

## East Tennessee Lands \$200 Million Solar Manufacturer

CLINTON, Tenn., Jan. 21 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Tennessee's Solar Initiative took another leap forward today with the announcement that Missouri-based Confluence Solar will invest \$200 million in a manufacturing, warehousing and distribution facility in Clinton, Tenn., near Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).

Confluence Solar manufactures high quality, mono-crystal silicon ingots that increase the efficiency and lower the cost of solar photovoltaic solar power generation.

The announcement by Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen comes on the heels of a rapid rise in capital investment in the state's solar industry as well as statewide growth in research and development, including:

- Construction of polysilicon manufacturing facilities near Cleveland, Tn., by German chemical giant Wacker Chemie, and in Clarksville, Tn. by Hemlock Semiconductor, represents a total investment of more than \$2 billion.
- The State is investing \$62.5 million in research and energy production, including the creation of the Tennessee Solar Institute, a partnership of ORNL and the University of Tennessee.
- In mid-March, the Department of Energy (DOE) unveiled Tennessee Valley Energy Enterprise, a concept to reuse federal sites at Oak Ridge and elsewhere in the Southeast for energy-related research in solar/photovoltaic, electrical grid enhancements, cleaner coal and work on hybrid vehicles.

These developments, along with advances in energy storage coming out of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, represent "a new economic engine" in Tennessee, according to Bredesen. "We have truly created a statewide solar footprint."

Confluence Solar will develop its facility on a 25-acre site in the Clinton I-75 Industrial Park. Official job numbers from the project are not yet available, but early estimates speak of 200 to 400 employees.

Local economic developers and elected officials, along with the Tennessee Valley Authority, leaders at ORNL, the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and the Clinton Utilities Board worked together to seal the deal.

"There should be no doubt in the business world that this region has the high tech workforce, the cutting edge research and affordable business costs that make it a solar economy leader," said Jesse Smith, technology director for the Knoxville-Oak Ridge Innovation Valley partnership ([www.knoxvilleoakridge.com](http://www.knoxvilleoakridge.com)).

For more information about the Innovation Valley, contact Smith, at or at [jsmith@innovationvalleyinc.org](mailto:jsmith@innovationvalleyinc.org).

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