

Ecotality Files For Ch. 11 Bankruptcy Protection

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Ecotality, which makes charging systems for electric vehicles, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and wants to sell its assets in an auction.

Ecotality Inc. said it made the filing Monday in Arizona. The company had said in August that it might be forced into a sale or bankruptcy filing after disappointing sales and a suspension of payments from the federal government. It has also paid \$855,000 in back wages and damages to resolve an investigation by the Department of Labor into allegations that the company broke labor laws.

The San Francisco company makes charging and power-storage systems for electric vehicles under the Blink and Minit Charger brands, including charging stations for the Nissan Leaf. It also does testing for government agencies, auto makers and utilities.

Ecotality wants to sell its assets through a bankruptcy auction, which the bankruptcy court must approve. The company also said Nissan will allow it to borrow as much as \$1.3 million. The court will also review that proposed loan.

Ecotality has received more than \$100 million in funding from the Department of Energy since 2009. The company has also received funding from the state of California and from Australia.

The Energy Department suspended payments to Ecotality after the company said in August that it might not be able to meet its obligations to the agency's electric vehicle program if it couldn't find new financing.

Ecotality's revenue nearly doubled to \$54.7 million in 2012. The company took an annual loss of \$9.6 million, narrower than its \$22.5 million loss in 2011.

But the company said last month that it was unable to sell enough commercial electric vehicle equipment to sustain operations in the second half of the year. It also said it would miss the scheduled release later this year of a new Minit Charger product for industrial customers because of "unacceptable performance" during testing.

Shares of Ecotality fell 7 cents to close at 16 cents. The stock closed at \$1.46 on Aug. 9, the last business day before Ecotality said it might have to file for bankruptcy protection.

Source URL (retrieved on 04/21/2015 - 12:17am):

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Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2013/09/ecotality-files-ch-11-bankruptcy-protection>