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PLATFORM LETS HOMEOWNERS DONATE ENERGY TO THOSE WHO NEED IT

 PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION

Gridmates is a peer-to-peer network that lets those with excess energy share it with neighbors in need.

For the new breed of homeowners that use solar and wind technologies to generate their own energy, one bonus is that any energy that isn't needed to power their home can be sold back to the grid. However, in every community there are those who can't afford to heat their home in the winter, or even turn their lights on at night. Hoping to connect the two, **Gridmates** is a peer-to-peer network that lets those with excess energy share it with neighbors in need.

We are all interconnected, and the way each of us uses the Earth's resources is one of the causes of inequality. There are people and communities who go without, and yet those who have abundant access to things like food and energy tend to be wasteful. By making networks smarter, we can help better share the resources we have. That's the tenet of Gridmates, a platform that's set to launch in December.

Homeowners — whether they generate their own electricity or not — can log onto the Gridmates website and sign up to pledge some of their energy to a nonprofit, an elderly citizen or anyone living in energy poverty. Working with utilities providers, the system registers their donation and reroutes energy to the recipient's home or building. Members can either pay money to simply contribute to another's electricity bill, or assign a portion of their current bill to be redirected to someone in need. The site hopes to also include tips that could help donors offset the equivalent power through energy saving tactics. Those who generate their own electricity can also sign up to give any excess to someone else in their community.

Watch the video below to learn more about the project:

George Koutitas, who came up with the concept, is currently working with the **Community First! Village** in Texas to trial the P2P energy network, relying on donations to provide 200 families with free electricity. Are there other ways to develop intelligent networks that could reroute excess resources to those who need it, instead of being wasted?

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