

Energy Technology Connections: Your Law Firm Link to Industry News

AUGUST 2014

In the August 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. We hope to see many of you at this year's NextWave Greentech Investing conference. For more information, see our Event Highlights below. 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](#).

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Leaders in the News

Our client, enVerid Systems, a Houston-based developer of energy-saving HVAC technologies, is one of four companies selected to receive up to \$6 million of Department of Energy funding to help businesses cut energy costs through improved efficiency. enVerid's project will involve retrofitting building ventilation systems with modules that remove indoor air pollutants such as carbon dioxide, resulting in significant energy savings. For more information on the project, please see the Department of Energy's [press release](#).

We would also like to congratulate our client, Sanergy, for their recent receipt of the Fonds Suez Environnement Initiatives — Institut de France Prize. Sanergy was selected from over 30 finalists in the "Social Enterprise Award" category, given to entrepreneurs in the fields of water access, water treatment, and waste management. Sanergy designs and manufactures low-cost, high-quality sanitation facilities throughout Africa and converts waste into useful byproducts, such as fertilizer, and other renewable energy sources. For more on Sanergy's innovative model and work on sanitation, please visit its [website](#).

Washington Update

On July 10, the House passed its fiscal year 2015 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. This measure would increase funding for the Department of Energy's fossil energy programs while reducing renewable energy spending by about \$111 million. Before passing the bill, House representatives included several amendments that would oppose President Obama's energy agenda. The legislation is currently under consideration by the Senate.

Furthermore, on July 15, the House Appropriations Committee approved a fiscal year 2015 spending bill for the Interior Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, and related agencies. The measure would increase Interior Department funding for oil and gas permitting and inspections on Bureau of Land Management land as well as funding for fighting and preventing wildfires. The package would reduce the Environmental Protection

Agency's budget by \$717 million, about 9%. The overall bill would amount to \$30.2 billion, a \$162 million increase from the fiscal year 2014 enacted level.

Both the Senate and the House have also seen the introduction of a number of energy-related pieces of legislation. For example, Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) introduced legislation (S. 2573) on July 9 to increase and extend the tax credit for properties with hydrogen vehicle refueling stations and to increase the investment credit for more efficient fuel cells. In addition, on July 10, Representative Peter Welch (D-VT) introduced the American Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act (H.R. 5072). The measure would establish a federal renewable electricity standard for retail electricity suppliers and a federal energy efficiency resource standard for electricity and natural gas suppliers.

Congress will be in recess for the month of August.

Event Highlights

On August 5, 2014, Mintz Levin is looking forward to being a part of the [NextWave Greentech Investing](#) conference in Menlo Park, California, for the second year in a row. Hosted by [Greentech Media](#), the conference is an annual gathering of leading investors, entrepreneurs, and senior corporate decision-makers to chart a new way forward in the greentech market. Building on the success of the inaugural conference in 2013, the 2014 conference will not only discuss successful investing in clean energy technology and services, but will also delve deeper into active areas such as solar power, electric utility business, cleanweb, and clean energy project finance. Sahir Surmeli (Co-chair of Mintz Levin's [Energy Technology Practice](#)) will be contributing as a panelist, discussing the energy IPO market during the session entitled "The NextWave Paths to Exit." Some of the many notable speakers and sponsors include Rob Day (Conference Chair and Partner at leading energy technology investor [Black Coral Capital](#)), Henrik Holland (Ventures Principal at [Shell Technology](#)), Mike Allman (Former Chairman, President, and CEO at [Southern California Gas Company](#)), Nancy Pfund (Managing Partner at [DBL Investors](#)), and Scott Clavenna (CEO of [Greentech Media](#)).

There is still time to register for this event! [To do so, click here](#), and use the code "MINTZ15" at check out to receive a 15% discount on your conference pass.

In addition, on August 6, Mintz Levin and ML Strategies will be hosting the New England Clean Energy Council (NECEC) 2014 Legislative Session Roundup in the Boston office. This event is part of NECEC's Policy Series. NECEC Vice President of Policy & Government Affairs Janet Gail Besser and NECEC state coordinators will provide an overview of key clean energy legislation that has emerged from the 2014 state legislative sessions. Come learn what new legislation will mean for the clean energy industry and what to expect in the coming year. For more information and to register for this event, [click here](#).

Innovator Profile

Recently, a team of Princeton scientists published exciting new solar energy research in the field of photovoltaic energy storage. Using standard photovoltaic solar panels to power a set of electrocatalytic reaction cells, scientists James White, Jake Herb, Jerry Kaczur, et al. were able to produce formates — energy-storing salt compounds — at a conversion rate far higher than the best previous results, and indeed higher than the conversion efficiency of natural photosynthesis. Specifically, the research team reported a "solar energy to fuel thermionic conversion efficiency above 1.8%," or energy storage nearly twice as efficient as photosynthesis and nine times as efficient as the next closest findings.

These results point to a potentially major advance in the way photovoltaic technologies store the energy that they harness from the sun. The issue of energy storage — critically important for renewables like wind and solar that deal with fluctuating power availability — has long hampered the advancement of solar energy, with existing electro-chemical batteries lagging far behind advancements in photovoltaic technologies. According to Jim Lane, editor and publisher of *Biofuels Digest*, "The project confirmed that renewable power, in this case solar, worked as a power source, and that the intermittent, sometimes-unpredictable nature of renewable sources did not negatively impact process efficiency." With prospects for commercialization and widespread adoption on the horizon, the findings give hope for significantly improved solar energy storage in the not-so-distant future.

The scientists' article, "Photons to formate: Efficient electrochemical solar energy conversion via reduction of carbon dioxide," appears in the September 2014 edition of the *Journal of CO2 Utilization*. You can preview the article [here](#).

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 & Clean Technology Matters](#).

Upcoming Events

NextWave Greentech Investing 2014

August 5, 2014
Menlo Park, CA

[More Info »](#)

New England Clean Energy Council (NECEC) 2014 Legislative Session Roundup

August 6, 2014
Boston, MA

[More Info »](#)

MRES Renewable Energy Storage 2014

August 19 – 21, 2014
Boston, MA

[More Info »](#)

The Soft Grid

September 10 – 11, 2014
Menlo Park, CA

[More Info »](#)

Water Innovation Summit

September 23 – 24, 2014
Berkeley, CA

[More Info »](#)

VERGE

October 27 – 30, 2014
San Francisco, CA

[More Info »](#)

Forum 20/20: Innovation and the Future of Cleantech

October 29, 2014
Boston, MA

[More Info »](#)

Cleantech Tour of China 2014

November 2 – 7, 2014
China

[More Info »](#)

US Solar Market Insight 2014

December 9 – 10, 2014
San Diego, CA

[More Info »](#)

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