

## December 2014 ATVG Newsletter

### **TVA Reports Jump in Regional Economic Growth**

Tennessee Valley Authority economic development efforts were successful in attracting and retaining more than 60,300 jobs and spurring a record \$8.5 billion in business investments in the TVA region in fiscal year 2014. This significantly exceeds the previous year's results of 52,000 new and retained jobs and \$5 billion in capital investment.

TVA attributed the gains in 2014 to two factors: more opportunity because of an increase in new projects the past couple of years and TVA's competitive and reliable power. TVA works with local power companies and regional, state and local economic development agencies to attract new companies and investments; encourage existing businesses and industries to stay and grow in the Valley; and help communities prepare for economic growth opportunities.

"Economic development is a core component of TVA's mission to serve and improve the quality of life of the 9 million residents in the Valley," TVA President and CEO Bill Johnson said. "It is a credit to the dedicated work of our employees and the strong relationships we have built with our customers and communities that together we had a banner year in 2014."

More than 190 companies were recruited to the region or expanded existing operations, contributing to the following job totals and business investments in 2014:

Alabama: 5,800 jobs and \$428 million  
Kentucky: 4,600 jobs and \$909 million  
Middle Tennessee: 18,800 jobs and \$2.3 billion  
Mississippi: 4,700 jobs and \$1.2 billion  
Northeast Tennessee and Virginia: 11,800 jobs and \$1.1 billion  
Southeast Tennessee, Georgia and North Carolina: 7,000 jobs and \$1.4 billion  
West Tennessee: 7,600 jobs and \$1.2 billion

The region has seen job growth in a variety of industries. Some of the announced major companies in 2014 included: Academy Sports + Outdoors in Cookeville.; Beretta USA in Gallatin; Enovate Medical in Murfreesboro; Mohawk Industries in Dickson; Hankook Tire in Clarksville; Remington in Huntsville, AL; Volkswagen in Chattanooga; Unilever in Covington.; Grammer AG in Shannon, MS; Fresenius Medical Care in Knoxville, and Bilstein Group in Bowling Green, KY.

In some cases, expansion at one company led to new investment by others. Automotive suppliers Comprehensive Logistics Co. and Magna International announced new investments creating more than 500 jobs in response to General Motors' plans to expand its manufacturing operations in Spring Hill, Tennessee.



ATVG Board and membership at "insiders' tour" of Rocky Top Sports Complex in Gatlinburg.

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## **More Nuclear Plants to come? TVA Chief says maybe.**

The Tennessee Valley Authority's top executive says more nuclear plants could be in the works in the coming years following the completion of the Watts Bar nuclear reactor, which is expected to be finished by the end of 2015.

After a spate of cost over-runs and delays, the Watts Bar nuclear reactor near Spring City will have cost \$4.5 billion. It's expected to be the first reactor to come on line in almost two decades.

When asked if the TVA plans on re-starting any other nuclear reactors, or building new ones, after Watts Bar, Bill Johnson, who leads the utility, said: "I can imagine building a new plant, restarting one that's partially finished," Johnson said, adding a caveat. "Our focus on the moment is finishing the one we are working on."

The TVA's single largest energy source is coal, which is the country's most significant greenhouse gas contributor. About a third of the TVA's energy is derived from nuclear. But that percentage is almost destined to go up, since the utility is slowly phasing out energy produced by coal. That's due to both new targets from the Environmental Protection Agency aimed at slashing carbon emissions and the abundance of cheap natural gas extracted through fracking,

Although it's generally viewed as a more environmentally-friendly energy source, one issue that remains unresolved with nuclear-fired plants is how exactly to best dispose of toxic nuclear waste.

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## **Grants to Promote Energy Efficiency Projects**

More grants are being offered to promote energy efficiency projects in Tennessee. Gov. Bill Haslam and Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau recently announced a fourth offering of the Clean Tennessee Energy grants, totaling \$2 million.

The grants will be used to fund energy efficiency projects for municipal governments, county governments, utility districts and other similar entities across Tennessee.

Funding for the projects comes from an April 2011 Clean Air Act settlement with the Tennessee Valley Authority. The maximum grant amount per project is \$250,000 and requires a match from the applicant. Grant applications are available on the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's website and will be accepted until January 30, 2015.

Recipients are expected to be announced in the summer of 2015.

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## **2014 Season Coming To Close for TVA Campgrounds, Visitor Centers**

Tennessee Valley Authority campgrounds and visitor centers at TVA dams and reservoirs are reducing hours or closing as the 2014 recreation season comes to an end.

TVA campgrounds that will close on Nov. 17 are:

*Cherokee Dam Campground - Cherokee Reservoir, TN*  
*Douglas Dam Campground - Douglas Reservoir, TN*  
*Foster Falls Campground - Marion County, TN*  
*Melton Hill Campground - Melton Hill Reservoir, TN*  
*Pickwick Dam Campground - Pickwick Reservoir, TN*  
*Wilson Dam Campground - Wilson Reservoir, AL*

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## **ATVG REPORT:**

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ATVG is a 501(c)(4), not-for-profit, public interest organization. ATVG advocates for the interests of county and city/town governments residing within the seven-state TVA region and their partners in the public and private sectors. For details about ATVG's mission and program of work, visit us on line at: [www.atvg.org](http://www.atvg.org).

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### **Sequoyah Drill Tests Preparedness**

In partnership with the leaders of a dozen law enforcement, medical and emergency service organizations, the Bradley, TN County Emergency Management Agency on November 19<sup>th</sup> participated in the “graded” phase of a nuclear preparedness exercise. As part of an ongoing series of emergency exercises required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the detailed drill saw department leaders from across Hamilton and Bradley counties make real-time decisions based on events surrounding a “hostile action-based” scenario.

The scenario is one practiced every eight years, in which armed assailants hypothetically gain access to the Sequoyah Nuclear Power Plant. Tennessee Emergency Management Agency personnel will then pass along “injects,” or a twist in the scenario. Leaders must then employ knowledge of their respective county’s plan and resources in order to effectively handle the changing situation. According to Gerald McLemore, a FEMA Region 4 Evaluator, Bradley County did well in managing the injects. “Although preliminary, the Bradley County radiological emergency preparedness exercise went well,” McLemore stated. “The director and staff performed in accordance with the September 2014 County REP plan.”

At 8:20 a.m., the initial TEMA inject caught Bradley County leaders by surprise while they were in a preliminary briefing meeting discussing the upcoming drill. Bradley County EMA Director Troy Spence and his staff were quick to respond to the twist: “Bradley County residents in the Harrison Pike area report hearing a large explosion and seeing smoke coming from the Sequoyah area.” The exercise had begun in earnest.

From that point on, the “War Room” was abuzz with department heads communicating to one another and to the Joint Information Center in Hamilton County, allocating resources and personnel to various situations across the two-county Sequoyah area. “Information flowed seamlessly regarding local response to the Joint Information Center,” said, Greg Kaylor, public information officer for BCEMA. “Bradley County Executive Assistant to the Mayor Lindsey Hathcock worked with other information officers in dissemination of what residents in the affected area would need to do in the event of a real situation.”

After the initial inject, the scenario turned local, with an “accident” on Interstate 75 involving a hazardous material spill. Spence and the Bradley County agencies took to the phones, assigning both men and machine to the scene. The FEMA observers watched and listened to everything, from response time to the specific number of emergency kits available. “The FEMA observers commended Troy Spence as well as those representing their agencies for being so well-versed in the specific areas regarding any action which may have been taken,” Kaylor reported.

Although the “injects” varied across county lines, they were meant to determine the same thing; that being, if equipment and manpower needs could be met to successfully respond to an emergency event at Sequoyah. No agency was spared involvement in the drill, and all departments, including those in Hamilton County, had to work together to solve crises that ranged from traffic fatalities to reports of odd smells and dead cattle. The drill was considered successful and informational, according to Spence and BCEMA staff members. However, the official grading is yet to come.

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*Have a Very Merry Christmas*

*And a Happy New Year*

*From your friends at ATVG*

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## **In Alabama, Redstone Takes Step Toward Renewable Energy**

Army leaders may not be able to control the weather, but they at least want to be prepared for it. The devastating tornadoes that swept through Alabama in April 2011 left Redstone Arsenal without power for nine days, leaving critical missions to rely on generator power. In the years that have followed, Arsenal, government and local leaders have strived to bring greater energy security to the federal center of excellence. Redstone took the next step in that mission November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Renewable Combined Heat and Power Project Pre-Proposal Meeting.

Companies interested in submitting proposals for the Combined Heat and Power Project (CHP) met at Huntsville Center to learn more about the project. Those proposals will be for a Renewable Energy Generation Facility that will provide both steam and electricity exclusively to the installation, which will be constructed on five acres in the northeast portion of the Arsenal, adjacent to the Solid Waste Disposal Authority. "We believe that this is going to benefit the greater Huntsville community, as well as the Tennessee Valley as a whole," said Erich Kurre, Office of Energy Initiatives project director.

A mission of the Office of Energy Initiatives is to enhance energy security at installations across the country, both from acts of man, and acts of nature, like the April 2011 tornadoes. Through the CHP, the Army aims to obtain local steam and 25MW of electricity to enhance that energy security. While the Arsenal's power is currently supplied 100 percent by the Tennessee Valley Authority, that number in the future is to drop to 48 percent, as the CHP is estimated to provide 48 percent of the Arsenal's power. Solar power will provide the remaining 4 percent.

The project will not only increase the energy security at Redstone Arsenal, but also reduce the cost of energy. It is expected to be cost-neutral in the short-term, but will stabilize the price and sustainability in the long term. "Our goal is to bring renewable energy to installations at or below the price for brown power," Kurre said. The CHP developer will provide the installation with a minimum of 160,000 MWh a year of electricity at a steam extraction rate of 520,000 klbs a year. The developer will also own, operate and maintain the Renewable Energy Generation Facility for 30 years.

"This installation is huge to the defense of our nation, both front line and homeland defense," Garrison commander Col. Bill Marks told the potential developers. "The products you bring to bear need to be very top end. This is the community where excellence is the standard."

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## **Solar energy project coming to Chickasaw County, Mississippi**

A solar energy project will soon find a home in Chickasaw County. November 19<sup>th</sup>, state and local officials joined Phoenix Solar to announce a 30-acre site on Filgo Road near Okolona. "This project is important to the entire Northeast Mississippi," Chickasaw County Supervisor Russell Brooks said. "To have a project of this magnitude, with clean energy, to come into our area, opens doors for others things to come along."

The site will eventually host 9,804 solar panels capable of producing up to three million watts of clean, carbon-free energy. "The capability of the power generated here through solar has the equivalent of powering 300 homes in our community," Regional Economic Developer Josh West said. Three Rivers Planning and Development District officials say the company has already invested \$9 million in the project.

The plant is being promoted as one of the largest solar projects in the state. Backers say it will bring jobs to Chickasaw County. They wouldn't speculate how many but 12 have already been hired for construction. The revenue is part of the community, so it brings in money which will be used for other opportunities," Tennessee Valley Authority Manager David Sparks said. "So it's a win-win for everybody."

Chickasaw County officials said they hope the solar project will show what the area is capable of when it comes to future endeavors. "When other companies come and see that we were able to accomplish this type of project; the largest solar project in the state of Mississippi. They will be apt to come to Chickasaw County," Brooks said. Even though the ground breaking was slated for November 19<sup>th</sup>, the project is already three weeks into construction. No time table has been set on when the project will be complete.

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## **Oak Ridge, Tennessee Wins EPA's Green Power Leader Award**

This formerly secret city has a new title; it's a "Green Power Community of the Year" one of only two nationwide, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA announced the new title on 11/19/2014. The other city winning the recognition is Medford, Oregon. Those municipalities are among 19 Green Power Partners and four power suppliers across the country receiving the EPA's Green Leadership Awards.

The recognition is for "advancing the nation's renewable energy market and reducing greenhouse gas emissions fueling climate change," according to an EPA news release. Combined, the winning entities use more than 7.6 billion kilowatt-hours of green power each year. Green power is electricity generated from such renewable resources as solar, wind, geothermal, biogas and low-impact hydroelectric sources.

"A lot of people in the city government and regular citizens have worked very hard to make this possible," Councilwoman Anne Garcia Garland said. "It (the award) is a really nice tribute." The winners, chosen for what the EPA calls their "exemplary use of green power," are among more than 1,300 partner organizations that comprise EPA's Green Power Partnership.

Since its birth as a secret city involved in building the first atomic bomb, Oak Ridge's identity "has long been intertwined with the energy sector," according to the EPA. Oak Ridge National Laboratory now does research involving various green power technologies while purchasing green power for its electricity use. The city is recognized as a "Platinum Community" in TVA's Sustainable Communities Program, the news release states.

Oak Ridge has "set the ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent by 2030," it continues. "With citywide attention focused on using clean energy, Oak Ridge became the Southeast's first EPA Green Power Community in 2014." Last spring, the city launched a challenge to encourage greater participation in TVA's renewable energy program. The drive tripled the use of TVA's Green Power Switch program, where residents pay more for electricity produced from nonpolluting sources. Residents, businesses and the local government "are using more than 73 million kilowatt-hours of renewable energy annually," according to the EPA.

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**Association of Tennessee Valley Governments  
Winter Meeting  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee  
January 21 – 22, 2015**

**Hotel: Embassy Suites  
1200 Conference Center Blvd  
Murfreesboro, TN  
(615) 890-4464**

**January 21, 2015; Eastern Time Zone**

1:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introductions	Ron Woody, ATVG President
1:15 p.m.	TVA Update	Burt Robinson, TVA
1:45 p.m.	TVA Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (Pilot)	Stephen Schoolfield, TVA
2:30 p.m.	TVA Integrated Resource Plan	Joe Hoagland, TVA
3:00 p.m.	<i>Break</i>	
3:15 p.m.	Overview of APPA and Key Issues	Austin Carroll, Hopkinsville Electric System
4:00 p.m.	Emergency Management: Regional Perspective	David Purkey, Director of TEMA and a TVA Presenter (TBA)
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn	
5:30 p.m.	Reception at Embassy Suites	
6:30 p.m.	Dinner: Five Senses Restaurant	

**January 22, 2015**

7:30 a.m.	Complimentary Breakfast at Embassy Suites
8:30 a.m.	ATVG Board Meeting

**Please help us make necessary arrangements by letting us know if you will be attending.** Send the enclosed registration form by email to: [registration@atvg.org](mailto:registration@atvg.org) or by U.S. mail to: ATVG, P.O. Box 3578, Clarksville, TN 37043.

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**Association of Tennessee Valley Governments Meeting Registration Form**

*Registration Fee: \$40.00 for members and affiliates; \$75.00 for non-members*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Registration Fee for spouse is included/No additional charge*

Company/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to: Association of Tennessee Valley Governments- P.O. Box 3578 – Clarksville, TN 37043*