

USPTO TO EXPEDITE GREEN TECHNOLOGY INVENTIONS

On December 7, 2009, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announced a pilot program for according special status to patent applications covering green technologies. The applications will be examined on an accelerated basis. The pilot program is designed to promote investments in and to speed the commercialization of green technologies. Examples of qualifying green technology inventions include inventions that contribute to enhancing environmental quality, efficient utilization and conservation of energy resources, the discovery and development of renewable energy resources, and greenhouse gas emission reduction.

Approximately 25,000 existing patent applications are eligible for consideration under the pilot program. The USPTO will examine on an expedited basis the first 3,000 patent applications for which proper petitions are filed. Participants of the pilot program can expect a shortened examination phase -- 12 months in contrast to the current average of 40 months.

If the pilot program proves to be successful, the USPTO could expand the program to be more widely available. We expect additional details on the pilot program to be made available in the coming weeks.



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