

COLUMBIA RESEARCH CORPORATION

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February 17, 2011

Ms. Christina Munro
FOIA Office
Bonneville Power Administration
Routing: DK-7
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208

SUBJECT: FOIA Request

RECEIVED BY BPA FOIA OFFICE THIS DATE: 2/22/11
DUE DATE: 3/22/11
LOG # BPA-2011-00677-F

Dear Ms. Munro:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), I hereby request the following documents related to BPA's patent and invention program. See attached article posted on the BPA website.

1. A copy of BPA's intellectual property strategy.
2. A copy of all agreements with private companies to help develop patents or innovations and/or encourage wider use of these products.
3. The name of each BPA employee awarded a bonus, incentive award or special compensation for patents or innovations.
4. The amount of the bonus, incentive award or special compensation identified in #3 above.

I am willing to pay \$50 for search and copy charges. Please call me if you expect the charges to exceed that amount.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dan Seligman
Attorney at Law

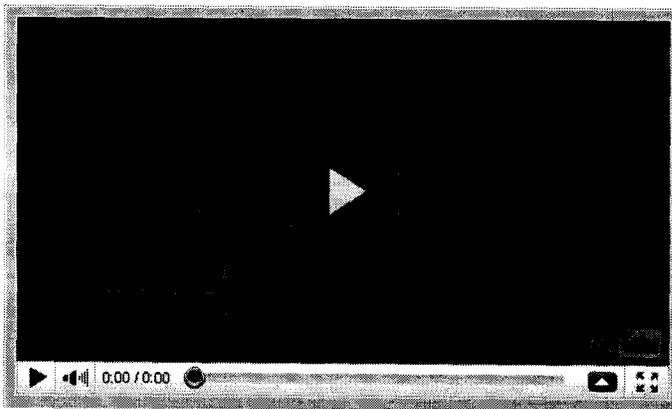
Bonneville Power Administration

http://www.bpa.gov

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New BPA strategy promotes, protects inventions



BPA has applied for patent protection on a new real-time wind energy display designed by Scott Winner of Power Services, the first time in more than 30 years the agency has sought to patent an employee invention.

The patent application also reflects a new BPA initiative to more aggressively encourage, identify and protect other employee innovations, especially as BPA ramps up research into development of a so-called "smart grid" and renewable energy sources.

One benefit of patents is that they might someday generate revenue that could fund further research, but there are other benefits, too. Patents secure BPA's interest in novel ideas so that the agency can develop and use them or pass them on to the private sector to commercialize for broader industry public use.

"BPA has a long history of innovation, but we want to be sure to capture that value for the agency, customers and the public," said Justin Reel, a patent attorney and BPA's new technology transfer manager. "We don't want to end up having to pay for something we already came up with, just because we didn't protect it."

BPA Chief Technology Innovation Officer Terry Oliver said patenting BPA inventions also ensures that the utility customers that support the agency and its research through power rates share any resulting benefits. "We want to make sure our customers have the rights to use inventions that originate here," he said.

BPA's intellectual property strategy, designed in 2008 at the urging of former Deputy Administrator Steve Hickok, also aims to encourage and support employee innovations that could have wider application. It recommends incentive awards for employees who come up with patentable inventions, ensuring they share in the benefits of their ideas.

"We want our engineers to get the recognition that comes with a patent and we'd like to have some control over how the invention is commercialized," said BPA attorney Kathy Black, who helped develop the strategy. "This recognition will help BPA recruit great engineers, further energizing our research."

Reel's goal is to track agency research for potential breakthrough ideas or technologies, known as intellectual property, and then work with employees to protect the inventions with patents. Then he'll look at options for further developing the innovations either within the agency or in commercial partnership with private companies.

The Bonneville Project Act of 1937 that created BPA gives the agency authority to acquire patent rights and the Transmission System Act of 1974 authorized expenditures on research, both signs that Congress saw a research and development role for BPA, Black said. BPA owns inventions developed by its

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employees and can patent them.

The situation is different for outside researchers who invent something in the course of BPA-funded research: they can obtain their own patent on the invention.

However, if an outside researcher decides not to seek a patent, then BPA can do so. Either way, however, BPA would have the right to use the invention free of charge.

The potential for patentable ideas may increase as BPA boosts its research in the areas of smart grid technology, renewable power integration and transmission system improvements. BPA's Technology Innovation Office recently sought a new round of proposals from employees and outside researchers.

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