

# AK Steel awarded \$1.8M from federal government

Carrie Blackmore Smith, [csmith@enquirer.com](mailto:csmith@enquirer.com) 10:05 a.m. EST December 21, 2016



(Photo: Provided/AK Steel)

Americans may not realize how many electric motors surround them, every day.

They power refrigerators and air conditioners; large and small machines in all sorts of industries, including manufacturing, where large-scale compressors, fans, pumps and other equipment run on electric motors.

But these motors use a tremendous amount of electricity, consuming nearly a quarter of all of the electricity used in America, according to 2013 figures from the U.S. Department of Energy.

That's where the federal agency hopes West Chester Township-based AK Steel can help.

The government has given the company \$1.8 million to develop a new grade of steel for next-generation motors that will be both powerful and energy efficient.

"We want to use our resources most effectively as possible," said Mark Johnson, director of the Advanced Manufacturing Office in the DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. "That means you need to develop new technologies."

The private sector, however, has not supported the research and development of tomorrow's motors sufficiently enough to allow the United States to be a leader in these new technologies, Johnson said, so the government has invested in a project called "Next Generation Electric Machines" in recent years.

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AK Steel was one of 13 recipients awarded a total of \$25 million. The companies and institutions, including the American Superconductor Corporation, Purdue University and the University of Houston, have different challenges related to solving the need for a more efficient motor, Johnson said.

AK Steel is "pleased to be considered for this collaborative agreement to develop innovative grades of electrical steel," said Roger K. Newport, AK Steel chief executive officer.

"This work is consistent with our ongoing research and production of electrical steels for use in the electrical grid," Newport said, "and for other uses such as motors for hybrid and electric vehicles."

AK Steel makes all sorts of steel products for a plethora of uses, including automotive, manufacturing, construction and electrical power generation. Of late, business has been good at AK, which [reported its best results](/story/money/2016/11/03/whats-behind-ak-steels-best-quarter-8-years/93223634/) in 8 years for 2016's third quarter.

"The triple bottom line" for creation for better motors, said DOE's Johnson, is "energy efficiency, economic growth and energy independence for national security."

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