

prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: February 24, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-04167 Filed 2-27-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request; Recording Assignments

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce

Title: Recording Assignments

OMB Control Number: 0651-0027 Form Number(s):

- PTO-1594
- PTO-1595

Type of Request: Regular

Number of Respondents: 524,298

Average Hours per Response: 0.5

Burden Hours: 262,150 annually

Cost Burden: \$2,954,726

Needs and Uses:

This collection of information is required by 35 U.S.C. 261 and 262 for patents and 15 U.S.C. 1057 and 1060 for trademarks. These statutes authorize the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to record patent and trademark assignment documents, including transfers of properties (*i.e.* patents and trademarks), liens, licenses, assignments of interest, security interests, mergers, and explanations of transactions or other documents that record the transfer of ownership of a particular patent or trademark property from one party to another. Assignments are recorded for applications, patents, and trademark registrations.

The USPTO administers these statutes through 37 CFR 2.146, 2.171, and 37 CFR part 3. These rules permit the public, corporations, other federal agencies, and Government-owned or

Government-controlled corporations to submit patent and trademark assignment documents and other documents related to title transfers to the USPTO to be recorded. In accordance with 37 CFR 3.54, the recording of an assignment document by the USPTO is an administrative action and not a determination of the validity of the document or of the effect that the document has on the title to an application, patent, or trademark.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profits; not-for-profit institutions.

Frequency: On occasion

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits

OMB Desk Officer: Nicholas A. Fraser, email: Nicholas_A_Fraser@omb.eop.gov.

Once submitted, the request will be publicly available in electronic format through reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Paper copies can be obtained by:

- *Email:* InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include "0651-0027 Recording Assignments" in the subject line of the message.

- *Mail:* Marcie Lovett, Records Management Division Director, Office of the Chief Information Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent on or before April 1, 2015 to Nicholas A. Fraser, OMB Desk Officer, via email to Nicholas_A_Fraser@omb.eop.gov, or by fax to 202-395-5167, marked to the attention of Nicholas A. Fraser.

Dated: February 20, 2015.

Marcie Lovett,

Records Management Division Director, USPTO, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2015-04214 Filed 2-27-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-16-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Proposed Collection; Comment Request; "Rules for Patent Maintenance Fees"

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as part of its

continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 1, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Written comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include "0651-0016 Rules for Patent Maintenance Fees" in the subject line of the message.

- *Mail:* Marcie Lovett, Records Management Division Director, Office of the Chief Information Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

- *Federal Rulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information should be directed to Raul Tamayo, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450; by telephone at 571-272-7728; or by email at Raul.Tamayo@uspto.gov with "Paperwork" in the subject line. Additional information about this collection is also available at <http://www.reginfo.gov> under "Information Collection Review."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Under 35 U.S.C. § 41 and 37 CFR 1.20(e)-(i) and 1.362-1.378, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) charges fees for maintaining in force all utility patents based on applications filed on or after December 12, 1980. Payment of these maintenance fees is due at 3 1/2, 7 1/2, and 11 1/2 years after the date the patent was granted. If the USPTO does not receive payment of the appropriate maintenance fee and any applicable surcharge within a grace period of six months following each of the above due dates (at 4, 8, or 12 years after the date of grant), the patent will expire at that time. After a patent expires, it is no longer enforceable. Maintenance fees are not required for design or plant patents, or for reissue patents if the patent being reissued did not require maintenance fees.

Payments of maintenance fees that are submitted during the six-month grace period before patent expiration must include the appropriate surcharge as

indicated by 37 CFR 1.20(h). Submissions of maintenance fee payments and surcharges must include the relevant patent number and the corresponding United States application number in order to identify the correct patent and ensure proper crediting of the fee being paid.

If the USPTO refuses to accept and record a maintenance fee payment that was submitted prior to the expiration of a patent, the patentee may petition the Director to accept and record the maintenance fee under 37 CFR 1.377. This petition must be accompanied by the fee indicated in 37 CFR 1.17(g), which may be refunded if it is determined that the refusal to accept the maintenance fee was due to an error by the USPTO.

If a patent has expired due to nonpayment of a maintenance fee, the patentee may petition the Director to accept a delayed payment of the maintenance fee under 37 CFR 1.378. The Director may accept the payment of a maintenance fee after the expiration of the patent if the petitioner shows to the satisfaction of the Director that the delay in payment was unintentional. Petitions to accept unintentionally delayed payment must also be accompanied by the required maintenance fee and appropriate surcharge under 37 CFR 1.20(i). If the Director accepts the maintenance fee payment upon petition, then the patent is reinstated. If the USPTO denies a petition to accept delayed payment of a maintenance fee in an expired patent, the patentee may petition the Director to reconsider that decision under 37 CFR 1.378(e). This

petition must be accompanied by the fee indicated in 37 CFR 1.17(f), which may be refunded if it is determined that the refusal to accept the maintenance fee was due to an error by the USPTO.

The rules of practice (37 CFR 1.33(d) and 1.363) permit applicants, patentees, assignees, or their representatives of record to specify a "fee address" for correspondence related to maintenance fees that is separate from the correspondence address associated with a patent or application. A fee address must be an address that is associated with a USPTO customer number. Customer numbers may be requested by using the Request for Customer Number form (PTO/SB/125), which is covered under OMB control number 0651-0035. Maintaining a correct and updated address is necessary so that fee-related correspondence from the USPTO will be properly received by the applicant, patentee, assignee, or authorized representative. If a separate fee address is not specified for a patent or application, the USPTO will direct fee-related correspondence to the correspondence address of record.

The USPTO offers forms to assist the public with providing information covered by this collection, including the information necessary to submit a patent maintenance fee payment (PTO/SB/45) and to designate or change a fee address (PTO/SB/47). The USPTO offers a total of three different versions of the form for petitions to accept unintentionally delayed payment of maintenance fee in an expired patent under 37 CFR 1.378(c). In addition to (i) the basic PDF that may be filled out

electronically and then printed and mailed (or submitted online) (Form PTO/SB/66), the USPTO offers (ii) an enhanced PDF that is designed only to be submitted electronically through EFS-Web (PTO/SB/66—EFS-Web), and (iii) a Web-based ePetition, which the public can complete on a computer using a Web browser and then click a submit button to send the information to the USPTO over the Internet (ePetition). No forms are provided for the petitions under 37 CFR 1.377 and 1.378(e).

Customers may submit maintenance fee payments and surcharges incurred during the six-month grace period before patent expiration by using the Maintenance Fee Transmittal Form (PTO/SB/45) or by paying online through the USPTO Web site. However, to pay a maintenance fee after patent expiration, the maintenance fee payment and the appropriate surcharge must be filed together with a petition to accept unintentionally delayed payment. The USPTO accepts online maintenance fee payments by credit card, deposit account, or electronic funds transfer (EFT). Otherwise, non-electronic payments may be made by check, credit card, or deposit account.

II. Method of Collection

By mail, facsimile, hand delivery, or electronically to the USPTO.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0651-0016.

IC Instruments: The individual instruments in this collection, as well as their associated forms, are listed in the table below.

| IC number | Form and function | Form # |
|-----------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Maintenance Fee Transmittal Form, electronic and paper | PTO/SB/45 |
| 2 | Electronic Maintenance Fee Form, electronic | No Form Associated |
| 3 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c)), electronic and paper. | PTO/SB/66 |
| 4 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c))—EFS-Web, electronic. | PTO/SB/66 |
| 5 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c))—ePetition, electronic. | ePetition |
| 6 | Petition to Review Refusal to Accept Payment of Maintenance Fee Prior to Expiration of Patent (37 CFR 1.377), electronic and paper. | No Form Associated |
| 7 | Petition for Reconsideration of Decision on Petition Refusing to Accept Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(e)), electronic and paper. | No Form Associated |
| 8 | "Fee Address" Indication Form, electronic and paper | PTO/SB/47 |

Type of Review: Regular
 Affected Public: Individuals or households; businesses or other for-profits; and not-for-profit institutions.
 Estimated Number of Respondents: 525,309 responses per year. The USPTO estimates that approximately 25% of

these responses will be from small entities.
 Estimated Time per Response: The USPTO estimates that it will take the public approximately 20 seconds (0.006 hours) to 8 hours to submit the

information in this collection, including the time to gather the necessary information, prepare the appropriate form or petition, and submit the completed request to the USPTO. The time per response, estimated annual

responses, and estimated annual hour burden associated with each instrument in this information collection is shown in the table below.

Estimated Total Annual Hour Burden: 18,123.42 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost Burden (Hourly): \$3,263,347.08. The USPTO expects that the petitions included in

this collection will be prepared by attorneys and that the other items in this collection will be prepared by paraprofessionals. Using the professional rate of \$389 per hour for attorneys in private firms, the USPTO estimates that the respondent cost burden for attorneys submitting the petitions will total \$1,470,420 per year.

Using the paraprofessional rate of \$125 per hour, the USPTO estimates that the respondent cost burden for paraprofessionals submitting the other items in this collection will total \$1,792,927.08 per year, for a total annual respondent cost burden of \$3,263,347.08.

| IC No. | Item/form No. | Minutes (a) | Responses (yr) (b) | Burden (hrs/yr) (c) (a x b)/60 | Rate (\$/hr) (d) | Total cost (\$/yr) (e) (c x d) |
|------------|--|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Maintenance Fee Transmittal Transactions (PTO/SB/45). | 5 | 37,434 | 3,119.5 | \$125.00 | \$389,937.50 |
| 2 | Electronic Maintenance Fee Transactions | 0.333 | 375,555 | 2,086.42 | 125.00 | 260,802.08 |
| 3 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c)) (PTO/SB/66). | 60 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 389.00 | 389,000.00 |
| 4 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c)) (PTO/SB/66)—EFS-Web. | 60 | 500 | 500 | 389.00 | 194,500.00 |
| 5 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c)) (PTO/SB/66)—ePetition. | 60 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 389.00 | 389,000.00 |
| 6 | Petition to Review Refusal to Accept Payment of Maintenance Fee Prior to Expiration of Patent (37 CFR 1.377). | 240 | 20 | 80 | 389.00 | 31,120.00 |
| 7 | Petition for Reconsideration of Decision on Petition Refusing to Accept Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(e)). | 480 | 150 | 1,200 | 389.00 | 466,800.00 |
| 8 | "Fee Address" Indication Form (PTO/SB/47). | 5 | 109,650 | 9,137.5 | 125.00 | 1,142,187.50 |
| Totals ... | | | 525,309 | 18,123.42 | | 3,263,347.08 |

Estimated Total Annual Cost Burden (Non-Hourly): \$3,801.42. This information collection has annual (non-hour) cost burden in the form of postage costs.

The public may submit the forms and petitions in this collection to the

USPTO by mail through the United States Postal Service. If the submission is sent by first-class mail, the public may also include a signed certification of the date of mailing in order to receive credit for timely filing. The USPTO estimates that the average first-class

postage cost for a mailed submission will be 49 cents and that approximately 7,758 submissions per year may be mailed to the USPTO, for a total postage cost of \$3,801.42 per year.

| IC No. | Item | Responses (a) | Postage cost (b) | Total non-hour cost burden (postage) (c) (a x b) |
|-------------|--|------------------|---------------------|---|
| 3 | Petition to Accept Unintentionally Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(c)). | 70 | \$0.49 | \$34.30 |
| 6 | Petition to Review Refusal to Accept Payment of Maintenance Fee Prior to Expiration of Patent (37 CFR 1.377). | 1 | 0.49 | 0.49 |
| 7 | Petition for Reconsideration of Decision on Petition Refusing to Accept Delayed Payment of Maintenance Fee in an Expired Patent (37 CFR 1.378(e)). | 11 | 0.49 | 5.39 |
| 8 | "Fee Address" Indication Form | 7,676 | 0.49 | 3,761.24 |
| Totals | | 7,758 | | 3,801.42 |

The total (non-hour) respondent cost burden for this collection in the form of postage costs is estimated to be \$3,801.42 per year.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of responses.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 20, 2015.

Marcie Lovett,

*Records Management Division Director,
USPTO, Office of the Chief Information
Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2015-04212 Filed 2-27-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-16-P

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

[CPSA Docket No. 15-C0003]

General Electric Company, Provisional Acceptance of a Settlement Agreement and Order

AGENCY: Consumer Product Safety Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: It is the policy of the Commission to publish settlements which it provisionally accepts under the Consumer Product Safety Act in the *Federal Register* in accordance with the terms of 16 CFR 1118.20(e). Published below is a provisionally-accepted Settlement Agreement with General Electric Company, containing a civil penalty of \$3,500,000, within twenty (20) days of service of the Commission's final Order accepting the Settlement Agreement.

DATES: Any interested person may ask the Commission not to accept this

agreement or otherwise comment on its contents by filing a written request with the Office of the Secretary by March 17, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to comment on this Settlement Agreement should send written comments to the Comment 15-C0003 Office of the Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission, 4330 East West Highway, Room 820, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-4408.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer C. Argabright, Trial Attorney, Office of the General Counsel, Division of Compliance, Consumer Product Safety Commission, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-4408; telephone (301) 504-7808.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The text of the Agreement and Order appears below.

Dated: February 24, 2015.

Alberta E. Mills,

Acting Secretary.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

In the Matter of: GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY, CPSC Docket No.: 15-C0003

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. In accordance with the Consumer Product Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2051-2089 (CPSA) and 16 CFR 1118.20, General Electric Company ("GE" or "Firm"), and the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission ("Commission"), through its staff, hereby enter into this Settlement Agreement ("Agreement"). The Agreement, and the incorporated attached Order, resolve staff's charges set forth below.

THE PARTIES

2. The Commission is an independent federal regulatory agency, established pursuant to, and responsible for the enforcement of, the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2051-2089. By executing the Agreement, staff is acting on behalf of the Commission, pursuant to 16 CFR § 1118.20(b). The Commission issues the Order under the provisions of the CPSA.

3. GE is a corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the state of New York, with its principal place of business in Fairfield, CT. GE Appliances ("GEA" or "GE Appliances") is an unincorporated business unit of GE that is located in Louisville, KY.

STAFF CHARGES

GE RANGES

4. Between June 2002 through December 2004, GE imported into the United States approximately 28,000 dual fuel ranges (the Range). The Range was sold through department and appliance stores nationwide for approximately \$1,300 to \$2,000 between June 2002 and December 2005.

5. The Range is a 30-inch wide GE Profile Dual Fuel Freestanding Range with an

electric range with gas cooktop burners. The Range is a "consumer product" "distributed in commerce," as those terms are defined or used in sections 3(a)(5), (8), and (11) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2052(a)(5), (8), and (11). At all relevant times, GE was a "manufacturer" of the Range, as such term is defined or used in sections 3(a)(11) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2052(a)(11).

6. The Range is defective because a connector in the wire harness at the rear of the Range can overheat, posing a fire and burn hazard to consumers.

7. GE first received notice of a possible Range failure in 2003, when a consumer reported to GE that she had called the fire department because the Range had caught fire while it was pre-heating. A GE technician noted that the wiring had shorted out. By the end of 2004, GE received four more consumer complaints of fire or melted wires. In 2004, GE technicians examined several of the Ranges involved in the consumer complaints and confirmed that the wiring harness at the rear of the Range could overheat, causing a fire hazard.

8. In December 2004, to reduce the risk of an overheated connector, GE redesigned the Range to remove the connectors in the wiring harness. By this time, GE had obtained sufficient information that reasonably supported the conclusion that the Range contained a defect or possible defect which could create a substantial product hazard or created an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. GE was required to inform the Commission immediately of such defect or risk, as required by sections 15(b)(3) and (4) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064(b)(3) and (4).

9. After the redesign of the Range, GE continued to receive reports from consumers of overheated wiring and fires that occurred in the back of the Range.

10. Despite having information regarding the Range's defect or risk, GE failed to inform the Commission immediately of such defect or risk, as required by sections 15(b)(3) and (4) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2064(b)(3) and (4).

11. GE did not file its Full Report with the Commission until February 25, 2009. GE recalled the Range on April 8, 2009. By that time, GE was aware of an additional eight reports of harness and wiring overheating in the back of the Range, including five in which the consumer reported that the unit or wiring caught fire. GE failed to update the Commission regarding these new incidents.

GE DISHWASHERS

12. Between July 2003 and December 2006, GE manufactured approximately 174,000 stainless steel tub dishwashers (the Dishwasher). The Dishwasher was sold through department and appliance stores nationwide for approximately \$750 to \$1,400 between July 2003 and October 2010.

13. The Dishwasher was sold under brand name of GE Profile or GE Monogram. The Dishwasher is a "consumer product" "distributed in commerce," as those terms are defined or used in sections 3(a)(5), (8), and (11) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2052(a)(5), (8), and (11). At all relevant times, GE was a "manufacturer" of the Dishwasher, as such term is defined or used in sections 3(a)(11) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2052(a)(11).