

VISITORS CENTER

The Visitors Center is a reconfigured warehouse located on the Fernald Preserve. The exhibits tell the history of Fernald and are an important educational resource for the surrounding area.

HOURS

Preserve Site: Monday – Sunday, 7 a.m. – dusk.

Visitors Center: Wednesday – Saturday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.



U.S. Department of Energy

Fernald Preserve

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Legacy
Management

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*educational resources for
the generations*

Fernald Preserve



The Fernald Preserve Visitors Center was completed in the summer of 2008. Respecting the vision of Fernald's neighbors and local communities, the Visitors Center tells the story of Fernald and has become an important educational resource.

The Fernald property once contained a uranium-processing facility that served as the first link in America's nuclear weapons production cycle. Uranium production ended at Fernald in 1989 and was followed by a \$4.4-billion environmental cleanup and ecological restoration. The site has been cleaned to standards established by the community and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Ohio EPA as being protective of human health and the environment, and is now managed by the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Legacy Management.

The Visitors Center is a warehouse that was redesigned in cooperation with the University of Cincinnati's College of Design, Art, Architecture, and

Planning (DAAP). DAAP personnel met regularly with the community to obtain input on the design and contents of the Visitors Center. The result is a major step toward realizing the desire to turn the Fernald property into a community asset.

Long before recorded history, this land was inhabited by many different Native American tribes. The changing of the seasons was observed as a time to grow and harvest crops and to hunt game for food. A major design feature of the building calls attention to this heritage. On the summer and winter solstices, the sun can be viewed along an axis through the aligned set of glass doors, over the Cold War Garden and beyond.

The exhibits in the Visitors Center depict the diverse history of the site and tell the story from the time of Native Americans, to the arrival of settlers and farmers, to the uranium-processing years, to the eventual environmental cleanup, and the legacy management

period that continues today. A fully equipped meeting room is available for use by community and school groups. Visits to the site are exceptional educational opportunities for classes studying a number of subjects, ranging from history to the life sciences.

The Visitors Center was planned and constructed to achieve certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, which sponsors the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings. Environmentally friendly features of the building include a ground-source heat pump heating and cooling system and a bio-wetland, where water, plants, microorganisms, and the environment (sun, soil, and air) interact to treat wastewater. The Visitors Center is the first building in Ohio and the second in the U.S. Department of Energy to receive LEED platinum certification.