

PORT CURRENTS

ACCELERATING CLEAN OPERATIONS AT THE PORT OF VIRGINIA

Issue #10 | September 2026

Clean Ports Grant — Driving A Zero-Emission Future

At The Port of Virginia, we are investing in a cleaner, more sustainable future through the ongoing electrification of our operations. By replacing traditional equipment with battery-electric alternatives, we are reducing emissions, enhancing air quality, and supporting healthier communities. These investments create meaningful environmental benefits while helping strengthen the quality of life for residents throughout Hampton Roads and beyond.

Delivery of New Battery-Electric Shuttle Bus

The Port of Virginia is taking another significant step toward a more sustainable future. Through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Ports Program, the port is advancing projects that support cleaner operations, reduce emissions, and enhance environmental performance. In early August, The Port of Virginia welcomed the first of 23 new shuttle buses at Norfolk International Terminals. These buses play a vital role in transporting employees safely and efficiently between terminal locations and work sites.



The arrival of the first vehicle marked an important milestone, allowing the port to place the bus into service and evaluate its performance under real-world operating conditions. Testing has focused on ensuring the vehicle meets the operational demands of the terminal while delivering performance comparable to traditional diesel-powered alternatives. Introducing the bus ahead of the full fleet deployment has also provided valuable feedback from operators and riders. These insights will help inform final adjustments and enhancements before the remaining vehicles enter service, ensuring the fleet is optimized for reliability, efficiency, and user experience. The remaining 22 shuttle buses will be delivered throughout the first quarter of next year.

Project Progress Update

Momentum continues to build as The Port of Virginia advances its Clean Ports Program initiatives. Supported by funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the program is helping transform port operations through strategic investments in cleaner technologies, modernized equipment, and supporting infrastructure.

The port continues to make progress on the engineering and design phases of its Clean Ports initiatives while advancing key equipment procurements. Procurement activities for battery-electric shuttle trucks, utility tractor rigs, forklifts, and mobile harbor cranes for Richmond Marine Terminal are nearing completion and are expected to be presented to the Virginia Port Authority Board of Commissioners for approval in the coming months.

In addition, the port recently closed its request for proposals for the charging infrastructure needed to support new electric equipment. These charging systems, known as battery-buffered chargers, are charging stations that include a built-in battery to store electricity for later use. Instead of drawing large amounts of power from the electric grid all at once, the charger charges its internal battery gradually and then uses that stored energy to quickly charge vehicles when needed. This helps reduce strain on the electrical grid, lowers infrastructure costs, and makes it possible to provide fast charging in locations where electrical capacity may be limited.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT The Port of Virginia's Maritime Incident Response Team Supports Sail 250

Sail250 Virginia brought historic tall ships, international crews, and thousands of visitors to Virginia's waterways, creating one of the Commonwealth's most memorable maritime celebrations. Behind the scenes, however, was a complex public safety operation that required months of planning and coordination among federal, state, and local partners. The Port of Virginia's Maritime Incident Response Team (MIRT) played a key role throughout the event, working alongside the U.S. Coast Guard and partner agencies to help ensure the safety and security of participants, spectators, and mariners.

MIRT's support began before the tall ships arrived in Hampton Roads, assisting public safety operations in affiliate harbors including Yorktown, Richmond, Onancock, Hampton, and Norfolk. During the Parade of Sail and other major events, MIRT partners provided coordinated marine patrols, emergency response capabilities, communications support, and operational coordination across the region. The effort showcased the strength of an established network of agencies able to work together seamlessly across jurisdictions and waterways.

While visitors will remember Sail250 Virginia for the spectacular ships and historic celebration, the event also highlighted the value of regional preparedness and partnership. Years of training, planning, and relationship-building enabled MIRT and its partners to operate as a unified maritime response team, demonstrating how collaboration helps keep Virginia's waterways safe during both large-scale public events and everyday operations.

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Stay Connected

Our Go-Zero Now project marks a transformative moment for The Port of Virginia and our surrounding communities. With \$313 million in grant funding, we are accelerating our path to Net-Zero by 2040—replacing diesel equipment, building clean energy infrastructure, and delivering cleaner air for our communities. This is more than an investment in technology; it's an investment in health, sustainability, and the future of freight movement.

We are excited to share our progress with you. Stay tuned for quarterly updates as we continue building a cleaner, greener future for our port team, partners, and communities. If you have questions or would like to share feedback, please reach out to us at:

publicaffairs@portofvirginia.com

Read More

[EPA Clean Ports Program](#)

[Port of Virginia Current News](#)

Progress Toward Net-Zero

The Port of Virginia is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2040. As cargo volumes continue to grow, investments in electrification and clean energy technologies are helping reduce carbon emissions and build a more sustainable future for our communities.

Sustainability Highlights

Reducing fuel use is one of the most effective ways to lower emissions. As The Port of Virginia continues to invest in electric equipment and more efficient operations, we are able to move more cargo while using less fuel. This progress is an important step toward our goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2040. When measured per container moved, the results clearly show that smarter equipment and improved operations are helping us reduce our environmental footprint while maintaining strong growth.

