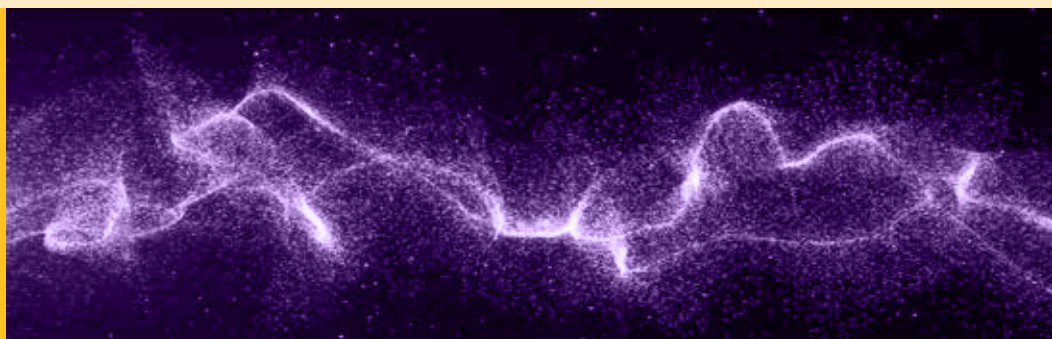


This is the BEST START Digest, an energy sciences newsletter published by the Energetics Technology Center (ETC) Inc. BEST START provides the crucial support businesses need to bring their visionary technologies to the warfighter. Whether refining smart grid technologies, enhancing renewable energy applications, or creating resilient solutions for power generation, BEST START partners with Minnesota companies to move technology forward. This newsletter aids in this mission.

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## Partner Update

**Maxwell Labs** hosted an informational event, on October 14, for current and potential investors where they shared how their laser cooling technology works, what their future plans are, and how they see their technology changing the landscape of chip cooling. They also gave a live demonstration of their current laser cooling capability.

**SYNCRIS** had the privilege of contributing to Rapid Capability Assessment 16 (RCA16) with SOCOM in Tampa which brought together leaders from industry,

COMPANY	PROJECT
<a href="#">Maxwell Labs Inc.</a>	Photonic Cooling
<a href="#">SYNCRIS</a>	Microgrid Inverter with Model Predictive Control
<a href="#">BWR Innovations, LLC</a>	Hydrogen Fuel Cell
<a href="#">Ascentek, LLC</a>	Sodium Ion Battery
<a href="#">Aza Power Systems</a>	Ammonia Power Combustion
<a href="#">LEMA, Inc.</a>	Dual-axis high-efficiency Solar Power System
<a href="#">Exergi Predictive, LLC</a>	AI-Based Energy Control for Tactical Microgrids

government, and academia to explore breakthrough solutions in energy, logistics, and autonomy for Special Operations Forces. This workshop helped shape

the future of energy solutions and create the roadmap for mission readiness in contested environments.

## General News

### Cuts to Green Project Funding

According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), the DOE is slashing \$24 billion of early-stage climate projects; nearly 600 projects are set to be axed. [Energy Tech](#), reports that this is on top of nearly another \$7.6 billion worth of previously awarded energy decarbonization projects—many approved late in President Biden's term. Terminations involved grant or loan guarantees already moving forward, for more than 220 clean energy projects. The technologies for these projects now

thrown into limbo include hydrogen, solar energy, carbon capture, electrification, utility interconnection and electric vehicle charging, among others.

### Generators for University of St. Thomas (UST) Microgrid Research

Caterpillar, Inc. has delivered 3 500KW generators to the UST for future microgrid research as part of the new Center for microgrid research building under construction. [According to Mahmoud Kabalan](#), director of the UST Center for Microgrid Research, "[They are] key assets

that will power our expanded research into distributed energy resources, grid resiliency, and workforce development. These generators will be integrated into our growing microgrid infrastructure, supporting cutting-edge research and hands-on education."

### New program aims to put nuclear generators on Army bases

[Defense News](#) reports the announcement of the Janus Program by defense officials. This program will locate nuclear power reactors on U.S. Army bases around the

*General News cont. on Page 2*

## Legislative Updates

### SBIR/STTR News Update

[Breaking Defense](#) reports additional information on the impasse that Senate lawmakers are in regarding the Pentagon's SBIR program. Sen. Joni Ernst (R), sponsor of the Innovate Act—which if enacted will establish some of the new SBIR rules enunciated here in this space in October—has openly railed against “SBIR mills,” where repeat winners gain much of the award money but do not end up creating products and services that are competitive on the open market. Ernst said this “SBIR set-aside charade” should end if the basic safeguards she proposes are opposed by her colleagues and, if so, believes the money should be returned to R&D within the defense agencies to better serve the warfighter. Sen. Markey (D) of Massachusetts opposes the cap limitation on repeat awards, creating the stalemate that forced the one year extension

between the House and Senate previously reported. Further perspectives on the effectiveness of the SBIR program can be found at [this](#) Breaking Defense article from April.

### 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) News:

The Senate on October 9th has passed the \$913.9 billion version of the 2026 NDAA on a bi-partisan basis, 77-20. A conference committee now hammers out differences between this and the House version passed last month. Final language on Acquisition reform, a legislative priority for both chambers, and the added \$22 billion on top of the War Department's request that was added by the Senate Appropriations Committee, will be focuses of the conference. Read more on [Breaking Defense](#).

## Opportunities and Solicitations

### Topics for SBIR/STTR Solicitations

[12 new topics](#) are released on the first Wednesday of each month. Pre-release and open and closing dates for DoD SBIR/STTR topics can be found on the [Defense SBIR/STTR Innovation Portal](#).



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*General News cont. from Page 1*

world. Army officials explain that reactors will be placed at forward deployed bases to produce meaningful power that will run for years—if not decades—without the need for refueling or any servicing. The Army will work with the DIU and the DOE to develop and test the micro reactors, which will be commercially owned and operated.

### Clean Energy Economy MN Releases their Clean Jobs Midwest Minnesota Report

[Click here to read the full report.](#) Key findings in the state include that there are now 63,802 clean energy jobs in Minnesota, clean energy jobs grew two times faster than the overall economy, 70% of clean energy jobs are in construction and professional services, and 11% of the clean energy workforce are veterans.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Organizer	Location
Nov. 19, 2025	<a href="#">AEE-ASHRAE Minnesota Energy Expo</a>	ASHRAE	Minneapolis, MN
Dec. 4, 2025	<a href="#">2026 Legislative Preview</a>	Clean Energy Economy MN	Minneapolis, MN