

## TVA Finds No Problems After Post-earthquake Inspections

The Tennessee Valley Authority says it has found no problems with its dams or coal ash impoundments in the wake of the East Coast earthquake. TVA spokesman Travis Brickey said August 24th that the inspections of 15 dams and impoundments were completed Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> the day of the quake and no deficiencies were identified.

The utility also completed an inspection of its nuclear power plants, which were farther from the epicenter of the quake in Virginia, and found no problems. Among ash impoundments checked was one at the Kingston Fossil Plant in East Tennessee where a December 2008 breach spilled 5.4 million cubic yards of toxin-laden sludge into the Emory River and onto land beside the plant.

The only dam at which the quake registered on a seismograph was Tellico Dam southwest of Knoxville. The US Geological Survey says more than 12 million people close enough to the quake's epicenter to feel the shaking. Editor's note: USGS has downgraded size of quake to 5.8 from 5.9 TVA officials say a seismic monitoring station at Tellico Dam registered the earthquake, which happened just before 2 pm Tuesday.

Immediately TVA officials began inspecting their 15 dams north and east of Knoxville for damage: Beaver Creek, Clear Creek, Boone, Cherokee, Doakes Creek, Douglas, Fontana, Ft. Patrick Henry, Nolichucky, Norris, South Holston, Watauga, Wilbur, Bull Run (empoundment dam at the fossil plant), and John Sevier (empoundment dam at the fossil plant).

Additionally, federal officials said two nuclear reactors at North Anna Power Station in Louisa County, Va. were automatically taken offline by safety systems soon after the earthquake. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission said the reactors were being powered by diesel generators after losing off-site power. The agency termed the situation "an unusual event," the least serious designation.

There were no impacts at any of TVA's plants. The agency has devices at each plant to detect ground motion. None registered, officials said. Plus no TVA personnel felt any ground motion. All six of the nuclear plants are operating at full power. Nine other plants in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia also declared an unusual event but none were shut down, according to published reports.

The North Anna plant operated exactly as it should from preliminary reports TVA is receiving. The plants can automatically shut down as the Browns Ferry units did after the April 27 tornado or they can be manually shut down. TVA operators are trained to know how to do manual shutdowns if needed.