

Thomas Johann Seebeck Encyclopedia Article

Thomas Johann Seebeck

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1770-1831

Russian-German physicist and chemist who first described the thermocouple. A thermocouple consists of two wires of different metals that are joined to form a closed loop. An electric current flows through the loop when the junctions of the wires are kept at different temperatures. This phenomenon, in which heat energy is converted to electrical energy in a closed circuit of different metals, is called the Seebeck effect. Today, thermocouples are used in some types of highly accurate thermometers.