

## Patent Law Alert—U.S. to Discontinue Printing Paper Patents

03.08.2023 by [Mark Montague](#)



All U.S. patents have been printed on paper since the first U.S. patent issued on July 31, 1790. That patent, signed by President George Washington, covered a process of making potash (used in fertilizer). Over 11 million U.S. patents have since issued ... all officially printed.\*

This is about to change. On April 18, 2023, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will start issuing the official copy of patent grants in electronic format as “electronic patent grants” (eGrants).

The USPTO announced this change in a [February 27, 2023 press release](#). The purpose is to save paper and to shave off several weeks of time it takes to publish the printed version of patents.

The soon-to-be old-fashioned bound paper version will still be available during a limited time transition period. Otherwise, to obtain a printed version of the patent, patentees and the public will have the option to (a) print a copy from the eGrant website free of charge, (b) order for a “nominal” fee a *ceremonial paper copy* issued by the USPTO,

which will indicate that it is a ceremonial copy of a patent that was officially issued in electronic form, (c) order a *certified copy* for a fee, or (d) order a *presentation copy* of the first page of the patent for a fee.

For additional information, see the [eGrants webpage](#) and the [eGrants FAQs](#).

This may be the end of an era, but we applaud the USPTO's decision to follow in the footsteps of what many other countries are already doing. However, we will miss the weekly receipt in the mail of our clients' original patents.

For further information, please contact [Mark Montague](#) or your CLL attorney.

\* See [other U.S. patenting milestones](#).

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