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# America's Biggest Disaster Threat

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### Innovations & ideas

By Ross Wehner  
Denver Post staff writer

#### "Bio-sensors" battle water germs

Your water may one day be safer to drink, thanks to miniature "bio-sensors" being developed by Lafayette-based Sporian Microsystems. The sensors, about the size of a quarter, float in the water to detect nasty pathogens such as cholera, giardia and E. Coli. They also can alert authorities via tiny transmitters, saving time and money over the traditional method of sending water samples to labs for testing. The company was founded by graduates of the University of Colorado at Boulder and is developing the sensors under contract with the Army Corps of Engineers. "The need for advanced bio-sensor technology like this is underscored by the tragedy of the small town of Walkerton, Canada, where several people died and hundreds became ill because of an E. coli contamination of their water supply" in 2000, said Murray Hamilton of the University of Denver's Rocky Mountain Center for Homeland Defense.

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#### Microsoft connecting to bloggers

The world's largest software company is following in the tire tracks of Vespa USA. Last week, Vespa announced

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it wants to hire bloggers to create a buzz about scooters in general, and its products in particular. Microsoft wants to do the same thing for software by hiring Web loggers to promote its Longhorn operating system. Team 99, as Microsoft's bloggers will be known, will get a look at pre-release copies of the new operating system, after pledging not to reveal details that could be useful to competitors or hackers. Software developers and "super users" are likely to be asked to join the group, according to Robert Scoble, Microsoft's most visible blogger. Nominees should be "trusted by the community ...

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