

Dean Kamen's LED Island Goes Off the Grid

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The inside of Dean Kamen's house on his personal island, on which all the lighting was converted to LEDs. The island runs completely off the grid, generating its own electricity from wind and solar methods

(PhysOrg.com) -- Dean Kamen, best known as the inventor of the Segway scooter and a thought-controlled prosthetic arm, has taken a personal interest in reducing energy consumption.

Kamen owns a three-acre island off the Connecticut coast called North Dumpling Island. The island contains its own wind turbines and solar cells, and, by making a few adjustments, Kamen recently succeeded in taking the island entirely off the grid.

The biggest change Kamen made was replacing all the island's lighting with LED bulbs, creating "the world's first LED nation," as he calls it. Working with some of his friends at Philips Color Kinetics, Kamen

installed LEDs as well as a reflector bulb prototype, called PAR38, that Philips plans to bring to market next year. The reflector bulb is dimmable and has a warm color temperature like an incandescent bulb.

With the new lighting, Kamen cut his house's energy use by 70 percent. Because he added some extra outdoor LED lighting that wasn't there before, the island's total energy consumption dropped by 50 percent.

Kamen plans to demonstrate the installation this spring during a fundraiser for FIRST, an organization Kamen launched to encourage young people to participate in science and technology.

For the time being, most people won't be able to afford converting their incandescent or fluorescent bulbs to LEDs yet, since the technology is still too expensive for residential use. Still, the demonstration shows the possibilities for reducing energy consumption when LED prices do eventually drop to an affordable level.

via: [Gizmodo](#) and [The New York Times \[with more pictures\]](#)

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