



## Orano Advances Project IKE with NRC Acceptance for Review of Uranium Enrichment License Application

*NRC review acceptance achieves key milestone on Project IKE, one of America's largest uranium enrichment developments for re-establishing a significant and reliable domestic nuclear energy fuel supply.*

**OAK RIDGE, Tenn., May 21, 2026** – Orano announced today that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has accepted the company's Project IKE license application for an accelerated 12-month review, marking a major step forward in developing the multibillion-dollar uranium enrichment facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The NRC review acceptance follows Orano's submission of Project IKE's technical licensing documentation and Environmental Report earlier this year.

NRC acceptance moves Orano's application into full technical review for granting a license to begin construction and to safely and securely operate the Project IKE uranium enrichment facility.

Unique in the industry, Orano's license application incorporates experience from many years of successful commercial operations with uranium enrichment centrifuges at its Georges Besse 2 facility in France—the same facility currently supplying American reactors with a reliable supply of nuclear fuel. Orano is also leveraging its construction experience with the ongoing 30% expansion in capacity underway at Georges Besse 2.

By providing a new U.S.-based source for large quantities of low-enriched uranium (LEU), Project IKE can play a key role in strengthening national energy security. The output from Orano's Project IKE facility alone can replace the enriched uranium America is currently importing from Russia.

Orano's \$5 billion development is supported by a \$900 million U.S. Department of Energy award to expand domestic LEU capacity as well as by the State of Tennessee's Nuclear Energy Fund. Together, this funding is significant for realizing Project IKE's production goals and closing the domestic nuclear fuel supply gap.

*"For 15 years Orano has used ETC centrifuges in France to reliably enrich and supply uranium for powering American reactors. Now, we are planning to generate that same secure nuclear fuel supply using the same proven technology and processes at our Project IKE facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee,"* said Jean-Luc Palayer, CEO of Orano USA. *"I commend my Project IKE team for their diligent work writing a high-quality license application, and I appreciate the energized NRC team's efforts and timely response for review acceptance. With the NRC's 12-month timeline and Orano's expertise, we are on a good path to begin enriching a significant amount of uranium at Project IKE in time to supply America's quickly increasing nuclear energy needs."*

*"This milestone represents the accomplishment of more than a year of dedicated work by the Project IKE team,"* said Lionel Antognelli, Project Director for Project IKE. *"It has been made possible through strong engagement with the NRC from the very beginning, supported by constant communication and monthly pre-application meetings that helped establish an efficient and collaborative licensing process."*

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Project IKE is located on a 624-acre parcel of unused former Manhattan Project land recently transferred from the Department of Energy to the City of Oak Ridge's Industrial Development Board. The 750,000-square-foot enrichment facility represents one of the largest capital developments in Tennessee's history and is expected to create more than 1,000 construction jobs and 300 long-term career positions, plus an extensive American supply chain based in the East Tennessee region.

Named for President Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower and his historic 1953 "Atoms for Peace" speech, Project IKE reflects the renewed momentum and investments for advancing nuclear energy technology in Oak Ridge, where American nuclear innovation began more than 80 years ago.

Learn more about Project IKE: <https://www.orano.group/usa/project-ike-enrichment>

Read the NRC announcement: [NRC Launches Accelerated Review of New U.S. Uranium Enrichment Facility to Strengthen Nuclear Fuel Supply](#)



*Concept rendering of Orano's planned Project IKE facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.*

**About Orano:** Based in Bethesda, MD, with global headquarters in Paris, France, Orano is a leading technology and services provider for the commercial and federal nuclear industries. Orano and its legacy companies have operated in the U.S. for more than 60 years, making it one of the longest serving nuclear energy companies in America. Orano is developing the Project IKE uranium enrichment facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and specializes in uranium mining/conversion/enrichment, used nuclear fuel storage and transport, used nuclear fuel recycling, federal site clean-up and closure, and developing nuclear medicines to fight cancer.

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