



Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada

Affaires autochtones et
Développement du Nord Canada



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First Nations Water and Wastewater

TSAG
November 1st, 2011



Safe Drinking Water for First Nations

- This Government believes that First Nations should expect, as do all Canadians, safe, clean drinking water and the effective treatment of wastewater. This is an important health and safety issue.
- The Government is committed to helping First Nations ensure that First Nation communities have comparable drinking water and wastewater standards to those found off reserve in provinces and territories.
- Between 2006 and 2013, the Government of Canada will have invested approximately \$2.5 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure in First Nation communities.



National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems

- In 2009, AANDC commissioned Neegan Burnside Ltd., to conduct a national assessment on First Nations water and wastewater systems. This Assessment is the most rigorous, comprehensive and independent assessment of its kind, surveying 97% of water and wastewater systems in First Nation Communities.
- Results of the Assessment were released July 14, 2011, with Neegan Burnside having identified the following:
 - 314 High-Risk drinking water systems, serving 228 First Nations. Majority of risk is due to capacity issues, although infrastructure issues and lack of enforceable standards are also a concern;
 - 1,880 homes currently do not have drinking water service and 1,777 do not have wastewater services;
 - 37% of community buildings (schools, daycares, etc.) with individual wells have water quality problems;
 - \$1.2 billion in upgrades for existing systems to meet AANDC standards; and
 - \$3.5 billion to address projected growth over 10 years.
- AANDC is reviewing the results and recommendations of the independent report as it develops a long term strategy to support water services on reserve.



AANDC Investment

- The data and recommendations from the National Assessment will inform funding decisions for the coming years, starting in the current year.
- Already this year AANDC has made investments in 15 water systems the National Assessment identified as having a high risk and high overall risk rating are planned or underway, and investments in an additional 57 are planned over the following four years.
- AANDC and First Nations need to work together to develop investment plans that align with the key priorities identified in the Assessment.
- AANDC partnership with TSAG to establish remote monitoring of systems.



Activities Addressing Identified Issues

- Based on the results of the National Assessment , AANDC is taking immediate action in order to start addressing the following identified issues:
 - Enhanced capacity building for operators and training to ensure the proper operation and maintenance of the systems;
 - Upgrade existing systems so they meet AANDC standards;
 - Develop infrastructure investments strategy, including improving technologies and partnerships to ensure cost-effective and sustainable solutions (e.g., promote alternative financing options including P3s); and,
 - Develop regulations and enforceable standards / protocols
- Investments into water and wastewater infrastructure will continue to be managed through the First Nations Infrastructure Investment Planning (FNIIP) process.
- Moving forward, the Government will work with First Nations and other stakeholders to determine how to prioritize investments and determine the best solutions.



Circuit Rider Training Program (CRTP)

- A new set of guidelines is being developed to provide clear procedures that will facilitate the successful administration of CRTP nationally.
- Improvements to the CRTP:
 - Improve program consistency across the country;
 - Clarify performance standards for CRTs;
 - Ensure appropriate number of visits to First Nation communities; and
 - Ensure CRTS have minimum qualifications.
- These activities should build capacity and provide support for operating and maintaining systems.



Improvements to AANDC Protocols

- Until there is legislation and regulations in place, current protocols will be improved to bolster water and wastewater protection in First Nation communities:
 - Protocol for Centralised Drinking Water Systems;
 - Protocol for Centralised Wastewater Systems;
 - Protocol for Decentralised Water and Wastewater Systems.
- The Protocols provide standards for the design, construction, acquisition, operation, and maintenance of water and wastewater systems.
- The Protocols are guides for the cost-effective management of water and wastewater assets through their life-cycle.
- The AANDC Protocols are ever-green documents, and comments can be provided at any time to Normes_Standards@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca



Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Legislation

- Bill S-11, An Act respecting the safety of drinking water on first nation lands, was introduced on May 26, 2010. It was before the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples when a general election was called.
- The intention of the legislation was to provide a framework for the development of enforceable regulations to protect the health and safety of First Nations people on reserve. Concerns were raised regarding:
 - funding for infrastructure and capacity;
 - a clear role for First Nations in the development and application of standards; and,
 - respect for Aboriginal and treaty rights.
- The Government in partnership with First Nations will define an approach to develop regulations. Development of regulations will take time and will be implemented in a phased approach, which will give time to the Government and First Nations to discuss the state of readiness of individual First Nation communities, and identify priorities for action.
- It is the Government's intention to introduce safe drinking water legislation in the fall session of Parliament.



Key Components of Proposed Legislation

- Key elements of the proposed legislation include:
 - Design and approvals of water and wastewater systems;
 - Operator training and certification requirements;
 - Drinking water quality; and,
 - Protection of sources of drinking water on First Nation lands.

- A regulatory regime will help to:
 - Establish appropriate oversight;
 - Maintain infrastructure and address deficiencies;
 - Define shared responsibility governing a legal basis for compliance; and,
 - Protect public health.



Questions?