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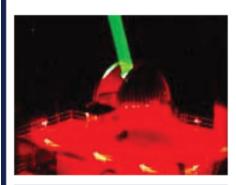
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High powered laser blackens any metal

Updated Tue. Nov. 21 2006 5:19 PM FT

Brian Jackson , DiscoveryChannel.ca

Star-watching observatories could be improved by lightabsorbing black metals. A laser with the same wattage as the entire North American power grid and faster than the speed of an electron can

renders any metal that stands in its way completely impervious to reflections, according to researchers from the University of Rochester.

"We wanted to see what would happen to metal's properties under different laser conditions," explains optics scientist Chunlei Guo. "We stumbled on this way to completely alter the reflective properties of metals."

Guo's femtosecond laser pulse lasts the smallest fraction of a second - just one millionth of one billionth of a second. Think about it this way: a femtosecond is to a second as one minute is to the age of the universe.

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