



Memorandum from the Office of the Inspector General

September 29, 2009

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FINAL REPORT – INSPECTION 2009-12695-05 – REVIEW OF MELTON HILL DAM CAMPGROUND

At the request of the Senior Vice President, Office of Environment and Research, we initiated reviews of the 11 Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) managed campgrounds to determine if (1) campgrounds are being operated in accordance with the program intent and (2) campgrounds' operating controls are functioning as intended. This report addresses our findings pertaining to the Melton Hill Dam Campground.

We found that the campground was operating under the program intent, which is to provide public areas for recreation. During our walkdown, we noted 14 out of 57 campsites were occupied. We found that the basic operating controls were the functions of the Maintenance Foreman for Facilities at Melton Hill Dam and Campground Host.¹ In summary, we found the operating controls appear to be functioning as intended and campground guidelines were generally being complied with. However, we did note some minor overall program guideline inconsistencies.

BACKGROUND

TVA operates some 100 public recreation areas throughout the Tennessee Valley, including campgrounds, day-use areas, and boat launching ramps. TVA manages 11 campgrounds throughout the Valley and has set out specific campground rules in various TVA documents to help guide the maintenance and operation of these campgrounds. These documents include:

- Stewardship Guideline 7.2.1 - TVA's Recreation Areas
- Stewardship Guideline 7.1.4 - Developed Recreation Area Rules and Regulations
- Stewardship Guideline 7.1.1 - Administration of Fee Campgrounds and Pavilion Reservations

¹ The Campground Host is an individual who is allowed to stay at the campground free of charge in exchange for providing some oversight functions.

- Campground Host Procedures and Campground Regulations Handbook (2008 Edition) (Host Handbook)
- Resident Manager Procedures and Campground Regulations Manual (2009 Edition) (Resident Manager Manual)
- Campground Fee Process provided by Facilities

According to Stewardship Guideline 7.2.1, the 11 TVA-managed campgrounds help provide opportunities for public access to and enjoyment of the river system.

Melton Hill Dam Campground is located on the Melton Hill Reservoir in Lenoir City, Tennessee. Melton Hill Dam Campground contains 57 campsites which consists of:

- Thirty-three campsites with water and electric hookups.
- Eight campsites with water, electric, and sewer service.
- Three campsites that were constructed to meet current accessibility guidelines² and have water, electric, and sewer service.
- Thirteen campsites with no hookups, nine of which are designated as tent sites.

The campground contains many amenities including (1) restrooms with heated showers and flush toilets, (2) a dump station,³ (3) picnic tables with grills, (4) a multipurpose court, (5) a swimming beach, (6) a boat ramp, and (7) a group pavilion which is available by reservation.

All of the 11 TVA-managed campgrounds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis; except for Barton Springs, Cherokee Dam, Mallard Creek, Loyston Point, and Melton Hill campgrounds that operate on a lottery system to initially allocate campsites on opening day at the start of camping season and then manage the remaining season on a first-come, first-serve basis. TVA campgrounds charge the same camping rates and fees. Specifically, during the time period we reviewed, TVA daily and monthly rates were:

- For a campsite without water and electric hookups, \$16 daily and \$240 monthly.
- For a campsite with water and/or electric hookups, \$20 daily and \$300 monthly.
- For a campsite with water, electric, and sewer hookups, \$24 daily and \$360 monthly.

² We were told by Land and Water Stewardship personnel that campground assessments have been completed and plans are being developed pertaining to the update of campgrounds to current Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.

³ A dump station is a place where camper wastewater may be discharged into a sanitary sewer system in a safe and responsible way.

America the Beautiful Pass and older Golden Age and Golden Access Passport programs⁴ can be used at TVA campgrounds to obtain half-price rentals on daily campsites only. Facilities Management provided us certain revenue, expense, and occupancy (i.e., the number of days the campsites were occupied) information for fiscal years 2004 – 2008 for the TVA-managed campgrounds, and that information is summarized in Table 1 for Melton Hill Dam Campground.

Table 1

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Revenue	\$ 27,277	\$ 32,140	\$ 32,035	\$ 29,546	\$ 64,778
Expense	\$ 34,621	\$ 46,584	\$ 45,271	\$ 38,741	\$ 119,089
Occupancy	3466	2938	3291	3162	5226

Four of the 11 TVA-managed campgrounds have a Resident Manager because the campground is not located on a dam reservation. The Resident Manager is to assist TVA in supplying a safe, hazard-free environment for persons using the campgrounds. The Resident Manager is responsible for registering campers, operating the gates, providing information to campers, picking up litter, and various other tasks. Melton Hill Dam Campground is a self-service⁵ campground and does not have a Resident Manager, but utilizes a Campground Host who is responsible for assisting campers and opening and closing the gates. The Maintenance Foreman for Facilities at Melton Hill Dam is to collect money and provide oversight of the facility. TVA Facilities Management takes care of maintenance and upkeep, such as lawn care and bathhouse repairs, at Melton Hill Dam Campground.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of our review of Melton Hill Dam Campground were to determine if (1) the campground is being operated in accordance with TVA's program intent and (2) the campground's operating controls are functioning as intended.

To achieve our objectives, we:

- Interviewed key TVA personnel and reviewed related TVA policies, processes, procedures, and guidelines to identify program intent and operational controls.
- Reviewed TVA-managed campground assessments as prepared by Land and Water Stewardship and Facilities, including scorecards and assessment briefing papers to identify potential areas of concern.

⁴ America the Beautiful Access Passes and older Golden Access Passes are for U.S. Citizens or permanent residents with permanent disabilities. America the Beautiful Senior Passes and older Golden Age Passes are for U.S. Citizens or permanent residents age 62 or over. These passes can be purchased through the National Park Service and are lifetime passes.

⁵ These are campgrounds without a Resident Manager which operate on the honor system. Fees are placed in a lockbox and collected by the designated campground attendant and forwarded on to TVA.

- Conducted a walkdown of Melton Hill Dam Campground to determine whether guidelines are being followed and controls are functioning as intended. During the walkdown, we also checked some randomly selected pay envelopes to determine if campers paid appropriately.
- Compared a sample of remittance registers for June 2009 submitted to Facilities for deposit with records maintained at Melton Hill Dam Campground to determine whether revenue was accurately reported or discrepancies exist.
- Reviewed historical occupancy reports and revenue information to identify any potential control weaknesses.

The scope of this inspection included activities and operating controls as related to Melton Hill Dam Campground. This Inspection was conducted in accordance with the "Quality Standards for Inspections."⁶

FINDINGS

Our review found that Melton Hill Dam Campground was operating in accordance with the program intent, which is to provide recreation for the public. Additionally, we found that the basic operating controls were provided by the Melton Hill Maintenance Foreman and Campground Host. The operating controls appear to be generally functioning as intended. Furthermore, the campground guidelines were generally being complied with. However, we did note some inconsistencies among applicable TVA guidelines.

PROGRAM INTENT

We observed campers in 14 of the 57 campsites during our visit to Melton Hill Dam Campground. We viewed campers enjoying their campsites and public use areas. The campground appeared to be well maintained and in good condition. Campsites set up for recreational enjoyment are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1



⁶ The Quality Standards for Inspections issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, Executive Council on Integrity and Efficiency, provide standards for conducting inspections in the Inspector General community.

OPERATING CONTROLS

The Maintenance Foreman for Facilities at Melton Hill Dam provides oversight and collects fees. In addition, there is a Campground Host that stays on-site and is available to help campers with any concerns or questions. The functions of the Maintenance Foreman and Host act as the operating controls for the campground. From discussions with the Maintenance Foreman, the following processes are to be completed:

- Host shall register campers' daily beginning at 2:00 p.m. The host operates the gate morning and night.
- Host greets campers and answers any questions the campers may have.
- Maintenance Foreman completes daily and monthly occupancy reports to be provided to TVA Facilities Management.
- Maintenance Foreman periodically inspects the campground and notifies Facilities Management of any maintenance needs.
- Maintenance Foreman unlocks vault and collects payment envelopes multiple times weekly.
- Maintenance Foreman reviews amount of money submitted for accuracy.
- Maintenance Foreman verifies occupied campsites have been paid for.
- Maintenance Foreman tracks the campers' length of stay.
- Maintenance Foreman converts all cash collected to money orders and forwards all payments (including checks) to TVA with a remittance report detailing weekly total.

As part of our review, we (1) reviewed camper payments, (2) performed a walkdown of the campground to assess compliance with campground guidelines, and (3) compared all identified manuals and guidelines for consistency.

Camper Payments

During our walkdown, we noted 14 of the 57 campsites were occupied. The Maintenance Foreman opened the vault and showed us the envelopes that had been submitted. The Melton Hill Maintenance Foreman explained he tracks camper payments by utilizing the occupancy report and highlighting who has paid. We compared the payment envelopes received to those campsites we noted as being occupied and found all but two had paid. The two that had not yet paid had just become due the day of our visit and the Melton Hill Dam Maintenance Foreman noted that he expected their payments shortly.

No discrepancies were identified when we compared our judgmentally selected sample of remittance registers from June 2009, provided by Facilities, to the documentation maintained with the Maintenance Foreman. Additionally, our review of documentation and discussion with the Maintenance Foreman found that the length of stay guidelines are being monitored and enforced.

These observations indicate that the operating controls tested are meeting their intended function.

Campground Guideline Compliance

We performed a walkdown of Melton Hill Dam Campground, and we found it to be generally operating in accordance with the guidelines. We created a checklist based upon (1) Stewardship Guideline 7.1.4 - Developed Recreation Area Rules and Regulations, (2) Host Handbook, and (3) Resident Manager Manual. We used the checklist during our walkdown to identify whether the campground was in compliance with the guidelines. We found the campground to be clean, well-maintained, and, based on our walkdown, operated effectively. Based on the specific criteria in the guidelines, we identified a few noncompliances. They are provided for informational purposes only and they do not require a response or actions from management. The only noncompliances found were two of the 57 campsites had coffee makers outside of the camping unit and both were using electrical outlets at an adjacent vacant campsite. An example of a coffee maker outside the camping unit on top of an electrical outlet can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2



Guideline Alignment and Clarity

During our reviews of the 11 TVA-managed campgrounds, we noted some inconsistencies among the various TVA guidelines utilized for the campgrounds. The detailed findings, recommendations and management's planned actions were addressed in Inspection 2009-12695-02 – Review of Douglas Dam Headwater Campground.

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Based on the results of this review and since the findings and recommendations regarding overall program guideline inconsistencies were addressed in a separate report, this report does not include any recommendations and is to be used for informational purposes only. Accordingly, no response is necessary.

Information contained in this report is subject to public disclosure. Please advise us of any sensitive information in this report which you recommend be withheld.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss our observations, please contact Gregory C. Jaynes, Deputy Assistant Inspector General, Inspections, at (423) 785-4810. We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation received from your staff during the inspection.



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Attachment

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