

## **FIVE YEARS AFTER KINGSTON SPILL TVA RECORDS SHOW GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION AT ALL 11 COAL PLANTS**

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Five years after the billion-gallon coal ash spill in Kingston, TN, a new report from the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP) shows that decades of mismanagement have led to toxic groundwater pollution at all 11 Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) coal plants, with concentrations of arsenic, boron, cobalt, manganese, and other pollutants exceeding health-based guidelines in dozens of downgradient wells. The affected groundwater is now unsafe for human consumption. As it migrates into local surface water, the contamination also threatens aquatic ecosystems. The EIP report, which is based primarily on Freedom of Information Act requests, also shows that TVA is not adequately monitoring much of the groundwater around its ash disposal areas.

The EIP analysis details TVA pollutants that exceed health-based guidelines and peak concentrations of toxic chemicals measured over the past five years. Contaminated groundwater under and around TVA facilities is widespread and includes arsenic, boron, cobalt, manganese, and sulfate – all toxic pollutants known to be associated with coal ash.

- Arsenic has been linked to cancers of the skin, bladder, kidneys and other organs. Average concentrations in downgradient wells exceeded the Safe Drinking Water Act Maximum Contaminant Level at five TVA plants: Allen, Bull Run, Colbert, Cumberland Paradise, and John Sevier.
- Boron may harm developing fetuses and contribute to testicular atrophy. Average boron concentrations have exceeded EPA's recommended limit in over 30 monitoring wells at 9 of TVA's 11 plants.
- Manganese at high doses can cause neurological toxicity. Average manganese concentrations have exceeded EPA's recommended limit in 50 wells at 10 TVA plants.

The report also shows that TVA frequently stops monitoring areas that it knows to be contaminated. For example, TVA installed seven wells around the fly ash and bottom ash ponds at the Paradise plant in Kentucky in 2010, found high concentrations of several pollutants in 2011, and then stopped monitoring all seven wells. Other areas, including abandoned ash disposal units at the Allen, Bull Run, John Sevier, and Johnsonville plants, have not been monitored at all in recent years.