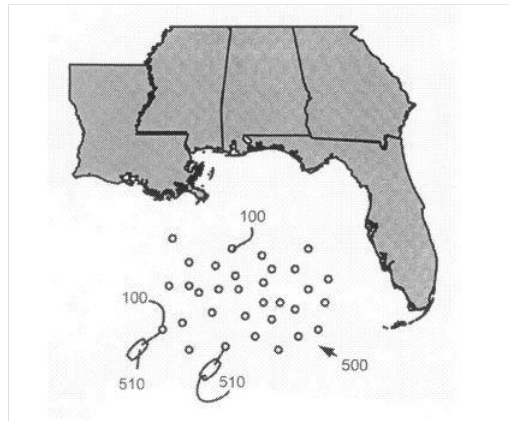




# Bored With PCs, Bill Gates Sets His Sights On Controlling the Weather

Microsoft's chairman is part of a joint patent filing for using fleets of vessels to stop hurricanes via geoengineering  
By [Jeremy Hsu](#) Posted 07.10.2009 at 11:11 am



**Bill Gates' Plan to Stop Hurricanes** A diagram from one of the newly disclosed Gates and Myhrvold patent filings, depicting a deployment of hurricane-suppression vessels in the Gulf of Mexico. via [TechFlash](#)

Truly this is the age of Greenfinger: Billionaire Bill Gates has patented the idea to halt hurricanes by decreasing the surface temperature of the ocean.

The patent calls for a large fleet of specially equipped ships which would mix warm water from the ocean surface with colder water down below, according to five new patents that include Microsoft's chairman as a co-inventor. That could then reduce or perhaps eliminate the heat-driven condensation which hurricanes feed upon, thus significantly reducing their intensity.

Patent-watcher "theadp" first spotted the new patent filings, and told [TechFlash](#) that the scheme reminded him of something Mr. Burns might have concocted in "The Simpsons" -- if the fictional industrialist hadn't already blown his master plan on blocking out the sun.

The hurricane-stopper plan apparently hatched from a meeting of Intellectual Ventures, a patent house which regularly gathers scientists and technologists to brainstorm together. TechFlash notes that the official filings came through an Intellectual Ventures affiliate, Searete LLC.

One of the five patents also suggests [how to pay](#) for the massive seagoing fleet, including selling insurance policies in hurricane-prone areas -- so much for the billionaire backer.

This represents just the latest in a long line of geoengineering proposals aimed at taming Mother Nature, whether aimed at climate change or hurricanes. Even the prestigious National Academy of Sciences held a workshop in June on geoengineering, although that [ended with disagreements](#) on whether the cure might be worse than the problem.

We previously looked at other plans regarding hurricanes, such as sending supersonic jets [slicing into the eye](#) of the giant storms. But for now, it's likely that coastal cities should at least invest in more grounded ideas to [become hurricane-proof](#).

[via [Slashdot](#)]

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26 COMMENTS

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EcoHolic

07/10/09 at 3:30 pm

Dear Editor in Chief:

Do you have editors? Is Microsoft Word spell checker enough for you? Does anyone care about good writing and editing anymore?

The first two articles that I have read on PopSci today, both had obvious mistakes. Not grammar purist kind of mistakes, or creative wordplay, but clear errors -- in the headlines, teases, and ledes, no less. And, this is not an isolated incident...an everyday thing.

This article (tease): "Microsoft's chairman is part of a joint patent filing..."

Did you mean "joint patent filing"?

And, the Google Chrome OS article:

3rd P, 2nd sentence: "Man of us already rely on Google..."

How about "Many of us..."

I'm available for hire (also a Drupal admin).

-----  
No-Pun.com

[link to this comment](#)

Jeremy Hsu

07/10/09 at 3:59 pm

Whoops, that shouldn't be -- fixed the dek for this story.

[link to this comment](#)



skillet

07/10/09 at 4:57 pm

2 bad their aren't a editor 4 coments. Why do people get bothered by things of little impotence?

[link to this comment](#)



EcoHolic

07/10/09 at 5:26 pm

I would say that good writing and editing is important. If you don't believe that is true, it is likely that you have been conditioned to accept poor quality.

My standards are higher.

[link to this comment](#)

ford2go

07/11/09 at 12:13 am

Maybe grammatical criticism is the reason that most articles no longer allow comments. :)

Actually, I've been looking for an excuse to mention that fact.

As for the grammer, I think it's more typos than anything else. I get a lot more concerned about the weak science /tech presented in some articles.

But then, this info is all FREE. I guess that it's up to us to decide what it's worth.

[link to this comment](#)



whitesites

07/11/09 at 1:22 am

EcoHolic

I understand your concerns with spelling, but in todays age of texting and all, its more important to get a point across than to use correct grammar.

The content is more important that spelling. PopSci writes some decent articles on tech that are written at a higher level of sophistication. I would rather read these articles full of grammar errors, than to read the crap on MSN, that uses correct grammar, but serves up the content at a 3rd grade level.

Being able to spell is nothing to be proud about. Being able to communicate and discuss complex concepts is.

[link to this comment](#)



whitesites

<http://prospornutrition.net/?a=633808700294218750>

[link to this comment](#)

07/11/09 at 1:25 am

About Gates plan, I don't see how it would make a large enough impact. You would need thousands of boats, doing this, and then don't the boats release energy and heat from their engines that would counter balance the benefits of this?

<http://prospornutrition.net/?a=633808700294218750>

[link to this comment](#)

BobDobbs404

07/11/09 at 3:33 am

@Ecoholic: What's up with being such a grammar nazi? At least it's a non-biased analysis of a Half-baked pipe dream some billionaire thought would work.

I'd rather have good science than some biased unintelligent articles from some imbecile such as Kent Hovind - leading creationist pseudo-scientist - of the Discovery Institute.

Hovind believes that the cyanide-releasing compound Laetrile is a "cancer cure" and argues that the US government is conspiring to suppress a cure for cancer. Also, he stated that carbon dating — a method used by scientists to estimate the age of various objects and events — is unreliable.

In debate with Massimo Pigliucci - evolutionary biologist - heard Hovind try explain his understanding of evolution "to convince the audience that evolutionists believe humans came from rocks" and at Hovind's assertion that biologists believe humans "evolved from bananas."

[link to this comment](#)

bdhoro87

from coral gables, fl

07/11/09 at 9:15 am

Seriously the last sentence in this article says it all. The way to prevent and stop all the damage from hurricanes is not to magically stop hurricanes, but to have the proper preparations in places where hurricanes are likely to hit. We probably will never figure out how to actually stop a hurricane from forming, and even if we do, who knows all the dangerous side effects that could occur.

The entire world is just so hypocritical these days - we say that human interference has disrupted nature and the best solutions we can come up with are larger scale intentional disruptions of nature. Good idea! (sarcasm).

Oh and I am tending to agree that this blog doesn't have editors, and I have posted a few corrections myself to articles on this site, but it is true that usually the errors are minor. Anyway, I keep coming back because even with the slight errors the articles are informative and work well at getting their point across. It is just kinda annoying that more of the comments now are about the first commenter than the article.

[link to this comment](#)

jimbofromga

07/11/09 at 9:44 am

To ecoholic, if you are going to be such a grammar nazi, perhaps you should pull the beam out of your own spellchecker. I believe you meant "leads" not "ledes". Nonetheless, your railings against mis-spellings have left you open to the same criticism you so easily dish out. Personally, I care more about the content of the matter, not on how well a turd is polished.

[link to this comment](#)

jimbofromga

07/11/09 at 10:01 am

By the way, as to the content of this article, it is rather disconcerting that we would want to end hurricanes. I've been through several of them, the first in the Navy out in the middle of the Bermuda Triangle! They are destructive, but like Kali of the Hindu religion, it is a necessary aspect of creation. What sort of damage would we do to the ecosystem by our attempting to tame nature? I suspect that not a lot of thought has gone into this, since not a lot of thought has ever gone into the results of every other

[link to this comment](#)

time we try and change nature.

[link to this comment](#)

Cookiees453

07/11/09 at 12:07 pm

Taming nature will save lives. Let us control Hurricanes and Tornado's. I'm all for a Star Trek Utopia, and in that Star Trek Utopia humans have conquered all weather on Earth through technology. Humankind will get to a point where their technology will be able to control all forces of the Earth, and eventually space. I hope I at least live to see the first part.

On a side note, the content of an article is more important than a misspelled word, just my opinion though. Anyway keep up the great work, these articles are a great read.

[link to this comment](#)

jimbfromga

07/11/09 at 12:18 pm

Hurricanes are beautiful displays of power in which nature reminds us how insignificant we really are. I've been through several at sea and on land, and to tell you the truth, those that get killed by them are doing the world a favor by dying off. Proper preparation will stop most of the devastation, and common sense the rest. But let's say that we did stop hurricanes, what will that do? How will that affect the cycle of nature? Will the means of doing so do more harm than the prevention of hurricanes? Do hurricanes serve a purpose? I, for one, revel in the majesty of hurricanes and I also think that the ability to stop them will somehow result in even greater damage to our ability to survive. But if we do stop them, we will have stopped one of the most beautiful storms you will ever see.

[link to this comment](#)

jerrydd

07/11/09 at 1:14 pm

jerrydd

This would take thousands of ships in the gulf and another 2 batches in the Atlantic just to cover the US coasts.

A big problem is the downpipe wouldn't let the ship cover much ocean each and so many would be a huge waste of resources, personnel, not to mention fuel as most of the places have currents requiring fuel to stay on station 8 months/yr.

Just not going to happen.

[link to this comment](#)

nola resident

07/11/09 at 1:38 pm

I live in New Orleans. This plan is absurd. The hurricane did not destroy my city. The levee system failure did. I do not worry about hurricanes. Only about crappy levees. How does a boat on the water survive the hurricane it is trying to weaken? How much damage does the pump cause? Will it suck up fish, coral, and other important sea life? What happens to a hurricane when the water is warm at the bottom of the gulf? Will the mixing of the water change the medium temperature of the gulf? Warm water will not just simply sit at the bottom where it was put, it will mix in and rise. Who are these so called scientists? What other insane patents does Bill Gates hold? Why won't he do anything about all the landfills he owns? Why not build a working levee system, and then move on to picking up all the floating trash in the ocean? He could put it in all his landfills. Oh yeah, this is the same guy who wants to exterminate most of us with support of the other billionaires.

[link to this comment](#)

bill hill

07/11/09 at 8:16 pm

All this talk makes me have to poop. gosh, sometimes right before i poop, i like to read poorly wrote books and stuff, and make fun of theyre spelling. Then, some gas slips out first and then i know if its going to be a good poop, by the smell of it. If it smells ripe, i know im in for a real treat! oh lord, how i love to poop reading a good article about greenhouse gases and other emissions.....awhhh ahhh. that felt great.

[link to this comment](#)

[link to this comment](#)



Bigfoot

07/12/09 at 12:26 am

Au Revoir coastal ecosystems, I suppose your death is necessary. Damn humans.

[link to this comment](#)



NOM

07/12/09 at 6:29 pm

This is part of Bill Gate's plan to take over the world. Once his weather control system is operational, he can use it to generate hurricanes and hold the world hostage.

Seriously though, hurricanes are part of the Earth's natural mechanism for removing excess heat. Stop them and the heat will build up - in this case by spreading the heat through the ocean depth. If the mixing stops, the heat will rise. The surface will get warmer, so hurricanes are more likely.

[link to this comment](#)

meyaht

07/16/09 at 2:47 pm

I say we let nature do it's thing. If you don't want to die due to a certain type of weather, relocate. Humans have these things called legs, walking is free.

[link to this comment](#)

ecobase

07/17/09 at 2:12 pm

Wow. Isn't that something! Very neat idea but I guess very very expensive. Are they going to do this for every hurricane that starts to form or only for the big ones?

Mira - <http://www.teeth-diseases.com>

[link to this comment](#)

gforcejim

07/17/09 at 3:45 pm

I am shocked that nobody has mentioned the potential source of increased hurricane activity: Global warming.

I'd say let's solve that problem, and many other current problems will go away.

[link to this comment](#)



Ruri

07/18/09 at 10:53 am

Gates controlling the weather why does that scare me so much?

[link to this comment](#)



Bubbeez

07/21/09 at 1:24 am

Yo gforce, way to interject in what WAS a non political discussion. Well, except for levee man who chooses to live below sea level.

AND...you worried Ruri who I take VERY seriously with her purple haired pig tail avi!

[link to this comment](#)

psciz

07/22/09 at 12:28 am

We're Sorry. Hurricane Stopper has encountered an error and must close. Send Error Report?

Allow or Deny?

[link to this comment](#)

goldy

07/23/09 at 9:49 am

This reminds me of Dr. Evil :) I should call it is unnecessary effort and waste of billions of dollars.

Jen @ <http://www.miningguide.net>

[link to this comment](#)



Q42

10/19/09 at 3:59 pm

If you ask me, this sounds like a seriously bad idea. We know that the vast majority of ocean life is found near the surface. Even assuming that a fleet of puny little ships could affect surface temperature across the entire Gulf of Mexico, if you start cooling off the surface to prevent hurricanes, what happens to the ecosystem there? What effect would such large-scale temperature changes have on ocean currents, etc.?

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