

ATVG REPORT, March 2007

TVA Chief Tom Kilgore says more nuclear may be on the way

The head of the Tennessee Valley Authority says the upcoming restart of a Browns Ferry reactor shows it has recovered from past mistakes. Tom Kilgore, president and chief executive officer of TVA, said it also paves the way for more nuclear plants in the future. Kilgore said the Browns Ferry Unit 1 reactor is 98 percent complete; the fuel is loaded and ready to come online later this year. The Browns Ferry unit was the scene of a fire started by a candle in the 1970s.

This is "more than just restarting the last of three units", Kilgore said at the Nuclear Energy Opportunities for Growth and Investment in North America Summit in Washington. Kilgore went on to say that; "Nuclear power is important to the future of the United States and makes up 20 percent of total U.S. demand while it is 30 percent of TVA's portfolio".

TVA is a government corporation that started in the 1930s to serve the valley area, though it doesn't utilize taxpayer money any longer. It now serves electricity to nearly 9 million customers in Tennessee and parts of Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia with fossil fuel, nuclear, hydropower, solar, wind and methane gas.

In 1985, TVA shut down all five of its operating reactors - three at Browns Ferry in Georgia and two at the Sequoyah nuclear plant in Tennessee, due to an uncertain market. But only two of Browns Ferry's and both Sequoyah reactors have been up and running since the 1990s. TVA built a reactor at Watts Bar, also in Tennessee, which came online in 1996, the country's newest reactor. This is still below the 17 reactors TVA had planned at one time.

Kilgore estimates that customer demand will grow about 600 megawatts a year and reported that TVA is looking at starting a second reactor at Watts Bar and/or one or two reactors in Alabama. "Whether we do either one of those is dependent on how we do in the next few months on Browns Ferry". "It is essential we understand the importance of nuclear power in our energy future." "TVA has a major stake in where nuclear power goes."