



MEMBER NEWS

South Carolina's Center for Hydrogen Research: Fueling the Future

Near the South Carolina-Georgia border, a unique, state-of-the-art research facility is strengthening global efforts to revolutionize the way the world gets its power. The \$10 million Center for Hydrogen Research constructed by Aiken County is helping create a vibrant hydrogen cluster in a region best known for equestrian sports, first-rate golf courses, and small town charm.

CHR opened in February 2006 as a collaborative research facility, where personnel from the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL), state universities, and industry can come together to develop new hydrogen-based products and services.

Currently, 17,000 of the 60,000-square-foot facility can be leased out to universities and industry. The other half is occupied by SRNL, where 50 scientists will work on unclassified, non-radioactive hydrogen research and development. Additional SRNL scientists are available to assist private sector researchers. The facility also boasts a 150-person conference center, allowing CHR to host major symposiums on hydrogen and its applications such as the recent Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) symposium.

The Center hopes to attract talented researchers from near and far.

SRNL staff has already begun working with the University of South Carolina on fuel cell technology and with Clemson University on materials development. Researchers are also connected with



Chairman of the Aiken, S.C. County Council Ronnie Young (L) and Director of Economic Development Partnership Fred Humes (R) stand in the facility's equipment bay. Aiken County's Center for Hydrogen Research (CHR) was created to accelerate the development of hydrogen as a viable alternative energy source by bringing together scientists from Savannah River National Laboratory with researchers from universities, research institutes, and the private sector.

universities in other states and national laboratories, expediting the research on and applications for hydrogen fuel.

One prominent company that has already committed to being a part of the Center is Toyota. The company is advancing its technology in hydrogen storage that will make hydrogen-powered vehicles more practical. Toyota Technical Center USA was the first non-Savannah River Site company to take advantage of CHR's private sector lab facilities.

Fred Humes, a local economic development official, is hopeful that as more knowledge is amassed at the Center, more hydrogen-based businesses will be attracted to the area in the hopes of commercializing and profiting from Center discoveries.

Says Humes, "We are very excited about the talent and industry that the CHR is bringing to the area."

