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Memorial Day

“Tip of the Month”

Inventor’s Notebook . . . A How-To Guide

The US Patent System is a *first-to-invent* system . . . thus, it is important that you inventive types keep accurate notebooks on your various inventions. Under the US system, notebooks are important evidence of invention when two or more people independently invent similar devices and each applies for a patent at about the same time. Where a US patent bestows certain exclusive property rights on an inventor, evidence of inventorship, i.e. a notebook, may be the deciding factor as to who is entitled to the patent. The following are rules to follow when keeping your inventor’s notebook.

1. Use a bound notebook (not a loose-leaf binder).
2. Make all entries in ink.
3. Make no erasures. “Cancel” an error by a line neatly drawn through the mistake. Make the correct entry and then initial and date the correction in the adjacent margin.
4. Record your experimental data (and observations) when they are collected (made). Date each entry.
5. Use the past tense to describe experimental work. Explain all abbreviations or terms that are not universally accepted.
6. Clearly label ideas and research proposals in order to differentiate them from experimental work actually performed. State in detail how you propose to carry out your idea or research proposal.
7. Leave no blank spaces between successive entries in your notebook. “Cancel” all blank spaces with diagonal lines drawn completely across the space. Initial and date your “Cancellation” in the adjacent margin.
8. Sign and date each page of your notebook when it is complete.
9. Have the pages of your notebook witnessed as soon as possible after their completion, by a person who is not the inventor or co-inventor of the experiment being witnessed, but who understands the objectives of the experiment. Whenever possible, this person should actually have seen the performance of the experiment.
10. Make no changes or insertions on a page after it has been signed and witnessed.
11. Maintain safe custody of the notebooks. They should be safeguarded in a manner that prevents theft or unauthorized access.

We can provide you with the necessary review and recommendations to help you protect your valuable patent rights, including crucial licensing recommendations. To set up a review, call us at 668-1971 or contact us through the internet at *Meslaw @ aol.com*.

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