventional materials. The installation of this energy producing flooring is likely to have an optimal effect in high-traffic hallways and public places. The affordability of this product makes it appealing. In the future, expect to see residential and commercial flooring systems that produce energy for about the same price as traditional flooring materials.

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