



Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission

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News & Updates: December 18, 2012

[OVRDC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#)

The Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission has completed and forwarded the 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for approval. Below is a link to the 2012 CEDS document. If you have any comments regarding the CEDS document please submit them to email@ovrdc.org within 30 days of this posting.

[Click here for the 2012 CEDS.](#)

[New Program will Create Thousands of Jobs in Ohio](#)

The Ohio Development Services Agency announced the launch of a program designed to find new uses for abandoned sites. The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund was enacted in HB 18, signed by Governor Kasich on May 4, 2012, and will provide grants to assist businesses in creating new jobs in vacant and underutilized commercial buildings and business parks.

The program seeks to encourage companies to locate in vacant commercial facilities, reusing existing buildings and infrastructure. For-profit employers are eligible to receive \$500 in grant funds for every new full-time position created in the vacant facility and lasting one year.

"The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund will help the state address the issue of vacant properties, while leveraging private investment and the creation of up to 4,000 new jobs for Ohio's communities," said Christiane Schmenk, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency.

The program requires that employers must occupy a building or business park that has been at least 75 percent vacant for at least 12 months and increase company employment at the facility. The new employees must increase the employer's base payroll at the time the vacant facility is occupied and earn a wage greater than or equal to Ohio's minimum wage. Employers must hire at least 50 employees or bring half of its current Ohio employees to the facility.

Grant funds can be used for acquisition, construction, enlargement, improvement, or equipment of the facility. The funds are reimbursed after the new employees have been employed for one year, allowing a company to make further investment in the new business location.

Prior to occupying the vacant facility, the first step for employers is to submit a pre-certification request form to the Ohio Development Services Agency's Office of Redevelopment. The Office will review the request and certify vacancy and base employment. Following approval of the pre-certification, employers can occupy the facility and increase employment at the business site. Once the new employees have been employed for one year, the employer can submit a grant application to verify the job creation and receive grant funds for eligible expenses.

The Ohio Vacant Facilities Fund has been allocated \$2 million from funds already budgeted for the Ohio Development Services Agency and is currently authorized through August 2015. Program materials are available at: http://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_ovff.htm. Pre-Certification Requests will be accepted beginning November 26, 2012.

[Application Period To Open for FY 2012 Fire Prevention and Safety Grants Starting Monday, December 17, 2012](#), online applications will be accepted for FY 2012 Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grants. The deadline for all FP&S grant applications will be **Friday, January 18, 2013, at 5 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)**.

HOW TO APPLY

For information on how to apply, visit the [FP&S Grants Web page](#) on the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Website (www.fema.gov/firegrants).

The first step is to read the [FY 2012 FP&S Funding Opportunity Announcement](#). This document describes how to apply for a grant, activities that will be funded, types of organizations that are eligible to receive awards, the evaluation criteria for making awards, and the federal requirements for grantees.

While the format of the FY 2012 Funding Opportunity Announcement has been updated, the funding priorities, eligibility criteria, and evaluation criteria remain the same as they were for the FY 2011 FP&S Grant Program.

Activities Eligible for Fire Prevention and Safety Grants:

- *Fire Prevention and Safety Activity:* Projects designed to reach high-risk target groups and mitigate the incidence of death and injuries caused by fire and fire-related hazards.
- *Firefighter Safety Research and Development Activity:* Projects aimed at improving firefighter safety, health, and wellness through research and development that reduces firefighter fatalities and injuries.

Resources for FP&S Applicants:

A number of resources have been developed to help potential applicants plan and submit their FP&S grant applications. The following resources can be downloaded from the [FP&S Grants Web page](#):

FP&S Grants Get Ready Guide. A short guide to help you kick-start your grant application and identify and address the most important elements of all the grant application questions.

FP&S Grant Self-Evaluation Sheet. Based on the application scoring dimensions used by peer reviewers, this tool can help you assess your organization's readiness to apply for a grant and help you plan your grant application.

Fire Prevention and Safety Grants video: Provides a short overview of the FP&S Grant Program, including highlights of eligible activities.

Community Risk Assessment and Fire Prevention and Safety Grants video: Describes the different types of risk assessments that applicants can use and explains how the risk assessment's information can support grant requests. Community risk assessments are critical to creating an effective fire prevention and safety project, and they are required to obtain a FP&S grant.

AFG Help Desk. If you have questions about the FP&S Funding Opportunity Announcement or any of the resources, contact the AFG Help Desk by telephone (toll-free at 1-866-274-0960) or by e-mail (firegrants@fema.dhs.gov).

Application Period: Monday, December 17, 2012, through Friday, January 18, 2013, 5 p.m. ET.

[U.S. Census Bureau Releases the 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

On December 6, 2012, U.S. Census Bureau has announced the release of the 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the most relied-on source for detailed, up-to-date socio-economic statistics covering every community in the nation every year. These estimates give even the smallest communities timely information on more than 40 topics, such as educational attainment, income, occupation, commuting to work, language spoken at home, nativity, ancestry and selected monthly homeowner costs.

Statistics are available for many distinct geographies including the nation, all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, counties, places, and census tracts. For the first time, the Census Bureau will also publish estimates by ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA). ZCTAs are approximate areal representations of U.S. Postal Service (USPS) 5-digit ZIP code service areas. Each ZCTA is identified by the most frequently occurring USPS ZIP Code for the addresses within that ZCTA, but may include addresses with other ZIP Codes as well.

To access these statistics for all published ACS geographies except those at the block group level, please visit the Census Bureau's [American FactFinder](http://factfinder2.census.gov/). (<http://factfinder2.census.gov/>)

Information about accessing block group estimates using the summary file, including links to the [FTP site](#), (http://www2.census.gov/acs2011_5yr/summaryfile/) is available on the [ACS Summary File Page](#). (http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/summary_file/)

The Census Bureau updated its popular [QuickFacts](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html) (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>) site with the new American Community Survey statistics, making it even easier for people to find information about a town, county or state. The Census Bureau has also launched "Easy Stats," a tool that allows users to build their own tables by selecting a desired topic and geography. Early next year, the Census Bureau will release "Dwellr," a mobile app designed to put Census Bureau statistics directly in the hands of new users in an engaging way.

The American Community Survey replaces the "long form" that historically produced demographic, housing, social and economic estimates for the nation as part of the once-a-decade census. Many of the questions asked on the American Community Survey have been asked since 1810 on the census form. The decennial census program, which includes the American Community Survey and the 2010 Census, along with the U.S. Census Bureau's population estimates program, serves as the basis for the allocation of more than \$400 billion in federal funds to state, local and tribal governments every year. These vital estimates also guide planning in the private sector as well as the work done by policymakers at all levels of government and in communities of all sizes. All survey responses are strictly confidential and protected by law. The collection of this information has been directed by Congress or the federal courts.

The ACS provides reliable statistics that are indispensable to anyone who has to make informed decisions about the future. These statistics are required by all levels of government to manage or evaluate a wide range of programs, but are also useful for research, education, journalism, business and advocacy. If you have questions about this survey, please call the Customer Services Center on 1 (800) 923-8282.

Citation and source of this information: U.S. Census Bureau

Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission will analyze and prepare the data for their region and have it available on their website in the near future.

[ARC and U.S. Commercial Service to Coordinate on Export Promotion](#)

ARC Federal Co-Chair Earl F. Gohl and Charles A. Ford, deputy director general of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service (U.S. Commercial Service), today signed into creation a new Export Promotion Partnership aimed at boosting exports from businesses based in the 13-state Appalachian Region.

The new partnership will enhance ongoing cooperation and coordination between the two agencies to increase export awareness among small and medium-sized firms. The partnership will leverage the tools and resources both organizations can provide to help Appalachian businesses with their export efforts.

"ARC's strategic partnership with the U.S. Commercial Service supports President Obama's National Export Initiative, and it helps ensure that Appalachia is well-positioned to engage, compete, and succeed in the global economy of the twenty-first century," Gohl said.

"Working with the Appalachian Regional Commission will strengthen our ability to reach out and support small and medium-sized businesses across Appalachia as they seek to launch new export initiatives and build on their past export achievements," said Ford. "We look forward to leveraging our U.S. Commercial Service network of offices to help boost exports that are key to moving our economy forward and supporting new jobs."

The new Export Promotion Partnership outlines a comprehensive package of activities that will be jointly pursued by ARC and the U.S. Commercial Service. They include:

- Education and training seminars to strengthen export skills among businesses;
- Promotion and market development projects to expand global awareness of Appalachian goods and services;
- Increased support for Appalachian export delegations bound for some of the largest and most important marketplaces in the world; and

Efforts to target and identify Appalachian industries that have high export potential.

As the trade promotion arm of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, the U.S. Commercial Service connects American businesses with international buyers through offices in 108 U.S. cities, and U.S. embassies and consulates in more than 70 countries.

Gohl underscored the need for partnership across all sectors of government. "Working closely with ARC's local, state, and federal partners in support of President Obama's National Export Initiative the very best approach to continuing to grow Appalachia's export growth and success in the future."

President Obama announced the National Export Initiative in 2010 with the goal of doubling U.S. exports by the end of 2014. The partnership launched today supports this goal by educating current and potential U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium-sized companies, about the benefits of expanding their exports to additional markets, and by providing public- and private-sector resources to assist them. With the partnership, ARC joins the U.S. Commercial Service's Strategic Partnership Program, whose members have connected more than 1,500 companies with federal export assistance.

Joining in the Export Promotion Partnership signing ceremony were members of ARC's Export Trade Advisory Council, who represent the 13 Appalachian states and the Region's 73 local development districts.

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