

Water Power in Your Home

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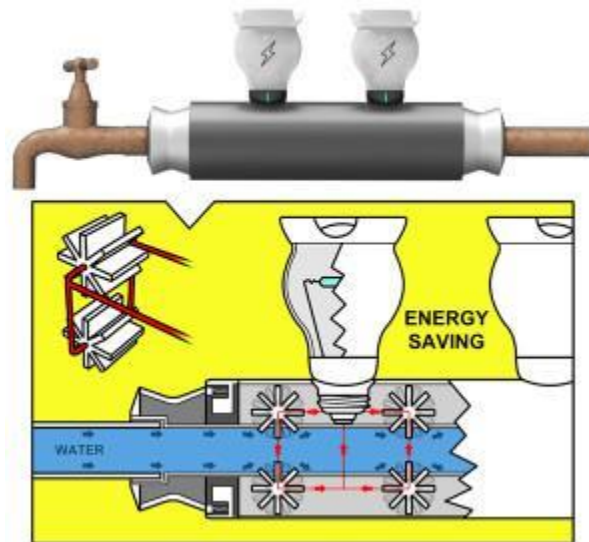


Image via Ryan Jongwoo Choi

Waterwheel turns your faucet into a tiny power plant. This nifty gadget is already a finalist in the Industrial Designers Society of America's 2012 International Design Excellence.

Most discussions of hydroelectric power involve massive underwater turbines or dams that capture the [kinetic energy](#) of our constantly flowing waterways. These are huge projects that involve millions of dollars and lots of potentially negative impact on the wildlife that lives in and around those waterways.

Lakes and rivers aren't the only flowing water to which we have access, however. Water is moving quickly (and almost constantly) through the plumbing of homes and businesses as well. To Korean innovator [Ryan Jongwoo Choi](#), it seemed silly that no one was working on a way to capitalize on this potential energy source as well. So he created the ES Pipe Waterwheel, a tiny faucet accessory that could make big waves in the world of energy conservation.

Choi's contraption works very similar to that of a typical [hydroelectric power](#) plant: rushing water turns turbines which then generate electricity. Only it's not happening in a massive facility, since the ES Pipe Waterwheel is simply attached to a piece of typical residential plumbing.

As water churns through the ES Pipe's interior waterwheels, hydroelectric energy accumulates and is stored in the removable bulbs that fit into the top of the pipe, [explains](#) Gizmodo. When needed, the bulbs can be removed and used for light.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k8HNMXdTKtg>

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When creating this concept, Choi researched African countries where many more people have access to running water than reliable electricity. He envisions the waterwheel as a way to help people living in non-electrified communities repurpose the resources they have into much-needed sources of light and power.

We're not the only ones that see a lot of potential in this nifty gadget: it's already a finalist in the Industrial Designers Society of America's 2012 International Design Excellence Awards and is currently being pitched to product manufacturers for production.
