



# Bellefonte Nuclear Plant

## Fact Sheet

*Why TVA's plan to finish building these reactors is an enormous financial and public safety risk.*

**With a final price tag approaching more than \$15 billion, TVA's proposed Bellefonte nuclear reactors are anything but cheap.**

During the 1970s and 80s, TVA wasted \$4.6 billion in ratepayer dollars on its first attempt to build two reactors at the Bellefonte site near Scottsboro, Alabama. The project never produced a single kilowatt of electricity. Now TVA wants to spend an additional ~\$11 billion to finish constructing these reactors. How does TVA plan to pay for it? By either saddling the agency with more debt or raising electric rates. Spending billions more for a degraded nuclear plant many decades old makes bad economic sense for TVA and its customers.

**Bellefonte is not needed to meet the demand.**

With thousands of megawatts of new capacity newly online or scheduled to come online within the next few years and continuing lower demand, even TVA's announced coal retirements don't make the case for Bellefonte. Slowing demand by increasing energy efficiency and developing renewable energy resources has greater public support, is a much wiser investment of TVA's resources and will bring substantially more benefits to Valley communities, such as job creation and ratepayer savings. To put it simply – if and when Bellefonte produces a single kilowatt of electricity, TVA and its ratepayers will wish the billions invested in Bellefonte had been invested somewhere else.



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**TVA's proposed reactors were designed over 40 years ago and never operated in the U.S.**

TVA is proposing to finish construction of reactors that were designed in the 1960s! Further, only one of this particular design was ever built, in Germany, but was fully operational for less than a year. To our knowledge, no one in today's nuclear industry has any experience operating this antiquated reactor design. With the ongoing nuclear disaster in Japan, it is unknown how this crisis may affect nuclear regulations here in the U.S. thus making any investments in new reactors, let alone designs that are decades old, very risky.

## **Serious safety concerns have not been addressed.**

In 2006, TVA formally abandoned its plans to build these reactors and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) terminated TVA's construction license. For the next 18 months the unfinished reactors were cannibalized for spare parts. At the end of this cannibalization, Unit 1 went from 90% complete to 55% complete and Unit 2 from 58% to 35%. No one, not even TVA, knows exactly what happened during this period, but it is certain that workers with no training in nuclear construction or safety were allowed access to the site. Who, exactly, was allowed access, what activities were conducted and what contamination or degradation may have occurred is unknown.

Then, in August 2009, after the NRC reinstated TVA's construction permit, workers discovered that a "vertical Tendon" had broken on one of the unfinished reactors, jeopardizing the structural integrity of the reactor's containment vessel. So far, it is not known exactly what happened, the extent of the damage, or what repairs will be needed. A similar problem at the Crystal River 3 reactor in Florida led to it being offline for 3 years and ultimately shutdown by Duke Energy after billions were spent and ratepayers were unfairly burdened with the majority of the costs.



## **What You Can Do!**

✓ **Tell TVA that Bellefonte is a bad bet! The financial and safety risks are too great to move forward with the proposed Bellefonte project.**

As TVA's long-term energy planning process (the Integrated Resource Plan or IRP) is underway, tell TVA and the Board to reject Bellefonte and instead invest in cheaper, cleaner and less risky energy options such as energy efficiency and conservation and renewables, including wind and solar.

- **E-mail:** [board@tva.gov](mailto:board@tva.gov)
- **Mail:** TVA Board of Directors  
400 W. Summit Hill Drive WT 6  
Knoxville, TN 37914
- **Get involved in the long-term energy planning process, the IRP.** Attend meetings, submit comments and get involved, visit: <http://www.tva.gov/environment/reports/irp/scoping.htm>.

**TVA must do better. It's time to put Bellefonte behind us once and for all!**

**For more information contact Southern Alliance for Clean Energy  
865.637.6055 or [www.cleanenergy.org](http://www.cleanenergy.org)**

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