

POWERING IT ALL

Vol. 3 Sept. 2025

Updates on PORTS site redevelopment

SODI Advancing Nuclear Industry in Southern Ohio with Support of Ohio Department of Development

The Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative (SODI) is designated by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as the local community reuse organization for the DOE former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PORTS) site in Pike County, Ohio. SODI receives personal property and clean and remediated land from the DOE site to leverage in regional economic diversification efforts. SODI activities at PORTS are transforming the site into an innovative energy generation complex, led by advanced nuclear technologies, that is co-located with hyperscale data centers and other high-volume industrial electricity users. This project is ushering in a resurgence in private sector development in southern Ohio, resulting in thousands of well-paying jobs and attracting billions of dollars in private capital investment.

SODI has received funding from the Ohio Department of Development to advance the nuclear industry in southern Ohio as part of site redevelopment. This work will be carried out in collaboration with Ohio University's PORTSfuture Program, Remington Road Group, and various local, regional, and state partners. Activities include:

- Developing an Ohio nuclear company directory
- Economic impacts of the current nuclear industry in Ohio
- Ohio nuclear supply chain localization and development to expand regional business opportunities
- Assembling site infrastructure inventory for developable locations beyond the DOE PORTS site to support supply chain growth/expansion in the region
- Determining advanced and specialized degrees and existing workforce resources for high-skill occupations needed by nuclear companies
- Assessing the higher education system's capabilities and needs to grow Ohio's nuclear enterprise
- Evaluating opportunities and strategies to address gaps in nuclear workforce readiness
- State and federal policy scan, assessment of policy and financing gaps, identifying investment pathways, and conducting policy and permitting analysis
- Deployment of findings with partners

Co-located industries at the PORTS site that are currently operational and linked to site reindustrialization include Centrus Energy Corp. centrifuge uranium enrichment production of High-Assay, Low-Enriched Uranium (HALEU) for use in developing fuel for advanced nuclear reactors and the Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride Conversion (DUF6) facility. DUF6 converts depleted uranium into a more stable form that is safer to store, reuse, or dispose and also produces hydrofluoric acid for use in various industrial applications. SODI's reindustrialization of the PORTS site is executed in partnership with DOE's Office of Environmental Management Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office (DOE EM PPPO), Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, private sector developers, consultants, and is supported by local and regional economic and workforce development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, elected officials, labor groups, community members, and a multitude of regional stakeholders.

Groundbreaking Report: ACE Training Center

The Appalachian Career Empowerment (ACE) Training Program, an innovative workforce development initiative led by USW Local 689 in partnership with SODI, broke ground on their new training center in Pike County, Ohio. Representatives from the offices of Governor Mike DeWine, U.S. Senators Jon Husted and Bernie Moreno, and Congressman David Taylor were in attendance, along with labor leaders, U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management officials, and community stakeholders.



Left to right: Joel Bradburne, Manager, DOE EM Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office; Kelli Johnson, District Director, Congressman David Taylor; Bonnie Ward, Southeast Ohio Regional Liaison for Gov. Mike DeWine; Bryn Stepp, Southeast Regional Director for US Senator Jon Husted; Juli Stephens, Southeast Regional Director for Senator Bernie Moreno; Andria Tipton, USW Local 689 President; Pete Coutts, Portsmouth Plant Manager DUF6 project; and Herman Potter, ACE Program Director, USW Local 689. Photo credit: U.S. Department of Energy

The center is dedicated to building the skilled workforce needed to power Appalachia's energy transformation. It will allow ACE to expand its efforts to help students and workers launch careers in advanced manufacturing and supply chain logistics through a nationally recognized curriculum from the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC). With the support of a federal grant, students can enroll at no cost in a program valued at more than \$2,500 and earn an industry-respected credential that gives them a competitive edge in today's job market. The curriculum provides a comprehensive foundation in advanced manufacturing, covering AI & Robotics, Hydraulics and Pneumatics, Management Principles, Blueprint Reading, and more.



Joel Bradburne, Manager, DOE EM Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office. Photo Credit: U.S. Department of Energy



Herman Potter, ACE Program Director, USW Local 689. Photo Credit: U.S. Department of Energy

“Advanced manufacturing continues to evolve, and with it comes the need for a workforce that is trained, adaptable, and forward-thinking. This new training center will allow even more students to enroll as demand increases.”

Herman Potter
ACE Program Director

In The News

Source: [U.S. Department of Energy, 8/19/25](#)

Ohio Nuclear Group Visit Highlights Portsmouth's Role in America's Energy Future

Leaders from the Portsmouth Site recently met with representatives from the Ohio Nuclear Development Authority (ONDA) during their first visit to the Portsmouth Site.

The visit underscored the Portsmouth Site's growing role in the nation's energy renaissance and its prime location for reindustrialization in conjunction with the local community's vision.

ONDA is a governor-appointed board Ohio lawmakers established in 2023 to boost research and development of advanced nuclear reactors, commercial isotope production, and nuclear waste reduction and storage technology.

The board seeks to foster innovative partnerships in the state — including Ohio's public institutions of higher education, private companies, federal laboratories and nonprofit organizations — to accomplish those goals.

ONDA has a unique interest in the Portsmouth Site and has engaged the community to prepare resources for a future workforce.



Portsmouth Site Lead Jeremy Davis, center, conducts a tour of the Portsmouth Site for members of the Ohio Nuclear Development Authority. The group discussed the legacy of the Portsmouth Site and the role the site will play in America's energy future.



Ohio Nuclear Development Authority members pose for a photo at the Portsmouth Site On-Site Waste Disposal Facility during a recent tour.

“Visiting the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, I was struck by the scale and progress of the cleanup efforts. What was once an enormous industrial complex tied to the uranium enrichment has been transformed and ready for future industrial reuse,” said Lei Raymond Cao, ONDA board member and professor at The Ohio State University. “It's a powerful example of how long term vision and sustained investment can turn legacy nuclear sites into opportunities for regional revitalization.”

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Read the full story from DOE's Office of Environmental Management [HERE](#).

Source: [U.S. Department of Energy, 8/12/25](#)

Department of Energy Announces Initial Selections for New Reactor Pilot Program

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) officially kicked off President Trump's Nuclear Reactor Pilot Program, announcing DOE will initially work with 11 advanced reactor projects to move their technologies towards deployment. DOE will work with industry on these 11 projects, with the goal to construct, operate, and achieve criticality of at least three test reactors using the DOE authorization process by July 4, 2026.

Today's initial selections represent an important step toward streamlining nuclear reactor testing and unleashes a new pathway toward fast-tracking commercial licensing activities.

“President Trump's Reactor Pilot Program is a call to action,” said Deputy Secretary of Energy James P. Danly. “These companies aim to all safely achieve criticality by Independence Day, and DOE will do everything we can to support their efforts.”

President Trump is committed to re-establishing the United States as a global leader in nuclear energy and securing a reliable, diversified, and affordable energy supply to drive American prosperity and technological advancement.

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Read the full story from DOE [HERE](#).

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To learn more about advanced nuclear technologies, visit our past webinars.



Both of these webinars are available at www.PORTSfuture.com/Webinars.

Don't forget to follow SODI on LinkedIn for project updates.

www.linkedin.com/company/southern-ohio-diversification

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