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Kasich touts growth at natural-gas facilities

By [Joe Vardon](#)

SCIO, Ohio — Robert Hendricks remembers when his 102-acre farm was just a farm and when this eastern Ohio village of about 750 people where he was once mayor was just a sleepy, struggling town.

That was 18 months ago. Now, a new road runs through his farm, and pipes carry natural gas — lots of it — into a brand new, nearly \$1 billion facility where the gas is made into propane, butane and ethane and shipped to customers across the country.

“See these trucks here? Every one of them is a job,” Hendricks said about an hour before Gov. John Kasich visited the Utica East Ohio Buckeye natural-gas processing facility just outside of the hamlet in Harrison County.

Kasich had a big day in eastern Ohio yesterday, visiting two new “midstream” facilities — the other near Youngstown in New Middletown. He brought attention to what people here in Scio — at least some of them — already know: It’s not just a “fracking” boom in eastern Ohio any more; the oil-and-gas industry is beginning to spur new construction and investment beyond wells.

The UEO Buckeye facility near Scio (there’s another one about 40 miles away in Kensington) is a joint venture between Texas-based M3 Midstream LLC and EV Energy Partners and Oklahoma-based Access Midstream.

It has been open since May, with construction continuing on a significant expansion; about 500 people work construction there, and 80 have full-time jobs. Between 50 and 60 percent of those jobs are filled by Ohioans.

“People are starting catering businesses to feed the workers,” Hendricks said. “They’re hiring more people at Circle-K, at the grocery stores. Properties are getting fixed up that have been run down because people have the money now (from selling mineral rights on their lands to oil-and-gas companies). There is just huge amounts of money being ingested into the system.”

The facility Kasich visited first near Youngstown is a joint venture between Texas-based NiSource Midstream Services and a subsidiary of Texas’ Hilcorp Energy. The plant, which will separate dry gases such as methane from natural-gas liquids, is a \$375 million investment that will generate 500 construction jobs and 20 full-time jobs when completed.

Kasich hailed both projects when he visited the UEO Buckeye site yesterday afternoon, marveling at the construction of the already-massive Harrison County structure in little more than a year’s time. But he spoke of the need for faster training so more Ohioans can fill the jobs at these plants, and he said the region is still working to capitalize on its opportunity.

Article continued here: <http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2013/10/29/kasich-touts-growth-at-natural-gas-facilities.html>

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