

# Why Not Patent That Invention Yourself?

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Two years ago, *FARM SHOW* (Vol. 7, No. 6, 1983) wrote about an inventor who files and executes his own patents without the aid of a patent attorney. He's successfully patented 18 inventions on his own and encourages other farmer-inventors to do the same.

Here's a report from C.F. Marley, Kokomis, Ill., who, after reading that story, decided to go for a "do-it-yourself" patent on his new Safe-T-Sweep invention for cleaning chimneys without having to climb up on the roof. He discovered that it can be done — that you don't necessarily need a patent attorney to obtain a strong, viable patent. Here's how he did it the low-cost, "do-it-yourself" way:

After reading in *FARM SHOW* how inventor Joe Molitorisz files and executes patents on his own inventions, I decided to give his do-it-yourself method a try with my new Safe-T-Sweep invention. It was a totally new experience. I was surprised to discover both that it can be done, and that the patent office is extremely cooperative in assisting inexperienced do-it-yourselfers such as myself.

My first step was to send for a booklet called "General Information Concerning Patents". It's available from the Superintendent of Printing Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 for \$3 and gives many helpful tips. It also contains blank forms for the various steps involved. I made use of these.

I spent \$50 to run a patent search for inventions similar to mine. Firms that do this advertise in *Popular Science* and similar magazines. I used copies of these existing patents as a guide in writing up my description and also to determine if my invention had exclusive features not claimed in any of these existing similar patents. Satisfied that I had exclusive claims, I went ahead and wrote and rewrote my application, filling in different wording and claims for my invention but following the basic order of the sample documents. The first application, I discovered, doesn't have to be perfectly worded since patent examiners carefully examine the written application, pointing out mistakes and suggesting how to correct them. The important thing in writing your claims is to spell out exactly what your invention does that existing patented inventions similar to it don't do. What claims can you make for it that aren't covered in existing "state of the art"?

For drawings, I contacted a local draftsman who works for an engineering firm. He did them on his own, freelance. Then, when submitting the application, I used Xerox copies of the drawings and put my informal lettering on them. The drawings, as done by the draftsman,

were according to patent office specifications spelled out in their general information booklet.

After I had everything in as good shape as possible, I bundled it up and sent it to the patent office, along with the required filing fee of \$150.

In a few months, I had a reply. The examiner explained that, while no claims were allowable as presented, three claims would be allowed if they were rewritten. The big surprise to me was that the examiner, using red pencil, wrote in approximately how the claims should read. With that good help, I then rewrote the claims as he had indicated and resubmitted them. Once a patent is rejected, it is my understanding that the applicant has three months to fix it up and send it back. If you can't get it shaped up yourself, you could, of course, go to a patent attorney for help. But I was able to work things out on my own, thanks to a lot of help from the patent office itself.

Several weeks after sending in the reworked application, I received a phone call from the examiner saying the claims still needed a bit more revision. He even went to the trouble of suggesting how to reword the application to make it clear and acceptable. I okayed his suggested changes on the phone and, in a few days, received written confirmation of the changes we'd agree on.

This left only the drawings and lettering to be corrected as a final step. Here, too, the patent office was helpful, providing a list of qualified persons who could do the fancy lettering. In my case, however, I was able to locate a fellow locally who does lettering freelance so I had him do it.

I confess that I was extremely hesitant about going for a do-it-yourself patent. Now that I've tried it, I can truthfully say it can be done. I couldn't be more pleased with the outcome and thank *FARM SHOW* for putting me in touch with a money-saving idea. The excellent cooperation I received from the patent office, and the examiner assigned to my case, still amazes me. My total cost for the do-it-yourself patent was right at \$550. This includes \$150 for filing, \$50 for the patent search, \$95 for drawings, and a \$250 "issue fee" paid to the patent office when my patent was issued.

Other farmer-inventors may encounter an entirely different experience, and their applications may involve factors that only a good patent attorney can best resolve. All I can speak for is my own experience. In fact, I've got another new invention in the hopper and am planning once again to go the "do-it-yourself" route in getting it patented.



## Marley's Safe-T-Sweep Invention

The new Safe-T-Sweep invented and patented by C.F. Marley operates from ground level, utilizing a specially designed weighted brush suspended by a bracket above the chimney top. The weighted brush is moved up and down by means of a cable which you operate from ground level, allowing you to easily sweep the chimney every week or two without having to climb onto the roof.

Kit includes the bonnet, brush and cable — all made of stainless steel — for 10 in. dia.

round chimneys. Custom kits are available for other diameter chimneys, and for square masonry chimneys.

With the issuance of a patent, Marley would like to license Safe-T-Sweep to interested manufacturers. Meanwhile, he's having it custom manufactured. Retail for \$140.

For more information, contact: *FARM SHOW* Followup, C.F. Marley, Marley Products, Rt. 2, Box 165, Nokomis, Ill. 62075 (ph 217 563-2588).

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The butane-powered Magic Match is just under 8-in. long and gives 2,000 lights on a single fill. You refill it with readily-available butane when empty.

Sells for \$9.95, plus \$1 for shipping.



**Magic Match gives 2,000 lights on a single fill.**

For more information, contact: *FARM SHOW* Followup, J.D. Lawson, Inc., R.R. 1, Box 83, Leesburg, Ind. 46538 (ph 219 453-3735).