

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Saturday, January 10, 2009

From: Karen Buerki, OSC

Subject: Emergency Response

TVA Widows Creek Spill
Steam Plant Road, Stevenson, AL
Latitude: 34.8849190
Longitude: -85.7577210

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	A4XR
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	1/9/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	1/9/2009	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

At approximately 0600 hrs on January 9, 2009, a release of Flue Gas Desulfurization (FGD) material (calcium sulfate or gypsum) was discovered by TVA contractor TransAsh. The material is produced when limestone (calcium carbonate) is used to scrub SOx emissions from flue gas. A small amount of fly ash is also sent to the FGD ponds because one of the boilers does not have an electrostatic precipitator. The release occurred at an out of service stand pipe from FGD Pond #2B. The plug in the pipe failed releasing the liquid contents of pond #2B into the stilling pond located below. The material released from the stilling pond when it overflowed into Widows Creek. Widows Creek feeds into the Tennessee River.

EPA received notification on, Friday, January 9th, 2009, at 11:23 am via NRC report (NRC #894379). Duty Officer Nattis deployed R-1 OSC Karen Buerki along with EPA Public Information Officer (PIO) Davina Marraccini and EPA's START contractor. OSC Buerki arrived on-scene at approximately 1610 hrs and met with TVA's Environmental Manager R.L. Pope and Alabama's Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) representative Jim Luken.

TVA provided a helicopter for aerial observation. Cenospheres were observed floating on Widows Creek and out into the Tennessee River. Discoloration from the presence of gypsum was observed in Widows Creek and at the confluence of the Tennessee River, however, it quickly dissipated. The closest drinking water intakes located on the Tennessee River are in Scottsboro and Ft. Payne, AL. They had been notified of the release and chose to draw water from an alternate source until surface water data became available.

Response contractor SWS was mobing equipment onto the site and TVA was mobing in additional personnel and resources to assist in the response. O'Brien Group was called in to assist TVA with implementing the Incident Command System.

A website has been created for further information: <http://epaosc.net/TVAWidowsCreekSpill>

Current Activities

TVA and their contractor TransAsh are working to secure the pipe and repair the dike wall that began sliding into FGD Pond 2B during the release. TVA's response contractor SWS placed boom in Widows Creek and the confluence of the Tennessee to aid in collection and removal of cenospheres. TVA has turbidity curtain in route for placement at the release location on the Stilling Pond to prevent additional gypsum from releasing into Widows Creek. TVA is surveying the release location to determine the volume of material that was released to Widows Creek.

EPA, ADEM, and TVA jointly developed a sampling plan for the response. EPA, ADEM, and TVA have been working jointly on press releases, fact sheets and other information shared with the public.

Planned Removal Actions

TVA will continue to collect and remove floating solids. TVA will continue repair of the dike and will permanently plug the stand pipe in FGD Pond 2B. Assessment of the extent of gypsum released into Widows Creek and whether or not it should be removed remains to be conducted.

Next Steps

Analytical results from TVA sampling on January 9, 2009, should be available tomorrow. EPA and TVA will continue surface water sampling tomorrow. EPA will begin to transition oversight the ADEM as analytical results become available and as the repairs are completed.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
RST/START	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	100.00%
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	100.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

response.epa.gov/TVAWidowsCreekSpill

POLREP #1 Last Updated 10/2/2009