

Intellectual Property Activities

Intellectual Property Strategy

The Osaka Gas Group positions intellectual property rights as an important management resource. At the same time, the Group takes proactive steps to secure and utilize intellectual property rights in concert with its business and technology development strategies.

Strategically Acquiring Intellectual Property Rights

In order to build strong patent coverage, we use patent portfolio management* and other techniques, focusing on applying for patents for technologies in domains that are vital to our business and technology development strategies. For example, in fuel cells and other residential gas cogeneration technologies, we strategically apply for patents for catalytic technologies, system technologies, etc.

In the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015, the Group submitted 469 patent applications.

* Patent portfolio management is designed to support business strategies by building strong patent coverage, filling in technological gaps by developing new technologies and acquiring patents.

Effective Utilization of Intellectual Property Rights

We hold a growing number of patents in gas production, transportation, and transmission, along with gas equipment, cogeneration, and material technologies for residential and commercial use. In particular, we have increased the number of patents significantly in the field of cogeneration, which has been designated an important field in our business strategy. In gas production and transmission, we hold patents in LNG tank technologies and excavation pipelines; in residential gas appliances we hold patents for mist saunas and gas stoves; in commercial gas equipment we hold patents in gas air conditioning and industrial burners; and in materials technology we hold patents in fine materials such as fluorene, as well as carbon materials. The Osaka Gas Group utilizes intellectual property rights across all of its businesses, and actively licenses them to other companies.

As of March 31, 2015 the Osaka Gas Group holds 3,305 patents, an increase of 185 over the same time in the previous year.

Acquiring and Protecting Trademark Rights

The Osaka Gas Group strategically obtains trademarks for the services and products it provides in order to build its corporate brand. As of March 31, 2015, the Group held 970 registered trademarks.

Examples of registered trademarks in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015

スマートコンロ
"Smart Konro"

Residential gas kitchen stove with smartphone connectivity
Registration No. 5696620

Vivace
[ビバチェ]

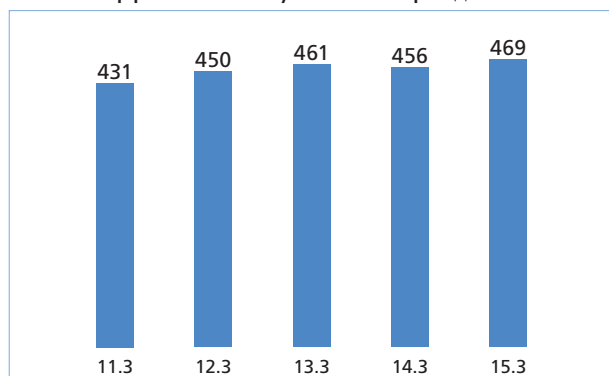
Gas fan heater with air purification feature
Registration No. 5703705

Strengthening Intellectual Property throughout the Group

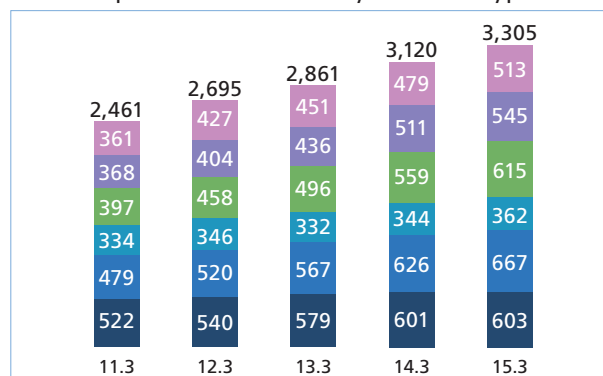
We employ a variety of educational and instructional tools to further improve Osaka Gas Group employees' understanding of intellectual property rights. For example, instructors from both inside and outside the Company conduct training sessions based on both goals and employee career level. We also distribute e-mail magazines with the latest news on intellectual property and explanations of important items to be observed when conducting business activities.

Other efforts are centered on reducing the risks of infringement of intellectual property rights belonging to other companies or infringement of our own intellectual property rights, including full investigations of the Group's trademarks.

Patent Applications by the Group (applications)



The Group's Patent Portfolio by Business Type (number)



■ Gas production, distribution, and supply ■ Residential gas appliance
■ Commercial and industrial gas equipment ■ Cogeneration
■ Materials technology ■ Other