

# News Alert: U.S. Patent Office Launching Pilot Program to Expedite "Green" Patent Application Examination

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## Winstead News Alert

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is going "green" when it comes to patent application examination.

While patent applications are normally taken up for examination in the order of their United States filing date, effective December 8, 2009, the USPTO has begun a twelve-month pilot program to permit patent applications filed prior to December 8, 2009 and pertaining to "green technologies" (i.e., environmental quality, energy conservation, development of renewable energy resources, or greenhouse gas emission reduction) to be advanced out of turn (i.e., accorded special status) for an accelerated examination process. Patent applications afforded this special status will not be burdened with the requirements or fee of the standard special examination process.

Patent applicants must electronically file a petition requesting accelerated examination for qualified applications at least one day prior to the date a first Office Action appears in the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system and include a request for early publication.

The USPTO will accept only the first 3,000 petitions meeting program requirements that are filed before December 8, 2010. The program may eventually be expanded depending on feedback from the participants and the effectiveness of the pilot program.

A full explanation of the Green Technology Pilot Program and petition requirements may be found at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-29207.htm>

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