



Orano Opens Project IKE Office in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to Support Developing its American Uranium Enrichment Facility

New 40-person office in Oak Ridge leads the continuing development of Orano's planned multibillion-dollar uranium enrichment facility on restored Manhattan Project property.

OAK RIDGE, Tenn., June 5, 2025 – Orano USA and more than 100 federal, state, business, and regional leaders recently marked a major milestone for Project IKE, the company's development of America's new multibillion-dollar uranium enrichment facility, with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting opening the company's office in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Project IKE, the single largest investment in Tennessee's history, will advance America's low carbon energy future by producing enriched uranium to power today's nuclear reactors and next-generation designs, bolstering U.S. energy independence and national security.

"Oak Ridge is where history meets the future," said Jean-Luc Palayer, CEO of Orano USA. "Today, we stand on historic ground—where American ingenuity first unlocked the power of the atom. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright has correctly said that Artificial Intelligence is the Manhattan Project of our time. But we only lead in AI if we can power AI. With that in mind and with Project IKE here in Oak Ridge, we step forward on a new mission of equal consequence. We are developing an American enrichment facility that will fuel not just reactors, but the future—powering new technologies that will define the next century."

The event included speeches marking the milestone by Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn, Congressman Chuck Fleischmann, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Stuart McWhorter, State Senator Ken Yager, and Oak Ridge Mayor Warren Gooch.

The enrichment facility's development is in line with President Trump's recent executive orders regarding nuclear energy, which are intended to revitalize and expand the U.S. nuclear industry, aiming to quadruple nuclear electricity production by 2050.

"The announcement of a major global enrichment company opening its office in Oak Ridge, paired with President Trump's strong movement forward in nuclear energy, is about to change the world and change the world for the better," Governor Lee said. "Tennessee will lead this change."

Palayer emphasized that applying Orano's 60 years of nuclear expertise in America and its proven centrifuge technology can enable a quicker ramp up for production of advanced nuclear fuels, including high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) and low-enriched uranium (LEU/LEU+).

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“America needs new nuclear power,” said Palayer. “The world needs new nuclear power. And new nuclear power needs Tennessee and Project IKE in Oak Ridge.”

Located less than 10 miles from Orano’s selected Project IKE site near the Oak Ridge Horizon Center Industrial Park, this first group of office employees, including engineers, project managers, and licensing personnel, is in addition to the 300-person workforce expected to operate Orano’s uranium enrichment facility.

The new Oak Ridge office joins Orano’s 15 other sites in the United States including manufacturing facilities in North Carolina, canister operations in Kentucky, nuclear medicine research in Texas, and headquarters in Maryland.

Later this year, Orano is celebrating 60 years in the United States as one of the longest operating nuclear energy companies in the nation. For more than 40 years, Orano has reliably produced and supplied American reactors with enriched uranium. Orano’s Project IKE is designed to continue this performance from an American facility to provide a reliable, significant, domestic nuclear fuel supply for U.S. advanced reactors and the existing reactor fleet.

Orano’s planned uranium enrichment center in Oak Ridge is designed as a multi-structure commercial production site covering approximately 750,000 square feet, making it one of the largest in America.

Depending on federal funding and customers’ support, the facility will produce LEU/LEU+ to fuel existing commercial nuclear energy reactors and, potentially, HALEU to help develop and power advanced reactors.

Orano has already taken active steps to support the American market and foster energy independence by launching a 30% uranium enrichment capacity expansion at its operating Georges Besse 2 facility in France.

Learn more about Orano’s [Project IKE and the uranium enrichment facility](#).



Tennessee Governor Bill Lee joins Orano USA CEO Jean-Luc Palayer and more than 100 federal, state, business, and regional leaders in a ceremonial ribbon cutting to open Orano's new 40-person Project IKE Office in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, supporting the development of its American uranium enrichment facility. Pictured (r-l) Congressman Chuck Fleischmann, State Senator Ken Yager, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, Orano USA CEO Jean-Luc Palayer, U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Stuart McWhorter, and Oak Ridge Mayor Warren Gooch.

About Orano USA: Based in Bethesda, Maryland, with global headquarters in Paris, France, Orano is a leading technology and services provider for the commercial and federal nuclear industries. Orano specializes in uranium mining/conversion/enrichment, advanced reactor services, used nuclear fuel management and recycling, decontaminating and decommissioning radioactive components and facilities, federal site clean-up and closure, and developing nuclear medicines to fight cancer.

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