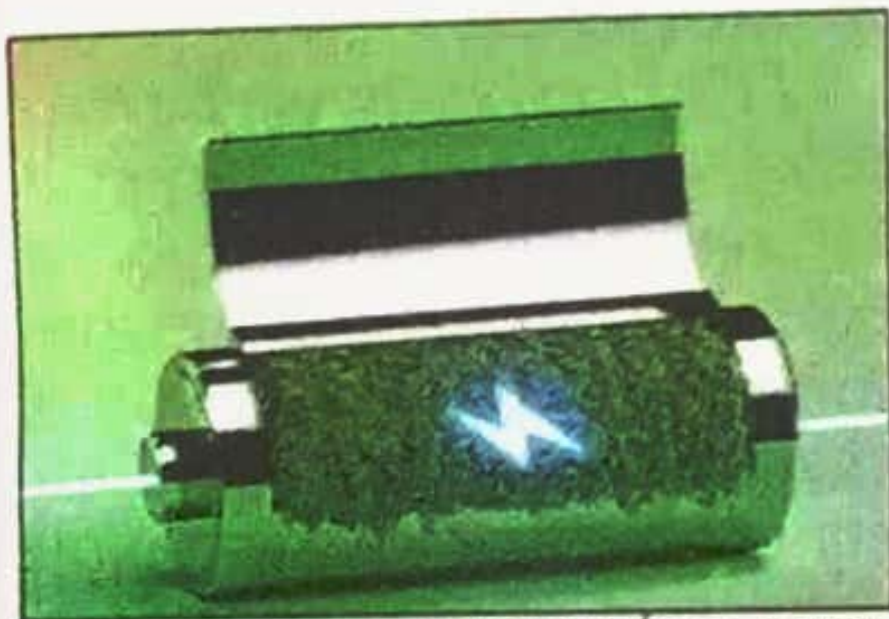


Bottled sun



ISTOCK.COM/JUST_SUPER

■ Scientists at the University of California, Santa Barbara, US, have created a material that works like a “rechargeable solar battery”, storing sunlight inside tiny molecules and releasing it later as heat — long after the sun goes down. Inspired by reversible changes found in DNA and photochromatic sunglasses, the system captures solar energy without relying on bulky batteries or the electrical grid. The molecule can hold energy for years and stores more energy per kilogram than lithium-ion batteries.