benefits. The current projected amortization periods of unrecognized net gain or loss is approximately 10 years for the pension plan and 12 years for the post-retirement plan.

Amortization of Prior Service Cost/(Credit). Amortization of net prior service cost/(credit) resulting from a plan change is included as a component of period expense in the year first recognized and every year thereafter until it is fully amortized. The increase or decrease in the benefit obligation due to the plan change is amortized over the average remaining service period of participating employees expected to receive benefits under the plan. The pension and post-retirement plans have prior service costs/(credits) related to plan changes made in 2009, 2010, 2016, 2018, and 2019 with remaining amortization periods ranging from one to 10 years. However, when a plan change reduces the benefit obligation, existing positive prior service costs are reduced or eliminated starting with the earliest established before a new prior service credit base is established.

Asset Method. TVA's asset method calculates a market-related value of assets ("MRVA") that recognizes realized and unrealized investment gains and losses over a three-year smoothing period to decrease the volatility of annual net periodic pension benefit costs. The MRVA is used to determine the expected return on plan assets, a component of net periodic pension benefit cost. The difference in the expected return on the MRVA and the actual return on the fair value on plan assets is recognized as an actuarial (gain)/loss in the pension benefit obligation at September 30. However, the MRVA has no impact on the fair value of plan assets measured at September 30.

Obligations and Funded Status

The changes in plan obligations, assets, and funded status for the years ended September 30, 2019 and 2018, were as follows:

Obligations and Funded Status
For the years ended September 30

798,000,000	Pension Benefits		Other Post-Retirement Benefits	
	2019	**2018**	**2019**	**2018**
Change in benefit obligation				
Benefit obligation at beginning of year	$ 11,725	$ 12,601	$ 428	$ 494
Service cost	44	53	11	14
Interest cost	499	473	18	19
Plan participants' contributions	7	7	—	—
Collections(1)	—	—	22	25
Actuarial (gain) loss	1,756	(658)	78	(46)
Plan change	7	—	—	(17)
Net transfers (to) from variable fund/401(k) plan(2)	1	(26)	—	—
Expenses paid	(6)	(6)	—	—
Benefits paid	(721)	(719)	(58)	(61)
Benefit obligation at end of year	13,312	11,725	499	428
Change in plan assets				
Fair value of net plan assets at beginning of year	8,003	7,989	—	—
Actual return on plan assets	389	454	—	—
Plan participants' contributions	7	7	—	—
Collections(1)	—	—	22	25
Net transfers (to) from variable fund/401(k) plan(2)	1	(26)	—	—
Employer contributions	307	304	36	36
Expenses paid	(6)	(6)	—	—
Benefits paid	(721)	(719)	(58)	(61)
Fair value of net plan assets at end of year	7,980	8,003	—	—
Funded status	$ (5,332)	$ (3,722)	$ (499)	$ (428)

Notes
(1) Collections include retiree contributions as well as provider discounts and rebates.
(2) Includes one-time transfers to the 401(k) of $23 million related to the 2018 plan amendment.