

Patent Searching Tips for the Energy Industry

One database of earlier patent publications is www.espacenet.com where you can do an informal search to get a better feel for how new your invention is, or look for competitors' patents, before incurring professional fees.*

All patent publications are classified according to their technology. One option when searching for patent publications is to limit the search by technology classification. In **Espacenet**, the European classification system, technologies for obtaining oil and gas from wells generally uses the **prefix E21B**. Therefore including this prefix in the CPC search field on www.espacenet.com will limit the results to patent publications so classified.

Other useful classifications in the oil and gas industry include:

- F16L1/12 Laying or reclaiming pipes on or under water
- C09K8 Chemical compositions for drilling or treating boreholes or wells
- G01V1 Seismic or acoustic prospecting or detecting

For renewable technology, a number of suitable classifications are listed here:

http://www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/green_inventory

In all cases, the classifications can be even more focused on the specific technologies of interest by reviewing the classification tree here:

http://worldwide.espacenet.com/eclsrch?locale=en_EP&classification=ecla

Note, other types of public disclosures are relevant to the validity of subsequently filed patents, not just earlier patent publications. Espacenet and other databases have limitations on the type of documents that can be found (for example those younger than 18 months are not normally on public record). HGF are not responsible for the completeness of these databases.

*** Do remember however, that locating patents and their legal effect is complex, and if commercial decisions are based on patent searches, we recommend conducting them and analysing the results professionally, and we would be happy to assist you with this.**