



AMEP CLIENT PROFILE

Aksik Heat Distribution System Develops Prototype with Assistance from AMEP

Gambell, AK

Company Profile

Aksik Heat Distribution System is a start-up company founded for the purpose of developing a clip-on radiator fin for boiler-fired baseboard heating systems. The family-owned business employs 2 people at its facility in Gambell, Alaska.

Situation

Aksik's owner, Edmond Apassingok, lives in the remote community of Gambell, Alaska, on St. Lawrence Island which lies in the northern Bering Sea between Russia and North America. During one particularly cold winter, Apassingok's baseboard radiant heating system couldn't put out enough heat in his home. One room had 8 feet of exposed baseboard heat pipe, and only 4 feet of radiator fins on that pipe. Mr. Apassingok thought, "If only I had a section of radiator fins that I could clip onto the pipe, I could extract more heat from my system." He made a crude prototype with his brother, Merle, and turned to the Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership (AMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help in protecting his idea and turning it into a manufacturing business.

Solution

AMEP coached Mr. Apassingok through the process of submitting a provisional patent, from drawings to photographs and descriptive text and then used a Visioning process to extract relevant details and follow through on thought processes to develop complete business strategies. AMEP also helped Mr. Apassingok network with stakeholders and secure free initial testing of his prototype at the Cold Climate Housing Research Center, which is providing pro bono testing because of the potential benefits of lowering energy costs for consumers throughout Alaska.

Mr. Apassingok received a provisional patent to temporarily protect the idea. This afforded him the ability to confidently promote his idea to first stage investors and potential technical partners. He developed a business plan that identifies sources and uses of funding at each stage of development. AMEP assisted on the networking side with Round 2 prototype manufacturing and product testing. With AMEP's guidance, Mr. Apassingok his company to receive first stage funding from investors and an array of energy efficiency grants to move his company forward.

Results

- Realized \$5,500 in cost savings.
- Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial

"A lot of people said they liked my idea, but AMEP worked diligently over a long period of time to advance my concept into a business. This tangible assistance is what is needed to capitalize on the many good business ideas we see in rural Alaska."

-Edmond Apassingok, Principal

Interested in learning more about how the Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Inc. can offer services to your growing business?

We are conveniently located mid-town at 701 Sesame St., Ste. 200, Anchorage, Alaska. Contact us at 907.279.2637 or information@ak-mep.org.