

Fungi on the Nose

Aspergillus terreus, *A. hollandicus* and *Eurotium chevalieri* are three of the most common fungi that cause staining of manuscripts. Using an "e-nose" developed by Naresh Magan of the Institute of BioScience and Technology at Cranfield University, UK, and others, to detect the volatile compounds given off, as they grow, unique "fingerprints" for these three fungi were identified. The nose consists of an array of 14 polymer sensors; monitoring changes in resistance of the sensors provided the unique clues to identifying the fungi. An e-nose costs more than \$20 000, although costs are coming down and with an increase in sensitivity of sensors to work better in higher humidity, the foreseeable areas of application are anticipated to increase.

Ref: - International Biodeterioration and Biodegradation, vol 54, p 303.
New Scientist, vol 186, No 2493, 2 April 2005.