

# Seoul to provide smartphone-charging down by the stream

August 29 2014, by Nancy Owano

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Credit: Seoul metropolitan city government

Seoul's mobile users will be able to make use of outdoor charging stations at a popular downtown stream, powered by mini-hydroelectric turbines that use the stream's current. The city is building the recharging stations along the Cheonggyecheon, which is a manmade stream in the city's downtown area. The Seoul metropolitan city government said on Wednesday that the plan is to make available smartphone recharging

booths near Cheonggyecheon, or Cheonggye Stream in Seoul, with the small amount of electricity that is generated from the flowing water, said Korea Bizwire. On Wednesday, city officials installed three small-sized hydroelectric generators on the Gwangtong Bridge on the stream, and two more generators in the walking trail 20 meters away. This will be a trial run, and the first time for phone-charging booths to be installed using the micro-hydroelectric generators. The city will experiment with the five generators for three months, according to the Korea Bizwire.

If all goes well, then the plan is expansion to more spots. The company behind the technology is Enomad, specializing in small water-powered generator manufacturing. These devices were made to be easily detachable for easy maintenance on rainy days. As for evening hours, the circular recharging booth part on the generator glows in the dark, to make it easy for people to find the location spots. The Wall Street Journal said that, according to a Seoul city official, each generator produces 15 to 20 watts, enough to recharge tablets and smartphones. Using this approach, it will take about two hours to fully recharge an iPhone and three to five hours to recharge a tablet.

Jeyup S. Kwaak, Seoul-based reporter for The Wall Street Journal, noted that South Korea has one of the world's highest penetration rates for smartphones. Given the numbers of mobile gadgets in the city, it would not be difficult to assume that such outdoor charging stations will be welcomed. "The country has long promoted [Internet](#) technology as a key driver of growth, and the capital Seoul is often referred to as the 'most wired' [city](#) on the planet," said an AFP report last year. "About 70 percent of South Korea's 50 million people have smartphones—the highest penetration rate in the world, according to the market research firm eMarket." Some of the cost to build the recharging stations was funded by a crowdfunding site, Tumblbug, said Korea Bizwire.



Credit: Seoul Metropolitan Government

As for the stream, Kwaak said that, "For decades covered under a major traffic artery, Cheonggyecheon in 2005 reopened to public as a manmade waterway. The water that flows through the 10.8-kilometer (6.7-mile) stream is also pumped with electric power."

**More information:** — [koreabizwire.com/seoul-city-go...eonggye-stream/17692](http://koreabizwire.com/seoul-city-go...eonggye-stream/17692)

— [tumblrbug.com/ko/enomad/process/4394](http://tumblrbug.com/ko/enomad/process/4394)

— [blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/20...hone-charging-spots/](http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/20...hone-charging-spots/)

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