

Energy Technology Connections Newsletter: Your Law Firm Link to Industry News

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In the November edition of *Energy Technology Connections*, we bring you recent industry highlights, the latest news from Capitol Hill, and a list of upcoming energy industry events. In our Leaders in the News section below, we congratulate ecoVent on their recent success in Cleantech Open Northeast's "Cleanweb" Prize competition. Please also see our Events section to learn more about the New England Women in Energy and the Environment's 2014 Annual Meeting. Finally, we outline the newly released topics for the Energy Department's SBIR and STTR grants in our Innovator Profile. For links to industry grant opportunities and stories from the business, policy, and research sectors of the energy and clean technology industry, please see our [Energy Navigator](#).

Leaders in the News

We are excited to congratulate ecoVent on its recent triumph in the first-ever Cleantech Open Northeast "Cleanweb" Prize competition. Presented by Mintz Levin's Tom Burton and EnerNoc's Micah Remley at the Cleantech Open Northeast business competition on October 28, the Cleanweb Prize recognized ecoVent as the most promising cleanweb participant in Cleantech Open's accelerator program. Their team designed a system of wireless vents and sensors that allows customers to set the perfect temperature for each individual room in their home and reap the energy savings. Best of all, ecoVent's system allows customers to control everything from an app on their mobile phone. In addition to winning the Cleanweb Prize, ecoVent was also named Techstars' Winter 2014 Company and won the MIT 100k Pitch Challenge.

Mintz Levin was thrilled to cosponsor this award with our frequent partner EnerNOC and to continue Mintz Levin's longstanding relationship with Cleantech Open. Our very own Sahir Surmeli and R.J. Lyman both served as judges for the business competition, and R.J. also served on the panel that selected ecoVent for the Cleanweb Prize. To learn more about Cleantech Open, [check out their website here](#).

In addition, we would like to extend our congratulations to our client True North Venture Partners. True North Venture Partners, an early stage venture capital company that focuses on the energy, water, agriculture, and waste sectors, successfully led a syndicate of investors in the completion of a \$20 million financing round for Harvest Power. This new round of financing will help Harvest Power accelerate their development of technology that turns organic waste into clean energy. For the full press release, [please click here](#).

Event Highlights

The New England Women in Energy and the Environment's 2014 Annual Meeting and Second Annual Autumn Extravaganza will be on Thursday, November 6, 2014. NEWIEE is welcoming two new members to its Advisory Board: [Alicia Barton](#), Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, and [Carrie Cullen Hitt](#), Senior Director, Project Development, NextEra Energy Resources.

Alicia and Carrie will join the existing members of NEWIEE's Advisory Board: [Susan Coakley](#), Executive Director at Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships; [Penni McLean-Conner](#), Chief Customer Officer & Senior Vice President, Customer Group at NSTAR; [Sonia Hamel](#), Principal at Hamel Environmental Consulting; [Edna Karanian](#), Director of Gas Supply at Northeast Utilities; [Barbara Kates-Garnick](#), Interim Director of Energy,

Climate and Innovation Program, Center for International Environment and Resource Policy, the Fletcher School, Tufts University; [Muriel Robinette](#), Senior Client Development Manager/Principal at Terracon Consultants, Inc.; and [Rebecca Tepper](#), General Counsel at the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.

At the annual meeting, the advisory board, the board of directors, and NEWIEE contributing members will discuss strategies for the coming year, including the plan to add an annual signature panel in June of 2015. The Autumn Extravaganza is a cocktail party that promises food, drink, and great conversation. The free annual meeting, from 4:30 to 6:15 pm, is open to contributing members; [guests should RSVP here](#). The Autumn Extravaganza is from 6:30 to 9 pm and open to all; [tickets can be purchased here](#).

We would also like to congratulate our client, GreenTech Media, on their successful [Forum 20/20](#) conference, which took place from October 27–30. Speakers included Governor Deval Patrick, CEO of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center Alicia Barton, Senior Vice President of NRG Energy Robyn Beavers, and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Energy John MacWilliams.

Washington Update

As the 2014 midterm elections come to a close, several key senate races remain too close to call. This electoral uncertainty, however, has not stopped many members of Congress from preparing for a brief but intense Lame Duck session or from looking further down the road to the next Congress. House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) released a memorandum on October 22 predicting that a Republican-controlled Senate would approve House-passed bills to eliminate the need for presidential permits for cross-border energy projects like the Keystone XL pipeline, establish deadlines for federal agencies to approve permits for constructing new natural gas pipelines, and streamline the permitting process for certain mining projects. Majority Leader McCarthy also said that the House will continue regulatory reform efforts that have stalled in the Senate.

Though the majority will be slim for whichever party prevails in the Senate, the focus on issues could be different, particularly if Senator Mitch McConnell's (R-KY) campaign prevails, Republicans take control of the upper chamber, and he becomes Majority Leader. Whether or not he becomes Majority Leader, Senator McConnell has promised to continue his battle against Environmental Protection Agency greenhouse gas regulations. Should Democrats retain control of the Senate, Congress is likely to continue in much the same vein for the next several years: unable to pass comprehensive climate or energy legislation, and facing difficult battles even on much smaller measures.

The Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration released a report on October 22 finding that domestic energy-related CO₂ emissions increased 2.5% last year due to colder weather, which led to an increase in residential and commercial demand for heating. Energy-related CO₂ emissions increased from 5,267 MMT in 2012 to 5,396 MMT in 2013. Emissions last year were still 10% below their 2005 level of 5,999 MMT. The DOE also published a final rule on October 14 that lays out criteria federal agencies must follow when using green building rating systems. Under the new rule, rated buildings must be able to demonstrate continued energy and water efficiency gains at least every four years, and agencies may use the rating system most appropriate for their buildings. The rule goes into effect November 13.

The Obama Administration plans to finalize the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal for the reduction of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) in the coming weeks. The American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers sent a letter on October 14 to President Obama in support of the proposed 16% reduction from 2014 levels, citing the E10 blend wall. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chair Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) had previously sent a letter to President Obama on October 8 saying that the proposal would increase CO₂ pollution.

Internationally, climate negotiators spent time in Bonn, Germany at the last United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change summit prior to the annual international climate negotiation this December in Lima, Peru. The third round of the Bonn Climate Change Conference concluded October 25, though negotiators reached no concrete result, leaving a busy schedule for the 20th COP/MOP in a few weeks. Almost 1,200 negotiators from 176 countries and organizations gathered last week to negotiate a new climate agreement, which is on target to be approved in Paris next December and to become effective in 2020. The talks failed to reach a conclusion on elements of the 2015 agreement and what should be included in the nationally determined contributions, which governments are expected to submit by early next year.

The European Union approved on October 24 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2030. European

Union leaders committed to reducing CO2 emissions by at least 40% by 2030 compared with 1990 levels, and this commitment will be legally binding for all member states. The bloc also agreed to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 27% compared with 1990 levels, as well as to improve energy efficiency by 27%.

California Update

In addition to our Washington Update, please also see [Brandon Barker and Gabriel Schnitzler's article](#) in our Green Building & Energy Technology Newsletter to read about two new laws passed in California last month. The laws give residential and commercial tenants rights to install electric vehicle charging stations and streamline residential solar permitting.

Innovator Profile

The Energy Department's [Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy](#) (EERE) has announced the nine topics and twenty-six subtopics that will be eligible for funding under its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Technology Transfer (STTR) programs for the 2014–2015 year. These programs aim to support for-profit businesses of 500 employees or fewer as they undertake high risk, innovative projects that support the government's objectives to stimulate technological innovation.

This year's grant program focuses on a wide range of needs, including sustainable transportation, renewable electricity generation, and the transfer of new technology to the marketplace. All grant applications must respond to one of the nine topics set out by EERE. This year, the topics are:

- Carbon fiber production processes
- Solid-liquid separations for algal systems
- Integrated storage and distributed generation for buildings
- Technology transfer opportunity for fuel cell quality control devices
- Technology transfer opportunity for geothermal co-produced applications
- Concentrating solar thermal desalination
- Silicone-carbide Schottky diodes for electric drive vehicle power electronics
- Innovative small, low-head hydropower turbines
- Active load alleviation strategies for wind turbine blades

For a more comprehensive list of topics and sub-topics, [please click here](#).

The application for SBIR/STTR funding is a multistep process. The deadline to submit a mandatory letter of intent is Monday, December 15 at 5 pm EST, and the entire application process closes on February 3, 2015. For additional application information, [please click here](#).

Since SBIR's inception, its eleven participating agencies have awarded over \$26 billion in grants.

Energy Navigator

Please visit and bookmark our [Energy Navigator](#) to easily view all of the latest headlines from the most trusted publications reporting on developments in the energy and clean technology industries. It is housed on our blog, [Energy Technology Matters](#).

Upcoming Events

Solar PV Boston Regional Training

November 5, 2014
Dorchester, MA

Fraunhofer CSE Plug and Play Demo Day

November 19, 2014
Charlestown, MA

NEWIEE Annual Meeting & Autumn Extravaganza

November 6, 2014
Boston, MA

US Solar Market Insight 2014

December 9 – 10, 2014
San Diego, CA

Cleantech Open 2014 Global Forum

November 12-13, 2014
San Francisco, CA

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