

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Division of Community Development Newsletter

In this Issue

- Navajo Nation and Indian Health Service move forward with water points and safe water storage projects using CARES Act funds
- Six New Mexico Chapters Present to the New Mexico Present to the New Mexico TIF Board and Secure 7.2 Million in and Secure \$7.2 Million in TIF Project Funding
- Waiting for water: On the Navajo Nation, long lines, scarce resources, a cry for solutions
- This tech is bringing water to Navajo Nation by pulling it out of the air
- Navajo Nation Sees Farming Renaissance During Coronavirus Pandemic
- Navajo Nation residents hope federal act, aid will finally bring big water projects
- Bulletin Board
- Personnel News
- Stop the Spread of Dikos Ntsaagíí-19 (COVID-19)
- Avoid Traveling Outside the Navajo Nation During The COVID-19 Pandemic
- Navajo Nation Census Information Center News
- Help with Dealing with Stress or Emotional Effects of COVID-19

Did You Know..

Prairie dogs act together to ensure each others' safety. While the group forages and maintains the burrows, one or more individuals act as a sentinel keeping watch for danger. The sentinel will give a loud alarm bark if a predator approaches and the group will head for the safety of the burrow.

<https://onekindplanet.org/animal/prairie-dog/>



Events:

August: Bini'antááts'ózí, which means Ripening of Early Crops

March 16-August 16: Limited Navajo Nation Services

August 14: Navajo Code Talker Day

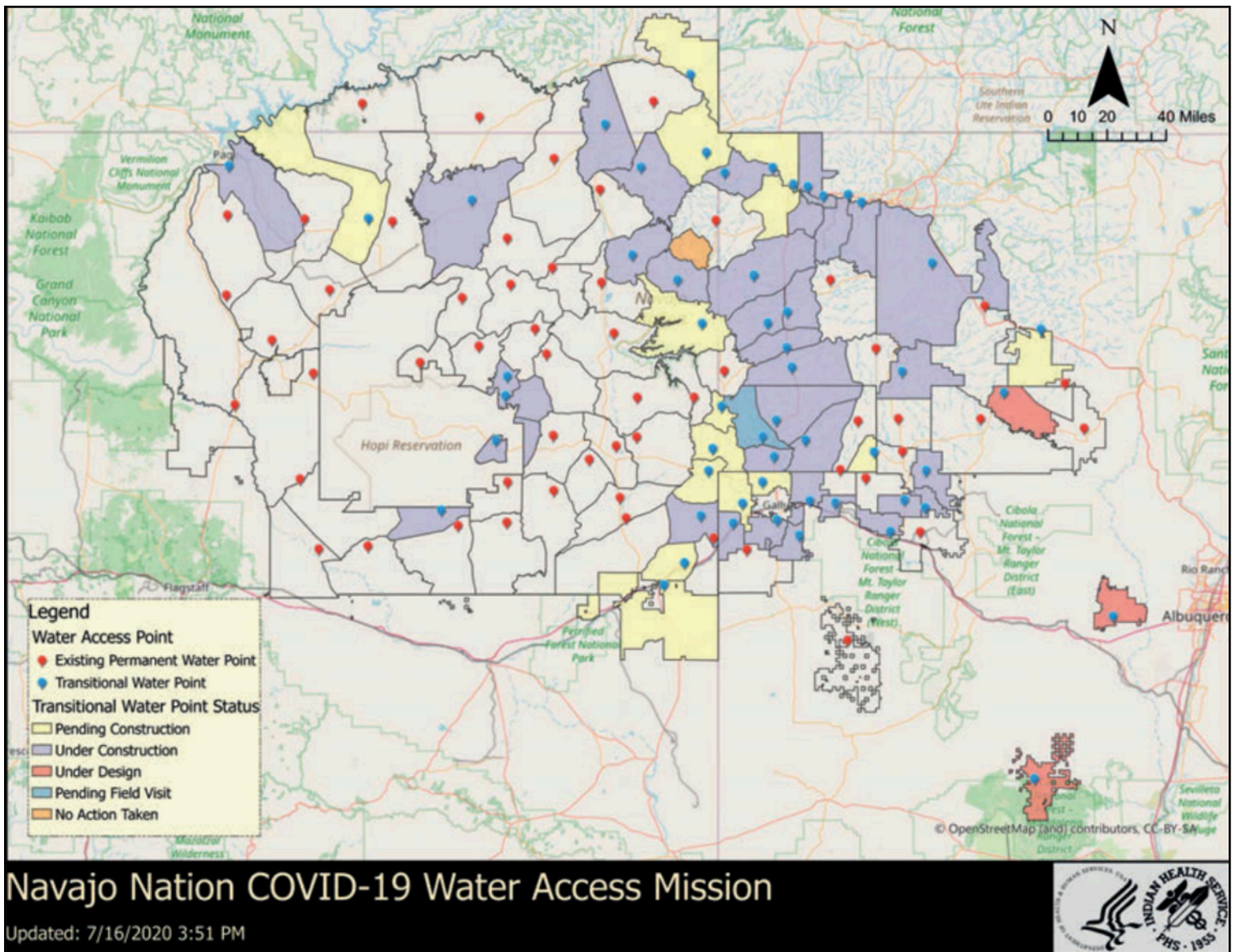
Navajo Nation and Indian Health Service move forward with water points and safe water storage projects using CARES Act funds



SOURCE: LEAH HOGSTEN | THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On July 14, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and officials with the Indian Health Service finalized a Memorandum of Agreement to allocate over \$5 million from the IHS appropriated Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to support the installation of up to 54 transitional water points, assistance with water fees, supply of up to 37,000 water storage containers, and up to 3.5 million doses of water disinfection tablets for residents living in homes with no piped water access for the duration of the Navajo Nation COVID-19 public health emergency. This large-scale effort is known as the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Mission.

“We know the Navajo people want and need water projects to move forward and get completed and with the signing of this MOA, many more Navajo families will get much-needed water resources. Through the partnership and hard work of the Navajo Nation, Indian Health Service, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, and Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, we are moving forward with these important projects. We are aware of the need for more windmill and earthen dam repairs in many communities and the Department of Water Resources is working hard to resolve those issues as well,” said President Nez.



The partnership of these entities developed into a group called the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Coordination Group, co-led by IHS and the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, comprised of 21 partners from the Navajo Nation, federal, state partners, public health universities, and non-profit organizations that have been meeting on a regular basis to collaborate on emergency water access response actions and to develop long-term solutions to address the lack of home water access.

“The Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Coordination Group is a great example of multiple federal and state agencies, and Navajo Nation divisions and programs coming together to address an important water need for our Navajo people. President Nez and I extend our appreciation to everyone involved,” stated Vice President Lizer.

Indian Health Service continues to work with the Navajo Nation, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, and the Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority on construction and start-up activities for 54 transitional water points, water point operations training for chapter staff, conducting an Interest survey of 110 Chapters to provide resources to support safe water storage, and the development of culturally appropriate public outreach and health educational materials on the importance of safe water storage.

“Partnerships and coordination of federal resources together is important, especially for improving water access on the Navajo Nation. I believe the Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Coordination Group bridges the needed resources and collaboration, and we appreciate the opportunity to co-lead the effort,” said Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development Dr. Pearl Yellowman.

“The Water Access Coordination Group work is a major undertaking to assess water wells and water stations at each Navajo Chapter community. This effort will better serve Navajo families with water needs for handwashing and quality drinking water. Through this partnership, we hope to help alleviate or reduce the community spread of COVID-19,” stated Capital Projects Management Department Manager James Adakai.

[READ HERE:https://bit.ly/2DcOBu1](https://bit.ly/2DcOBu1)

July 2020

SIX NEW MEXICO CHAPTERS PRESENT TO THE NEW MEXICO TIF BOARD AND SECURE \$7.2 MILLION IN TIF PROJECT FUNDING

July 23, 2020 —The New Mexico Tribal Infrastructure Fund board has awarded over \$13 million in funding across 11 tribal communities in New Mexico. The funds were approved by the Tribal Infrastructure Act of 2005, which recognizes that many of New Mexico's tribal communities lack basic infrastructure, resulting in poor health, social and economic conditions. The 13-person board thoroughly evaluates and scores each project proposal from tribal communities to ensure that critical needs for the projects are established.

The chapters submitted their proposal via the New Mexico TIF web portal in March 2020. Then, projects were reviewed and ranked by the TIF board. This year the TIF board received 54 proposals to rank and the top nine projects were selected to present their projects through a virtual Zoom TIF board meeting on July 23, 2020. The presenters included the Jicarilla Apache Nation, Tohatchi Chapter, Ohkay Owingeh, Coyote Canyon Chapter, Jemez Pueblo, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills Chapter, Alamo Chapter, Chichiltah Chapter and Mariano Lake Chapter. After the presentations, the TIF board voted to approve the 2020 TIF projects and funding amounts. Eight of the projects were fully funded and the ninth project was partially funded with the remainder of the TIF funds available. The following Navajo Navajo projects were funded this year:

Chichiltah Chapter will receive \$2,071,679 for the Chichiltah - Vanderwagen Community Water Supply Project to construct five water wells for the system.

READINESS

Planning completed

- Preliminary Engineering Report
- Biological and Archaeology Surveys
- Hydrogeological Investigation
- Land user consents

Slide includes logos for ASMA and various government departments, along with a map of the project area.

CRITICAL NEED

- Lack of water for Development and Growth
- The US Highway 491 corridor has high potential growth for economic and residential developments

Slide includes a table titled 'Table 1 - Summary of Federal and State Water Demand in Basin Projections' and a map of the Tohatchi Chapter area.

Tohatchi will receive \$593,245 for the Regional San Juan Lateral Water (NGWSP) Tohatchi and Mexican Springs Connection

SPECIFIC SOLUTION

CONNECT COYOTE CANYON TO REGIONAL NAVAJO GALLUP WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

Slide includes a map showing the project location and a list of project goals.

Coyote Canyon Chapter will receive \$2,786,781 for Coyote Canyon Connection to the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project Construction.

OVERVIEW MAP

Slide includes a map of the project area and a list of project goals.

Toadlena/Two Grey Hills Chapter will receive \$289,550.00 for Regional San Juan Lateral Water Project (NGWSP) Toadlena/Two Grey Hills and Newcomb Connection

ALAMO NAVAJO CHAPTER

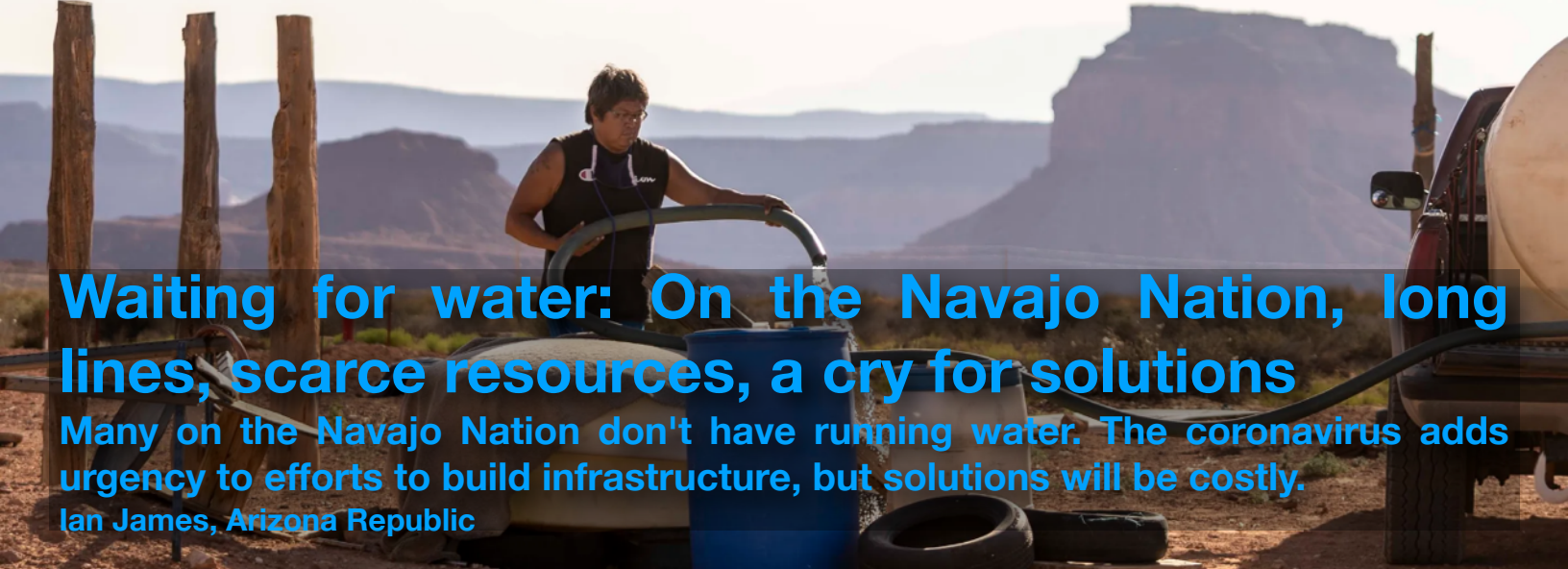
Alamo Sewer Line Extension Planning Project

Slide includes a photo of children playing in a field and a map of the project area.

Mariano Lake Chapter will receive \$1,400,000 for a New Multi-Purpose Building

Readiness

Slide includes a map of the project area and a list of project goals.



Waiting for water: On the Navajo Nation, long lines, scarce resources, a cry for solutions

Many on the Navajo Nation don't have running water. The coronavirus adds urgency to efforts to build infrastructure, but solutions will be costly.

Ian James, Arizona Republic

MONUMENT VALLEY, Utah — The line forms at the water spigot before dawn.

In Chevrolets, Fords and Toyotas, men and women of all ages pull up, the beds of their pickups holding plastic tanks and barrels.

Each day, all day long, people wait to take the white hose and let the water run into their tanks. It's the only reliable source of clean drinking water they can count on in this part of the Navajo Nation, and they come from miles around to fill up.

Heidi Nelson was behind six other trucks at 7 a.m., her truck's engine idling. The wait would be nearly an hour, and the tankful of water would be enough to last her family two or three days.

"Some of it will be for washing our hands. Some of it will be for cooking," Nelson said. "We just have to carefully watch over how we use our water."

An estimated 30% or more of people across the Navajo Nation live in homes without running water.

For generations, the Navajo people have suffered with this lack of water infrastructure, a deficiency rooted in colonial history and systemic racism, compounded by decades of insufficient funding and complicated by a host of other obstacles, including long-delayed settlements of the tribe's water rights claims.

In areas where there are few sources of safe drinking water, some people have resorted to collecting water from windmill-powered wells that were built for sheep and cattle. At times, they've unknowingly relied on sources tainted with hazardous contaminants, such as bacteria, naturally occurring arsenic and uranium from abandoned mines.

Efforts by the Navajo Nation and the federal government to address these deficiencies have long been hampered by small budgets and bureaucratic hurdles. And when planning infrastructure projects, officials from tribal and federal agencies have had to consider the high costs of extending water pipes to remote clusters of homes, often miles apart in the vast landscapes of desert, sagebrush and junipers.

In the past four months, the Navajo Nation has struggled to control some of the highest rates of COVID-19 cases in the country. The coronavirus has brought new attention to the dire need for water access on the reservation.

As the virus has spread and claimed lives, many Navajo citizens have found it difficult to take basic precautions like washing their hands because they can't just turn on the tap. As older residents have tried to stay isolated at home, relatives and other community members have stepped in to haul water for them.

Leaders of the Navajo Nation say COVID-19 has brought urgency to their plans for water solutions. But the scale of needed infrastructure projects, with costs estimated in the billions, makes their task a monumental challenge. The tribe's water officials say their plans involve drilling wells, diverting water from rivers and building pipelines and distribution networks to gradually reach more homes. They acknowledge these projects will take years to complete.

Along the Arizona-Utah border, many Navajos live in homes without running water or electricity. They use outhouses, keep rows of plastic barrels beside their homes and bathe using the water they can carry inside in buckets.

They haul water on dusty roads that wind through the towering mesas and buttes of Monument Valley.

In the reservation's Oljato chapter in southern Utah, nearly half the households don't have water.

Families must set aside time and gas money for their trips to the community of Goulding, where a red spigot stands in a lot beside the Monument Valley Post Office.

On one afternoon, some of those waiting in the queue of pickups said they would need to make a second trip to get enough for their sheep, horses or cows. In the summer heat, the animals need more water. Making two back-to-back trips can easily eat up half a day.

To pass the time in line, people chatted, checked phones or watched downloaded movies on iPads. Some wore masks as they stepped out of their trucks, grabbed the hose and sloshed water into a tank.

One of those waiting was Tommy Rock, a 44-year-old Navajo researcher who holds a Ph.D. from Northern Arizona University and who specializes in studying water contamination and environmental health.

Rock lives about 15 miles away with his mother and a brother. He hauls water in his truck to fill up their tank and water barrels and to give to their sheep. But they can't shower at home, so they often drive to a campground, where they pay more than \$6 per shower.

In May, Rock and his family came down with COVID-19. While they suffered through the illness, relatives helped bring them water.

Rock lost his sense of smell and taste, and the virus attacked his lungs. He coughed and struggled to breathe, a fever weighing him down.

Living through the virus was "one of the worst feelings ever," Rock said. To ease his cough, he boiled sage in a pot and breathed in the vapors. He and his family gradually recovered.

When Rock resumed driving to town for water, he put on a mask.

In the past few years, Rock and his mother have repeatedly heard talk about plans to lay water pipes in their area, where the horizon stretches to distant mesas. But these plans have been discussed for so long that Rock has grown skeptical about the prospects of construction getting underway.

"It gets really frustrating," Rock said, standing by his truck while another man filled up.

"We just need more funding to extend a lot of these water lines," Rock said. "When is that going to happen?"

READ MORE AT: <https://www.azcentral.com/in-depth/news/local/arizona-environment/2020/07/22/the-navajo-nations-wait-for-water-persists-with-few-answers/3224889001/>

This tech is bringing water to Navajo Nation by pulling it out of the air

Zero Mass Water's Source hydropanels use sunlight to absorb water vapor from the air. In the Navajo Nation, where running water is scarce and COVID-19 is surging, they're providing a lifeline.



BY KRISTIN TOUSSAINT

In the Navajo Nation, sometimes a single spigot on an empty road is the only water source around for hundreds of residents. Others have to drive from their rural homes into towns miles away to buy all the water they need for cooking, drinking, cleaning, and livestock, because there's no infrastructure to bring it through pipes. About 40% of households in the Navajo Nation live without running water. But now, at a few houses, panels positioned on the ground pull moisture from the air, connecting to a tap inside the home and providing up to 10 liters of water—or about 20 16-ounce bottles—a day, at no cost to the family.

The panels come from Zero Mass Water; the company's Source hydropanels use sunlight to absorb water vapor from the air, even in arid climates. Zero Mass Water partnered with local Navajo governments and Navajo Power, a public benefit corporation working to install solar power on tribal lands, for an initial demonstration project in which 15 homes received two Source panels each, for a total of 30 panels. Those initial panels were funded by Barclays and The Unreasonable Group, an accelerator for socially minded startups.

Each Source hydropanel can make up to 3 to 5 liters of water a day; with two panels, a home can get up to 10 liters a day, and each panel can store 30 liters of water, or 60 16-ounce bottles of water, for when cloud cover may affect production. The panels last for 15 years.

"These homes are very rural. You could drive for 10 minutes down the highway between homes; you're never going to get a pipe [installed]," says Cody Friesen, Zero Mass Water CEO. This land, he adds, is about the same size as the state of West Virginia, with a population of 175,000—54,000 of which have no water. "This is a solvable problem," he says.

The Navajo Nation has at points during the pandemic had the highest COVID-19 infection rate per capita in the U.S., worsened by the fact that residents can't easily access water to wash their hands and have to make frequent trips into town to buy water. Zero Mass Water first started communicating with the Navajo Nation about three years ago, but the pandemic has heightened the urgency for this partnership. The company worked with chapter leaders—the Navajo Nation has 110 chapters, which are geographical divisions like counties—to find the people most in need.

"When you have an average family of five or six in a household, and they have a herd of sheep and maybe a couple horses and cattle, the water doesn't last too long. They have to make another run into town," says Jerry Williams, president of the LeChee Chapter of the Navajo Nation. Some families, he says, are fortunate enough to have 225-gallon tanks on their pickup trucks, so they can haul more water at once; others are not.

Williams admits he was a bit skeptical when Navajo Power first approached him about this project. "I said, 'Well you're going to have to show me, you're going to have to make me see it to believe it,'" he says. It was tricky to explain to community members what exactly they'd be getting, too, but he talked with the Navajo families in LeChee that would be a part of this initial demonstration project and visited their homes when the panels were installed and the water taps turned on.

Now, Williams hopes more Navajo chapters and leaders can find out that this technology exists. "To go through this, to be skeptical and then to the time where you actually feel it, taste it, then you're game," he says. "Then you think about, 'Wow, how can we get this out to the other communities?'" Zero Mass Water wants the same. The company is hoping this initial project can prove that its Source panels can be a solution for the entire Navajo Nation's water crisis, with support from CARES Act funding.

This technology can scale, Friesen says, but it will take money. To outfit all the Navajo Nation homes in need of water with Source panels would be about \$40 to \$70 million. The Navajo Nation received \$714 million total in CARES Act funding to cover expenses "incurred due to the public health emergency," such as making sure people have running water to wash their hands. This solution would account for about 5 to 10% of that total allotment. "I'm hoping that each of the 110 chapters can at least utilize some of this equipment. I know there's a lot of people that live off the grid, that live 6, 7, 10 miles off the main water line," Williams says. "I know that there is need."

READ MORE AT: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90530445/this-tech-is-bringing-water-to-navajo-nation-by-pulling-it-out-of-the-air>

Navajo Nation Sees Farming Renaissance During Coronavirus Pandemic

Historically Navajos have lived off the land. But decades of assimilation, forced relocation and dependence on federal food distribution programs changed that.

Navajo farmer Tyrone Thompson is on a mission to help people return to their roots. He's even taken to social media to teach traditional farming techniques.

In a recent video he demonstrates how to layer organic matter to turn dry clay into rich fertile soil.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture calls the Navajo Nation a food desert. People travel up to 40 miles to get their groceries. But Thompson says they don't have to.

"As we see the shelves emptying of food and toilet paper we kind of reconnect to our roots," Thompson says. "Some of the tools that were given by our elders and our ancestors — our planting stick and our steering sticks — those are our weapons against hunger and poverty and sickness."

The Navajo Nation has gone from having the highest coronavirus infection rate in the country to a steady decline in cases. Tribal leaders are discouraging members from travel to surrounding states where numbers are spiking. Now, researcher Brandon Francis says more people are staying home and farming.

"There has been a surge in interest," Francis says. "Seeds were hard to come by. They flew off the shelves just as fast as toilet paper did."

This renewed interest in agriculture comes five years after many people on the reservation abandoned farming. They quit when an EPA crew investigating a mine in Colorado accidentally unleashed 3 million gallons of metal-contaminated waste into the southwest river system. Photos of the yellow river went viral.

"It's shocking and it shocked people worldwide," Francis says.

The town of Shiprock, which was the most affected, is named for a giant rock formation that appears to be sailing across the desert. Many people there don't have running water. So when the Gold King Mine dumped into its main water source, Shiprock Chapter president Duane "Chili" Yazzie says people were devastated.

"The mine spill certainly had a very significant impact on our lives, our mental emotional spiritual health," Yazzie says.

Water plays a critical role in Navajo ceremonies. So when people saw the yellow sludge flow past their farms, Yazzie says they weren't sure what would become of their prayers, their livelihoods or their families.

"We as indigenous people continue to recognize that the spiritual and the physical aspects of our life are one and the same," Yazzie says.

Upstream problems, downstream problems

Researchers have studied the impacts of the leaks and surges on crops downstream and they say there are occasional spikes in metals like lead and arsenic. But they say residents would have to eat 40 servings a day over several days before getting sick.



Since COVID-19 has much of the Navajo Nation stuck at home, farmer Tyrone Thompson says it's the perfect time for them to return to their agricultural roots.

Tommy Greyeyes /Courtesy Hundred Storms Creative

But upstream in Colorado dozens of historic mines are still leaking and many of them could surge once again endangering farming on the Navajo Nation. It's an area called the Bonita Peak Mining District, which includes the Gold King Mine.

Peter Butler is the chairman of an advisory group that's working with the EPA to prevent another spill, like a nearby mine that's had two major blowouts in recent years.

"Nobody wants to go in there and find out what's going on because who knows the water could be backed up again," Butler says. "You're going back in there and if, of course, it releases, it's a death trap."

The EPA has recognized the seriousness of the spill and made it a super fund site. Ironically that's created even more red tape to remediate all of the hazardous mines. It's also raised the costs.

So Butler says the question becomes "how much are you willing to spend to try to reduce the risk of unplanned surges when they may or may not happen?"

But this costs may become more and more necessary. Downstream the Navajo are now counting on clean water from the river to irrigate their crops and become a self-sustaining nation during a pandemic.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/28/895735482/navajo-nation-sees-farming-renaissance-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

Navajo Nation residents hope federal act, aid will finally bring big water projects

BY Zak Podmore

Last summer, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez sat before the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee and pleaded for the passage of a bill that would formalize water rights for the Utah portion of the Navajo Nation.

“More than 40% of Navajo households in Utah lack running water or adequate sanitation in their homes,” Nez said in the June 2019 testimony. “In some cases, such as in the community of Oljato on the Arizona-Utah border, a single spigot on a desolate road, miles from any residence, serves 900 people. The legislation provides the means to address these critical needs of the Navajo people.”

Nine months later, the critical needs Nez described became even more urgent, after a man unknowingly carried the coronavirus from a baseball tournament in Tucson, Ariz., to the Navajo Nation community of Chinchilbeto, Ariz., not far from the Utah line. The virus spread at a church rally March 7 — the pastor giving the sermon reportedly had a cough — and ripped through the northern Navajo Nation over the next few months, prompting lockdowns, curfews and mask orders.



(Leah Hogsten | The Salt Lake Tribune) A man who lives in Aneth fills up his water jugs at the St. Christopher's Episcopal Mission well in Bluff. More than 30% of Navajo Nation households lack running water, and the problem is even worse in San Juan County where nearly half of Navajo Nation residents have to haul water. Families fill jugs at communal wells or buy bottled water from stores — both costly and time-consuming burdens that have become only more difficult during the pandemic.



(Leah Hogsten | The Salt Lake Tribune) The Oljato-Monument Valley water spigot adjacent to the post office is one of a few locations in San Juan County where members of the Navajo Nation can get clean water. More than one third of Navajo Nation households lack running water, and the problem is even worse in San Juan County where nearly half of Navajo Nation residents have to haul water. Families fill jugs at communal wells or buy bottled water from stores, both costly and time-consuming burdens that have become only more difficult during the pandemic and the tribe's daily and weekend curfews.

An elderly woman and her son from Navajo Mountain, Utah, died within days of each other in late March after running out of water in their off-grid home while quarantining with the virus. As of Sunday, COVID-19 had taken 434 lives on the Navajo Nation, which has an on-reservation population of about 174,000. That translates to a higher per capita rate than any U.S. state, and Nez has repeatedly drawn connections between the severity of the outbreak and the lack of running water in so many households.

It was in this context that the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act, which Nez testified on behalf of last year, was revived. The settlement formalizes an agreement among Utah, the federal government and the Navajo Nation that was worked out over more than a decade of negotiations. Talks over the deal began in 2003, and the bill was first introduced in Congress by then-Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, in 2016. Hatch's successor, Utah Republican Sen. Mitt Romney, reintroduced the legislation last year, but it didn't pass until June, after the pandemic had turned water availability on the reservation into a national issue.

The House version of the bill, co-sponsored by Utah's entire congressional delegation — three Republicans and one Democrat — has yet to see a vote.

If it passes into law, the legislation would recognize the Navajo Nation's right to 81,500 acre-feet of water from the Colorado River Basin each year, and it would provide \$210 million in funding for water improvements on Navajo Nation lands in southeastern Utah. An additional \$8 million has been approved by the state of Utah.

Expanding water access has broad support among the American public during the coronavirus pandemic. A June poll from Climate Nexus, in partnership with Yale and George Mason universities, found 84% support for allocating federal dollars to provide clean water to the 2 million Americans currently without running water, many of whom live on Native American reservations.

According to Nez, the Utah settlement would save the federal government millions of dollars in litigation costs and help the United States meet its treaty obligations.

"The passage of this legislation will also advance the commitments made in the Treaty of 1868, where Navajo leaders pledged their honor to keep peace with the United States and, in return, the United States pledged to the Navajo people ... their permanent homeland," Nez said. "In the arid West, it is clear — no lands can be a permanent homeland without an adequate supply of water, especially potable water."

Even before the pandemic, the public health benefits of water funding were clear. According to an analysis by the Indian Health Service, every dollar the agency spends on home sanitation facilities achieves at least a twentyfold return in health benefits.

"We're under a very serious pandemic emergency," said James Adakai, president of the Oljato Chapter and manager for the Navajo Nation Capital Projects Management Department, which works on water and electrical improvements. "We need to get clean water to the homes. To improve the living conditions of Navajo families, we need long-term, reliable water sources, which the Utah Navajo Water Rights Settlement Act will provide."



(Zak Podmore | Tribune file photo) Oljato Chapter President James Adakai, right, talks with San Juan County Commissioner Bruce Adams after a county commission meeting in Monument Valley, Utah, July 2, 2019.

Adakai said the \$218 million in funding from the state and federal governments would be significant seed money but might not be enough to connect all Utah Navajo households to water. In some cases, he said, it could cost between \$150,000 and \$250,000 to connect a single household.

"This is a big project, running the water lines maybe 20 to 40 miles to very remote communities," Adakai explained. "Running the line to the home, the drain fields, the septic tanks, the interior plumbing work, the cost of booster stations, water storage tanks, treatment plants — all the construction costs, labor, materials and supplies — it adds up."

Another potential source of funding is the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which passed in March and has so far resulted in \$714 million flowing to the Navajo Nation.

The disbursement of the bulk of the funds was delayed by the federal government by nearly two months, and more recently a debate within the Navajo Nation government over how to spend the money has led to additional delays with presidential vetoes and stalemates within the Navajo Nation Council.

The CARES Act money must be spent by Dec. 31 under current rules, and Arlyssa Becenti, government reporter for The Navajo Times, said some constituents worry about time running out.

"They're not liking the fact that legislative and executive [branches] are fighting over the money and where it should go," Becenti said, adding that small protests have recently broken out over the issue in the Navajo Nation capital of Window Rock, Ariz. Some critics have suggested giving out the money directly to individual tribal members.

But the prolonged debate can obscure a base of widespread agreement over spending priorities. "Water, electricity and broadband — those are the main components," Becenti said. "Those three are what the council wants, the president wants, and the protesters want."

As political efforts to expand water access grind forward and as nonprofits work on interim solutions, a low-pressure public spigot in the Oljato Chapter near Monument Valley that Nez referred to in his congressional testimony is as crowded as ever with pickup trucks lined up every day, waiting to fill portable tanks and haul the water home.

Adakai said it's important to keep those stakes in mind. "We're in a water crisis," he said. "We were before [the pandemic], but now it seems to be worse."

Zak Podmore is a Report for America corps member and writes about conflict and change in San Juan County for The Salt Lake Tribune.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2020/07/27/navajo-nation-residents/>

Bulletin Board

This college student from the Navajo Nation now wants to become the chief of police for her reservation

Three years ago, Devonna Begay left her Navajo tribe in Arizona to start a new journey at the University of Portland. It was as milestone: She would be the first member of her family to attend a four-year college.

Because of her excellent academic performance in high school, Begay was able to get a scholarship that covers all her tuition and housing expenses. Today, Begay is a rising senior majoring in sociology with a concentration in law enforcement, and with many goals and dreams to accomplish after graduation.

But Begay's vision of the future is not the same as it was when she started college a few years ago. In fact, her life has changed dramatically in the last six months.

In March, when Covid-19 first started to spread around the U.S., the University of Portland asked all students to leave their dorms and go back home. This was a hard hit for Begay. She knew that going back home was not an option. There, she would not have access to internet to continue her studies and there was also the risk of getting her family members infected with coronavirus. Luckily, she was able to stay with her boyfriend in Portland. But still, she struggled.

"The last four months have been a challenge for me. Both of my parents lost their jobs because of Covid-19. The Navajo Nation has been hit pretty hard and there have been times when I felt hopeless for not being able to support them," Begay said.

On top of the financial hardship, one of her uncles passed away and two members of her family tested positive for Covid-19.

"I wish I could be with my family.... I am stuck here, I can't go home, and all these things that are happening," Begay said.

And then, on May 25, George Floyd was killed after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly 9 minutes, sparking a massive movement against police brutality and discrimination. Thousands of people around the U.S. went out into the streets, night after night, asking for justice for Floyd's death. They demanded reform of the law-enforcement system and even called on the government to defund the police.

All of this makes it particularly difficult to focus on her studies and career - especially given that she is pursuing a career in law enforcement. She has actually begun to rethink her career path.

"Being a female and a minority in law enforcement will be out of the norm for sure," she said. "I'm trying to see what I can do to better prepare myself and help others the best that I can."

Begay believes that "police reform needs to happen but in a strategic way," where officers have access to counseling and mental therapy.

She was on track to join the U.S. Army next year but decided with all that has changed, that wasn't the path she wanted to take. Now, her goal is to become chief of police for her reservation. Begay wants to apply her knowledge in sociology to create connections between mental health and law enforcement - so that social issues can be solved in a better way and not by resorting to violence.

Read more at: <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/29/coronavirus-has-caused-this-college-student-to-change-her-career-plans.html>



New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration hold Virtual ICIP Trainings

New Mexico ICIP trainings were set up to help communities and local government officials understand and develop their Fiscal Year 2022-2026 ICIP. The training webinars included ICIP 101 for learning the importance of submitting an ICIP and entering your project information into the ICIP database. The Community Development Bureau provided a presentation on Capital Outlay, understanding grant agreements, notice of obligations, pay requests, information on the 2020 Capital Outlay Bill (HB 349) and Solvency Measures from Special Session (SB 5). Other trainings will provide information on planning, and vetting projects, and creative ways to develop a cost estimate for your project.

The trainings were recorded and will be uploaded to the NM DFA YouTube Channel.

NNOG provides propane to those in need

WINDOW ROCK -- The Navajo Nation and a multitude of volunteer relief groups are delivering food across the Navajo Nation so vulnerable elders and COVID-positive families don't have to leave their homes during the pandemic.

But free food doesn't do you much good if you're out of fuel to cook it with. With that in mind, Navajo Oil and Gas has been traveling across the Nation filling up propane tanks. An average of 120 tanks are filled at each location, ranging in size from 20 to 100 pounds. Last week the enterprise was in Oak Springs/Pine Springs Chapter, where Community Services Coordinator Flavian Tabaha estimated about 120 families were helped.

Tabaha said many people in the rural chapter use propane to cook with and the community was very appreciative. "This is a high-unemployment area and most people don't have a big 3,000-pound tank because they can't afford to fill it," Tabaha said. "When you see all these people bringing these small tanks, you know they really need it."

According to Tabaha, the Oil and Gas employees tested the tanks before they filled them to make sure they were safe, and found quite a few that needed repairs, which they performed. "That was an important part of the service," he said. Tabaha said the chapter worked closely with the community health representatives to identify "high-risk elderlies and people without transportation" as priority for the program.

"I'd just like to thank the Navajo Nation, Navajo Oil and Gas, our local delegates, the chapter officials and the Fort Defiance Community Development people for all their help during this pandemic," he added.

READ MORE AT: <https://navajotimes.com/ae/community/nnog-provides-propane-to-those-in-need/>

Bulletin Board

Navajo Navajo Firefighters receive new fleet of fire trucks

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate the Navajo Nation Fire Department for their strong advocacy and hard work to secure a fleet of new fire trucks and equipment that will help to serve and protect our Navajo communities. The new fire trucks arrived to the Navajo Nation on Thursday.

President Nez, Vice President Lizer, and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council gathered with local firefighters at Navajo Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Ariz. on Friday, to see the new fleet and congratulate Navajo Nation Department of Fire and Rescue Services Fire Chief Larry Chee and his team for their accomplishment. Fire Chief Larry Chee was very instrumental in developing legislation to allocate a portion of Navajo Nation tax revenue to provide more revenue and resources for the Navajo Nation Fire Department. The seven new trucks will replace an aging fleet that has been used for many years.

"This is a great occasion for our entire Nation. The men and women of the Navajo Nation Fire Department are on the frontlines each and every day. They played a major role in successfully containing the recent Wood Springs 2 Fire as well. Under the leadership of Fire Chief Larry Chee and his staff, we are now able to provide more efficient equipment to help our firefighters save lives and protect our communities from wildfires and other emergencies. Thank you, our frontline warriors!" said President Nez.

The Navajo Nation Department of Fire and Rescue Services operates 24/7 to provide fire protection, education, and medical services across the Navajo Nation. Prior to the passage of the legislation the biggest challenge was inadequate funding for personnel, personnel training, equipment, and community education.

"This is a great accomplishment and it is due to the persistence and dedication of our frontline warriors and Fire Chief Larry Chee. Our Nation's firefighters, Navajo hotshots, and many others did a great job in putting out the wildfire that occurred this month. President Nez and I made several trips out to the Sawmill area during the fire, and we saw firsthand the hard work and brave service that our firefighters provide. Thank you to all of our frontline heroes," stated Vice President Lizer.

READ AT: <https://bit.ly/39FaAG5>

Filing period for Navajo Nation general election opens Tuesday

GALLUP — The filing period for candidates seeking to run for chapter government offices and board seats in the Navajo Nation general election can submit their paperwork from July 28 through Aug. 10.

Candidates may file applications at one of the five agency offices, according to the Navajo Election Administration.

The Nov. 3 election, which will be by plurality vote, will determine chapter presidents, vice presidents and secretary-treasurers, in addition to seats for alternative forms of government and memberships on grazing committees, land boards, school boards, farm boards and the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors.

There will be no primary election in August because of the coronavirus. The decision to drop the primary election was recommended by the election board over safety of voters and to comply with the various public health emergency orders the Navajo Department of Health has made to address the new virus.

The final decision to cancel the primary election was bogged by a veto from tribal President Jonathan Nez before the Navajo Nation Council supported an override.

For more information about the filing period, contact the election administration in Window Rock, Arizona at 800-775-8683 or by email at navajoelections@navajo-nsn.gov or by visiting the administration's website at navajoelections.navajo-nsn.gov.

The agency offices can be reached by telephone at:

Northern Agency election office in Shiprock, 866-659-5842

Eastern Agency election office in Crownpoint, 888-508-6870

Fort Defiance Agency election office in Window Rock, 866-800-4988

Chinle Agency election office in Chinle, Arizona, 866-387-9352

Western Agency election office in Tuba City, Arizona, 888-508-4970

The election administration warns that there might be a delay in responding to telephone calls and email is a faster way to receive replies.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.daily-times.com/story/news/local/navajo-nation/2020/07/27/candidacy-filing-period-opens-tuesday-navajo-nation/5517529002/>

July 2020

PERSONNEL NEWS

DCD OPEN POSITIONS

POSITION TITLE	LOCATION	PAY RATE	CLOSING DATE
Administrative Service Centers			
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Jeddito, AZ	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Red Lake, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Klagetoh, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Crystal, NM	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Black Mesa, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Forest Lake, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Iyanbito, NM	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Alamo, NM	25,854.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Lake Valley, NM	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Red Mesa, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Red Valley, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Tolani Lake, AZ	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Kaibeto, AZ	25,854.40	OUF

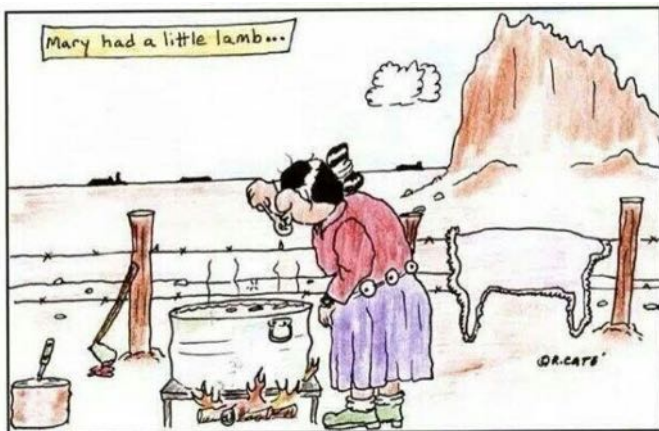
(OUF) Open Until Filled

(S) Sensitive Position (subject to background check)

Closing Dates may change due temporary reduction in non-essential Navajo Nation government services

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at
<http://www.dpm.navajo-nsn.gov/jobs.html>

Comic of the Month



Inspirational Quote of the Month

"You must do the things you think you cannot do."

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

GH

U.S. Population Clock Hit 330 Million at 8:02 a.m. EDT Today Based on Population Components Measured Since 2010 Census

DERICK MOORE | JULY 23, 2020

The 2010 Census counted 308,745,538 people living in the United States. Now, 10 years later, the 2020 Census is still counting and we will not know the final number until our work is done and presented to the president and Congress.

However, the U.S. Census Bureau provides population estimates between the decennial censuses and as projected, the nation reached a milestone at 8:02 a.m. EDT today: the U.S. population hit 330 million.

The clock shows a net gain of one person every 16 seconds through the Population Estimates Program (PEP) which calculates the three components of change: births, deaths, and migration.

"Using administrative records, we measure change since the last Census," said Luke Rogers, chief of the Population Estimates Branch. "We release estimates for many groups and geographies."

"PEP estimates are used in federal and state funding allocations, as survey controls, as denominators for a variety of rates calculated by other agencies, and for countless research projects by academics, media, and others interested in how the United States is changing," Rogers said.

Visit the U.S. Population Clock to witness this event or select a date to get the population estimates for that day.

The last milestone (based on an old, and now superseded, series of estimates) was 325 million on May 7, 2017 at 6:13 a.m. EDT.

Results of the 2020 Census will have a major impact on all population estimates until the next Census in 2030.

"The accuracy of the 2020 Census is imperative," Rogers said. "A good Census will help us produce accurate estimates across the entire next decade."

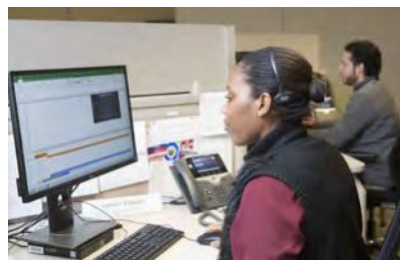
Population Estimates are available for the United States, its counties, cities or towns and so are Population Projections for the Nation and states.

Derick Moore is senior communications specialist at the Census Bureau.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/07/census-bureau-estimates-united-states-population-reached-330-million-today.html>

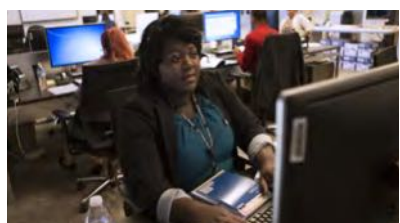
The 2020 Census

4 Ways to Respond



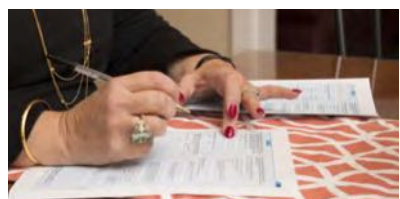
1. Secure Internet

New and Quick, Respond Online. It's safe, secure and confidential. Your information and privacy are protected. It's economical both for you and for the taxpayers. It's greener saving trees and it's user friendly—offering you help screens and the ability to review your answers.



2. Respond by Phone

Our enumerators are ready to take your information question by question from the convenience of your phone.



3. Respond by Mail

Wait until you receive your paper form through the mail or dropped at your residence. It can be filled out at home and dropped into your mailbox or post office.



4. In-person Interview

Our enumerators will visit and quickly interview residences that choose not to self respond.

Respond today at **2020census.gov**
or call **844-330-2020**

Each completed survey
is a building block to
a better America.

Shape
our future
START HERE >



July 2020

Stop the Spread of Dikos Ntsaaígíí-19 (COVID-19)

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19:



Wear a face mask
when in public places

Maintain 6 feet of
physical distance from
people you do not live
with



Clean and disinfect
commonly-used
surfaces and things

Stay home and
self-isolate when you
are sick, except in an
emergency



Do not touch your eyes,
nose, or mouth

Regularly wash your
hands with soap and
water for at least 20
seconds



Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue, then throw
the tissue in the trash and wash your hands. If you don't
have a tissue use your arm or sleeve (and not your hand)

Be aware of your health- watch for symptoms of COVID-19
Get daily physical activity

DIKOS NTSAAÍGÍÍ-19
CORONAVIRUS

NAVAJO HEALTH COMMAND OPERATIONS CENTER
(P) 928.871.7014
(E) coronavirus.info@nndoh.org
www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19

  
[@navajodephealth](https://www.facebook.com/navajodephealth)
[#DineDabizilil](https://twitter.com/DineDabizilil)



AVOID TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE NAVAJO NATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

COVID-19 cases and deaths have been increasing in areas surrounding the Navajo Nation. Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick.

Before you travel off the Navajo Nation, here are some questions to consider:

- Is COVID-19 spreading where you're going?
- Will you or those you are traveling with be within 6 feet of others during or after your trip?
- Are you or those you are traveling with more likely to get ill from COVID-19?
- Do you live with someone who is more likely to get very ill from COVID-19?
- Are you prepared to quarantine for 14 days after your trip?
- Are you prepared for the risks?

When you leave your home, here are some tips to protect yourself and others:

- Always wear a face mask
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance between yourself and others

July 2020



**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NEEDS
HELP DEALING WITH STRESS OR THE
EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF COVID-19
HERE ARE SOME RESOURCES:**

Navajo residents can also call
Navajo Regional Behavioral Health Center at
(505) 368-1438 or
(505) 368-1467, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday-Friday (MDT)

After 5 p.m., Monday - Friday (MDT)
Chinle Region:

(928) 551-0713

Dilkon and Tuba City Region:

(928) 551-0624

Farmington, Kirtland, and Shiprock Region:

(928) 551-0508

Shiprock and Red Mesa Region:

(928) 551-0394

DIKOS NTSAAÍGÍÍ-19
CORONAVIRUS



  
@navajodephealth
#DineDabidzii

Navajo Health Command Operations Center
(928) 871-7014
coronavirus.info@nndoh.org
www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19



The DCD Newsletter, "Community Info", is produced monthly by the Division of Community Development and is a resource for division staff and chapters.

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