
Department of Energy

VP 100: Growth in solar means growth in Ohio

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DuPont is betting on major growth in the market for solar energy -- and therefore for its Tedlar film, a durable backing for silicon solar panels. | Photo Courtesy of DuPont

Market research company Solarbuzz reports that [global demand for solar power soared by 54 percent](#) in the second quarter of 2010. The research firm reports that in the United States, the annual number of [total watts installed](#) moved from 485 MW in all of 2009 to 2.3 GW as of June -- and DuPont sees further growth ahead.

"We see the industry growing in the range of 30 to 35 percent annually on a compounded basis over the next several years, and we expect it to grow rapidly beyond that as well," says John Odom, DuPont Global Business Director for Photovoltaic Fluoromaterials. DuPont projects its own sales to the photovoltaic solar industry at over \$1 billion this year and \$2 billion by 2014.

Jobs for Ohioans

In Ohio, the company is spending \$175 million to retrofit unused factory facilities in Circleville, Ohio. The factory will manufacture Tedlar polyvinyl fluoride film, widely used as a durable backsheet for photovoltaic panels. Together with an earlier \$120 million

expansion project, DuPont will more than double its production of Tedlar over 2008 numbers.

The retrofit operation, launched earlier this year, is supported through a \$50.7 million Advanced Energy Manufacturing Tax Credit under the [Recovery Act](#). The project also benefited from Ohio state incentives.

DuPont says the combination of state and federal incentives supported its choice to expand in Circleville.

"The investment DuPont has made in Ohio is creating and retaining hundreds of good jobs for Ohioans and is also solidifying the state as a global leader in solar energy technology," says Lisa Patt-McDaniel, Director of the Ohio Department of Development.

According to [data from the Department of Development](#), DuPont is a major employer in Circleville, which is located 45 minutes south of Columbus. The area has a strong manufacturing economy, but saw a 32.3 percent decrease in average manufacturing employment between 2003 and 2008.

Odom says the construction work will create about 230 jobs in Circleville. When the factory is finished, projected for September of 2011, the company expects to hire for 70 full-time jobs to operate the factory. The state of Ohio says 444 others will be retained at the site.

10 GW and the 1970s

When operating at full capacity, the factory will be able to make enough Tedlar to support backsheets production for up to 10 GW (10,000 MW) worth of solar panels annually.

"To put that into context, the market estimate for 2010 total is around 15-20 gigawatts," says Odom. "This is a very fast-growing market and this is a large block of capacity to support that growth"

Part of the reason DuPont is confident in its market outlook is that Tedlar has been used in producing backsheets for solar panels since the 1970s, Odom says.

"We have a very good view of how the industry's grown and also very good insight into how the industry can grow going forward," he says. "When the industry begins to attain grid parity... we actually expect the demand for photovoltaics to grow even faster."

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