

Hand-held device generates bleach from salt water

Student engineers at the University of Iowa have developed a low-cost, hand-cranked electroly chlorine generator for disinfecting drinking water in developing countries.

The device was presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement Science in Chicago recently. It is expected to cost \$5 and should help to prevent water-borne diseases such as cholera, salmonella, shigella and amoebiasis.

The kit includes a mixed metal oxide anode, a stainless steel cathode, neoprene spacers, nylon ties, nuts and washers. Turning the crank for 3 minutes makes about 50 mL of concentrated bleach, enough to disinfect 20 liters of filtered fresh water. The device is also easy to assemble, clean and repair.

The team hope to test a prototype in Ghana in the next few months.

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