

Association Tennessee Valley Governments



REPORT

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TVA's Energy Efficiency Program Seeks to Meet Valley's Growing Power Demands and Reduce Environmental Footprint

The demand for power in the Tennessee Valley is rising. This growth in energy use is increasing at about 2 percent each year. That's why the TVA Board recently approved staff recommendations on how TVA can help meet the Tennessee Valley's growing demand for power and reduce the agency's environmental footprint through cleaner, more energy-efficient opportunities. An Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Plan, a Renewable and Clean Energy Assessment and an Environmental Policy were approved at the board meeting in Muscle Shoals, AL on May 19th.

The Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Plan seeks to slow the current rate of growth in the region's power demand by providing opportunities for residential, business and industrial consumer groups to use energy more efficiently. By the end of the 2012 fiscal year, the plan proposes to reduce the growth in peak demand by up to 1,400 megawatts – more than the amount generated by one nuclear power unit or about the amount of power it currently takes to serve all the homes in a city the size of Nashville.

The Renewable and Clean Energy Assessment strives to add clean energy resources to TVA's generating mix to help reduce carbon emissions while minimizing costs and maintaining a reliable power supply. The assessment proposes to review TVA's generation mix and identify a road map for pursuing additional renewable and clean energy supply in the region.

The Environmental Policy provides a framework for continuing to reduce TVA's environmental footprint by reducing environmental impacts from operations and evaluating the environmental, economic and sustainable aspects of every generating resource used by TVA.

Prior to approving this new policy, the TVA Board held public listening sessions on energy efficiency and renewable energy in March. TVA staff conducted regional briefings throughout the Valley in April and May, receiving additional input from the public and TVA power distributors.

"It is a fairly momentous day to approve all these things at once," TVA President and CEO Tom Kilgore said. "But reducing our footprint is something we need to do, so we need to get after this." He promised to work "judiciously, but expeditiously" on the goals, which reflect not just public demand for clean energy but expectations of tighter pollution requirements on coal-fired power plants.

"I am encouraged that we all believe that nuclear is the (immediate) way to reduce our carbon footprint," Kilgore said, because technology is still under development to capture and sequester carbon emissions from coal plants. "We need a short-term and a long-term solution."

To help raise consumer awareness on energy efficiency, TVA and local power distributors began offering a free energy efficiency kit in mid-January to every Valley resident who completed a Home Energy Audit. As of the end of April, over 16,000 audits have been completed. To take the home energy audit and learn about simple steps that can help save energy, and money on monthly power bills, visit www.energyright.com.

