



The Weekly Update

Tennessee General Assembly
House of Representatives

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On Wednesday, the House heard testimony given by residents of Roane County whose homes were destroyed by the collapse of a retaining wall that spewed more than a billion gallons of coal ash sludge in the area.

Handwritten stories from local residents were delivered to the legislators along with materials detailing the impact of the disaster on the health of the community. In January, Federal officials tested an area that showed arsenic levels of more than 100 times the acceptable amount in a river near the spill. The message was loud and clear. This levy had been a time bomb waiting to go off, and it did. Clearly there was a failure here and someone had to be held accountable to clean up the mess and make sure it never happens again.

The next day, TVA CEO Tom Kilgore appeared before a joint committee of the House and Senate Conservation & Environment Committees to answer questions about what TVA had been doing prior to the spill to protect the community; and what they will do in the future to clean up the disaster area and safeguard the community.

Kilgore advised that the total cost of the clean-up could add up to \$825 million. Although he made it clear that taxpayers will not be left to pay the tab and that rate increases are not likely, he did not say where the \$825 million would come from.

Therefore I and other legislators will monitor the situation to try to see that the recovery costs are not passed on to you, the rate payers.

Kilgore further advised the joint committee that new procedures have been adopted to better inspect dikes across the area.

Call or e-mail if you have questions about legislation or if I may help you in any way.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary".

Weekly updates are for informational purposes only.