

Department of Environment & Conservation

Jim Fyke, Commissioner

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Ash Slide at TVA Kingston Fossil Plant



Paul Sloan
Deputy Commissioner

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On May 11, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency signed an enforceable agreement with TVA to oversee the removal of coal ash at the TVA Kingston Plant. The state of Tennessee welcomes this action and will continue to work in partnership with EPA to ensure the cleanup in Roane County is thorough and protective of public health and the environment.

[Click here](#) for more information on EPA's involvement and what it means.

Early morning on December 22 a retaining wall failed at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant in Roane County, Tennessee. More than 5.4 million cubic yards of coal ash spilled from an on-site holding pond to cover more than 300 acres of surrounding land and water. While there were no immediate injuries caused by this extraordinary ash slide, the area's physical and natural environment has been dramatically impacted by this spill. Citizens' lives have been disrupted; water quality has been impaired and aquatic habitat has been destroyed.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has been actively engaged in this situation since it occurred. Department professionals have been on-site at the Kingston Fossil Plant as part of a coordinated effort to contain the immediate threat to human health and the environment. This has included sampling and analysis for public drinking water systems to assess whether the raw water entering and the finished water produced by the Kingston Water Treatment Plant meets public health standards. All samples received to date indicate municipal water supplies are safe.

Our work includes ongoing water quality monitoring and assessment within the major waterways impacted by the ash slide - Emory River, Clinch River and Tennessee River. We also consulted with the Tennessee Department of Health to provide public health guidance and recommended precautions for citizens that come in contact with coal ash.

As attention is now focused on timely cleanup and safe disposal of recovered coal ash from the spill, the department is encouraged by TVA's promise of full and complete clean up for these communities. As part of this recovery strategy, TDEC has developed and implemented a comprehensive sampling plan to address surface water, ground water, drinking water, soil and air monitoring to better inform communities and citizens while ensuring full, complete cleanup.

This Web page will be updated regularly to share sampling plans, results reporting and actions taken at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant spill site that reflect our department's commitment to protect human health and the environment for Tennessee and its citizens.

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