

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## Division of Community Development Newsletter

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### Did You Know..

Did you know that prairie dogs have a distinct language and descriptive words for different things and have dialects between villages.

[Read More](#)

### Events:

#### July: "Ya'iishjáástsoh," which means Planting of Late Crops

March 16-July 26: Limited Navajo Nation Services

July 3: 4th of July (Observed)

July 4: 4th of July

## Passage of the Navajo Nation CARES Act legislation is a victory for the Navajo People



PHOTO: Office of the Navajo Nation President and Vice President

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer commend the Navajo Nation Council's passage of Legislation 0116-20, which creates a path forward for the three branches of government to work together to begin using the \$600 million in CARES Act funds to help the Navajo people and frontline warriors in the fight against COVID-19. The measure was approved on June 19, yet the final resolution has not been delivered to the Office of the President and Vice President as of Thursday – nearly one week later.

"We strongly advocated for the passage of the legislation, which was strongly supported by the Navajo people. Legislation No. 0116-20 received over 2,800 supporting signatures on an online petition and over 100 written supporting comments from the Navajo people, but the resolution has not reached our office for consideration. It's time to stop playing political games and send the resolution to the Office of the President and Vice President," said President Nez.

Despite the President's call for no amendments to Legislation No. 0116-20, the 24th Navajo Nation Council moved ahead to approve six amendments, which altered the intent of the legislation.

Some of these amendments changed the original CARES Act expenditure proposal, as the original legislation sought immediate use of \$50 million to assist in reopening the Navajo Nation by purchasing test kits to test all employees prior to having them return to work, purchasing personal protection equipment, cleaning/disinfecting compromised government buildings, and hazard pay for employees working during the pandemic such as CHR's, senior citizen center staff, first responders, and others. These dollars were removed or altered from the original legislation through Council's amendments.

Another amendment removed the creation of a three-branch Care Act "work group," which would've worked together to ensure the vetting of infrastructure projects based on project readiness or construction readiness and expedite the expenditure of funds for these projects. President Nez said that although the "work group" was removed from the legislation, the Executive Branch will move forward with creating a team to package up the expenditure plan.

"It's clear that the intent of some delegates was to gut the original legislation to make it unworkable so certain delegates could introduce separate bills that propose spending sprees in a piecemeal approach. Since Legislation No. 0116-20 was passed, Legislation No. 0132-20 was introduced and quickly approved and that resolution was quickly sent to the Office of the President and Vice President. We strongly caution the Council not to treat the \$714 million in CARES Act funding as unrestricted spending for pet projects," stated President Nez.

It's important to note that CARES Act money must be used with the strictest application possible since these funds come from a federal source, and do not originate from the Tribe's General Fund. Proper transparent use of these federal dollars is paramount to the Nez-Lizer Administration. It is also important to have the approvals for the use of the funds to be expeditious.

"I question the actions of the Council to remove language from the bill that would have provided a method to expedite the use of funds, especially when we are faced with a pending deadline in December to use the funds. Instead, they reincorporated the bureaucratic review process and additional requirements related to bidding, which will slow the process of completing projects," stated Vice President Lizer.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer said there are issues that have to be worked out including the plan for the second round of CARES Act funding totaling approximately \$113 million. Overall, the Navajo Nation received just over \$714 million through the CARES Act.

The Nez-Lizer Administration proposes to expend the CARES Act funding for:

- Expenditure of \$300 Million for water infrastructure and agriculture projects
  - Adequate plumbing of Navajo homes are necessary to provide clean water for hygiene and household use to combat COVID-19
  - Agricultural projects are needed to promote self-sufficiency and economic development
- Expenditure of \$150 Million for powerline and solar infrastructure
  - An adequate source of power and energy of Navajo homes are needed to electrify water infrastructure, refrigeration, telephone, telehealth, etc.
- Expenditure of \$50 Million for Broadband/Telecommunication
  - Adequate telecommunication and broadband systems for Navajo communities are needed to communicate effectively
- Expenditure of \$50 Million for scholarships to assist Navajo students entering the health care and public safety fields
- Expenditure of \$60 Million to help Navajo businesses, and promote economic development
- Expenditure of \$20 Million to address housing needs on the Navajo Nation
- Expend the remaining amount for additional chapter projects and direct aid for the Navajo people

President Nez stated that approximately 3,000 people voiced their support for the expenditure plan put forth by the Nez-Lizer Administration because it is the most comprehensive plan that will benefit all Navajo Nation residents and first responders.

President Nez expressed his gratitude to the Navajo people who took the initiative to voice their support stating, "Your voices have been heard. The voices of our Navajo people is a powerful way to get our leaders to act. Despite some questionable amendments approved by the Council, we are now in a position to move forward in working with Speaker Seth Damon, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, and others to utilize the CARES Act funds to help our frontline workers, our Navajo people, and to continue being proactive in preparations for any potential new waves of the coronavirus.

We are very thankful to Council Delegates Edmund Yazzie, Edison Wauneka, Herman M Daniels, Jamie Henio, Kee Allen Begay Jr., Paul Begay, Pernell Halona, and Rickie Nez for the sponsorship of the legislation and for listening to the voices of the Navajo people."

"It's critical that the Navajo people hold all of their elected leaders accountable including chapter officials, members of the Navajo Nation Council, and the Office of the President and Vice President. We call upon the Navajo Nation Council members to work in good faith on the remainder of the funding. Our Navajo people are adamant in their desire for us to work together," stated Vice President Lizer.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks the 24th Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo people for supporting Legislation No. 0116-20. President Nez and Vice President Lizer look forward to working with the Nation's leaders on the remaining CARES Act funds .

READ AT: <https://bit.ly/2CUK27x>

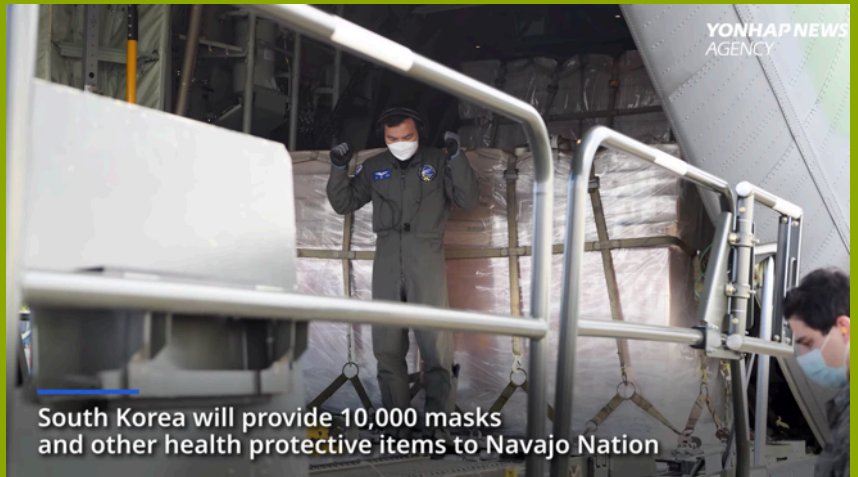
June 2020

## South Korea Sends 10K Masks to Navajo Nation to Honor Their Service as ‘Code Talkers’ During Korean War

From The Good News Network by Andy Corbley

When the South Korean government realized that the Navajo Nation had been suffering infection rates of COVID-19 rivaling that of New York City, it shipped them 10,000 masks and other PPE to honor their service seven decades years ago to the East-Asian nation.

Click to read the [ORIGINAL ARTICLE](#) [HERE](#).



During the Korean War around 800 members of the Navajo Nation used their native language as an unbreakable code for radio messages, ensuring complete secrecy around any military movements by the United States, an ally to South Korea.

While this little-known story in the famous ‘police action’ that was the Korean War often goes untold, the South Koreans have never forgotten the Native American contributions.

According to the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs in South Korea, around 130 of these “Code Talkers” are still alive today.



“We hope our small gifts will console the veterans in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis,” said committee co-chairman Kim Eun-gi.

“The government remembers those who made a noble sacrifice to defend a strange country 70 years ago, and we hope they will proudly tell their posterity about the choice they made so many years ago.”

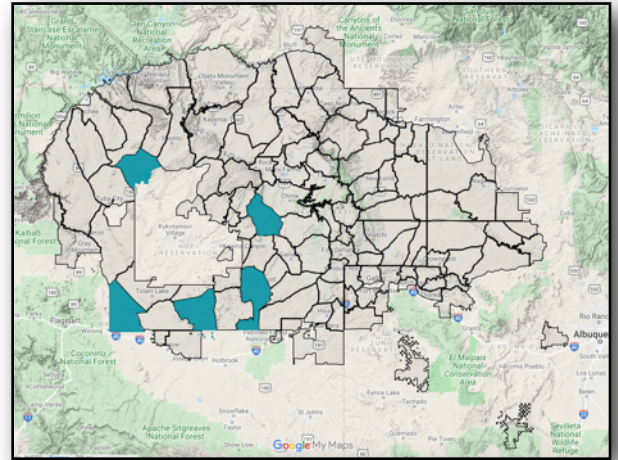
South Korea, which has so far handled the COVID-19 pandemic quite well by

essentially testing anyone and everyone, has sent masks all over the world—including one half million to the Department of Veterans Affairs in honor of American soldiers who fought and died on the Korean peninsula, and those who serve their country today.

# 96 Navajo families to receive electricity with \$6.2 million Indian Community Development Block Grant award

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer are pleased to announce that the Navajo Nation was recently awarded over \$6.2 million from the Indian Community Development Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for five powerline projects in the communities of Dilkon, Lower Greasewood, Leupp, Tonalea, and Tselani/Cottonwood. Construction of the projects will be completed by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the need for greater infrastructure across the Navajo Nation including water, power, telecommunications, and roads. With the ICDBG funding, NTUA will be in a position to complete these projects that will connect 96 Navajo families to the power grid. With the Nation’s CARES Act funds, we are looking to invest at least \$100 million for additional powerline and solar projects, \$300 million for water infrastructure, and \$50 million for telecommunications on the Navajo Nation. We are very thankful to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for funding these much-needed projects,” said President Nez.



The Indian Community Development Block Grant Program provides eligible grantees with direct grants for use in developing viable Indian and Alaska Native Communities, including decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities, primarily for low- and moderate-income persons. Projects funding by the ICDBG program must principally benefit low-and-moderate-income persons.

“The needs are great across our communities, but our administration remains committed to working with every level of government to move infrastructure projects forward for the Navajo people. This will be a great partnership between the Indian Community Development Block Grant Program, NTUA, and the entire Navajo Nation. We are very happy for the 96 families that this initiative will benefit,” stated Vice President Lizer.

NTUA will oversee construction of the powerline projects, which will add an additional 75-miles of electrical lines in the five communities.

“This award will help approximately 96 families who have been waiting years for electricity,” said NTUA General Manager Walter Haase. “NTUA is grateful for this funding because it will help to improve the quality of life by allowing families to have refrigerated food, air conditioning, and the ability to charge their phones in their homes for the very first time.”

READ MORE AT: <https://www.navajo-nsn.gov/News%20Releases/OPVP/2020/Jun/FOR%20IMMEDIATE%20RELEASE%20-%202096%20Navajo%20families%20to%20receive%20electricity%20with%206%20million%20Indian%20Community%20Development%20Block%20Grant%20award.pdf>

# CHID Projects Update

1. The Community Housing & Infrastructure Department (CHID) has an on-going new housing project in Ganado, AZ, due to a burnout. On May 19-20, 2020, CHID backhoe operator was able to trench the water & wastewater line to the new home. The waterline was connected and turned on by NTUA and the electric service will also be hooked up and energized soon.



2. On June 3, 2020, during the COVID-19 relief efforts, CHID, CPMD & NNAA staff unloaded 24 pallets of boxes of bleach from a semi-trailer and they were loaded on 3 flatbeds at the Window Rock Airport for the Navajo Nation communities. St. Michael's Chapter was also able to assist with a flatbed and a heavy equipment operator. The pallets were transported to a temporary secure storage facility and are to be distributed out to the Chapter communities.



# Navajo Women Are Bringing Sustainable Solar Power to the Navajo Nation

"The sun plays a significant role in our teachings as Navajo people."



With the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, the United States federal government tried to erase disparities in energy access between rural and urban areas. Suddenly, hard-to-reach communities were electrified, folded into the broader US economy.

But many Native American tribes were left out of this effort. On the Navajo Nation, that exclusion still reverberates today. More than 15,000 homes on the reservation lack electricity, accounting for 75% of the unelectrified homes in the US, according to the American Public Power Association.

"There are tribes that don't have access to the grid because they weren't in the planning process and weren't considered," Wahleah Johns, cofounder of Native Renewables, told Global Citizen. "That's environmental racism: when planning is only for certain populations and not for First Nations and tribal nations."

She said that the lack of energy impacts every aspect of life for affected families. Without electricity, homes often lack running water, lighting, cooling, heating, and refrigeration. Many families end up buying gasoline, propane, or kerosene for their electrical needs, a last resort that is both costly and exposes them to pollution.

Linking up to the grid, meanwhile, is out of the question for most families.

"We have our own tribal utility, but the cost to extend power lines can range between \$27,000 to \$75,000 or more," Johns said. "That makes it hard to access a loan to extend a power line to their home."

Johns, who has years of experience in the renewable energy industry, has long witnessed the injustice of this situation. Along with other Native women in the industry, she launched Native Renewables, a solar energy provider that aims to electrify every home on the Navajo Nation with off-grid solutions.

"We have over 300 days of sunlight throughout the year," she said. "We're in a prime area to develop and manage our own power."

Native Renewables goes above and beyond a simple utility company. The organization employs Navajo tribal members, holds educational workshops on the benefits of renewable energy, promotes economic independence, and seeks to empower tribal members.

As the community gets electrified, entrepreneurship, innovation, and solidarity can flourish, she said.

"This technology can be part of our ability to show self-determination and to show our sovereignty," she said. "A family can manage and own their power that doesn't have to come from a utility or some other entity regulating it. They can actually be a homestead that can generate their own power and live in a way that is in line with our values as Native people."

Native Renewables is still in the initial phases of outreach and marketing, but early projects have so far been successful and have improved the economic security of families.

"We've supplied four homes and have seen a great improvement for families living in rural areas," she said. "We're delivering a product because it can save people money but also bring joy and comfort."

While solar energy requires upfront costs for installation, and other costs for upkeep and maintenance, it eventually pays for itself, saving homeowners money in the long-run. Families can even band together to create larger, communal installations that reduce overall costs, Johns said.

"That's a key piece that helps to liberate ourselves from the structures that aren't working for us and decentralize the power grid," she said.

"We have these big utilities that control our rate of power and how to generate that power, which usually comes from a very dirty source," she added. "We can plant seeds for our future generations so energy is collective and decentralized rather than what it is today."

Native Renewables is part of a larger shift in energy production. As climate change intensifies around the world, calls to abandon fossil fuels are only growing, along with investments in clean energy sources. In the US, renewable energy consumption surpassed coal for the first time ever in 2019. Global renewable energy production is expected to increase by 50% between 2019 and 2024.

Johns said that climate change is already impacting the Navajo Nation.

"The Colorado River and the Rio Grande river don't produce as much water. You see a lot of lakes throughout the West drying out because of the drought," she said. "In the summer, we have the monsoon season that comes through and waters our land for vegetation for livestock that we raise, for the produce we grow — corn, squash, beans, food — and when that doesn't happen it makes it really hard on the farmers and ranchers."

She also said that bark beetles, an insect whose range has been expanded by warmer temperatures, have destroyed vast stretches of pine trees.

Johns said the biggest obstacle facing Native Renewables is investment. Many of the families who lack electricity also live below the poverty line and need subsidies to pay for solar systems.

"We're looking for mission-aligned impact investors to help us get to scale," she said. "We just need investment to help to buy all of the equipment to do several hundred systems a year."

She said that the team has spent the past few years carefully planning, training maintenance crews, and demonstrating proof of concept.

Now they're ready to electrify Navajo Nation and provide a global template for sustainable, community-based development.

"I was born and raised on Navajo Nation," Johns said. "We love our community so much. We have these ideas for solutions that can address energy access and a lot of it is referencing the sunlight that's of really powerful cultural significance."

"The sun plays a significant role in our teachings as Navajo people," she said.

**READ MORE AT:** <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/navajo-renewables-solar-energy/>

# Bulletin Board

## Nez-Lizer to host virtual commencement ceremony to honor and congratulate all graduates

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer announced that the Office of the President and Vice President, Office of the First Lady and Second Lady, and the Office of Miss Navajo Nation will host a virtual commencement ceremony on Saturday, June 6 at 7:00 p.m. (MDT) to honor and congratulate all Navajo graduates on and off of the Navajo Nation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many graduation ceremonies were either postponed, canceled, or held online or on the radio for the safety of students and their families. The online commencement ceremony will be available on the Nez-Lizer Facebook page and the Office of the President and Vice President's YouTube channel.

"The COVID-19 pandemic created challenging circumstances for all of us, especially for students, teachers, and parents. This is our small way of recognizing our Diné students for their hard work to reach their next level of education. We also thank all of the parents, grandparents, teachers, and others who supported and guided the graduates. We welcome everyone to tune-in to this special event online," said President Nez.

This is the first time that an online commencement ceremony has been hosted by the Navajo Nation, which will feature special recognitions and special messages for the graduates.

"We have so many graduates from the Head Start level, elementary, high school, university, and beyond. As the leaders of the Navajo Nation, we are very proud of you and we wish you all continued success and many blessings in life," stated Vice President Lizer.

The virtual commencement ceremony will stream on the Nez-Lizer Facebook page and the Office of the President and Vice President's YouTube channel on Saturday, June 6 at 7:00 p.m. (MDT).

Read at: <https://bit.ly/3iiWlLg>

View at: <https://www.facebook.com/NezLizer2018/videos/191136435485007>

## 250 Gallon Water Tank Donated



"This water tank was picked up in Los Lunas, NM two weeks ago and it was donated to the NN for the Pandemic crisis". The tank is being used to haul domestic water for Navajo people. -- Sony Franklin

## Coyote Canyon Chapter Receives Truck

Good to see Coyote Canyon receiving a chapter truck.

Good team work with the chapter, Elmer Johnson, Project Manager, CPMD Staff, and the Partners.

Sihasin Funds financed the purchase of the chapter truck. Congratulations to Coyote Canyon Chapter!

-James Adakai, CPMD Dept. Manager III



# Bulletin Board

## Navajo Nation files lawsuit against the U.S. EPA over the Clean Water Act

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — The Navajo Nation filed a lawsuit on Monday against the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico, arguing that the recent 2020 Waters of the United States rule significantly diminishes the number and extent of Navajo waters protected by the Clean Water Act in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act. The new rule could also adversely impact the amount of federal funding that the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency receives for its water programs.

“At this point in time, with climate change occurring around the world, it’s more prudent than ever to protect our land, water and air. We, as Diné People, have a duty to preserve and conserve our natural resources to ensure that our future generations have access to clean water, air and land. The previous 2015 Waters of the United States rule provided clarity in protecting our Nation’s waters. Therefore, we strongly oppose and disagree with the revised WOTUS,” said President Nez.

The Nez-Lizer Administration is proposing to use \$300 million from the CARES Act funding that the Navajo Nation received for water infrastructure and agriculture projects, which will require clean water resources to development and construct.

“Our Navajo people always say that water is life, and that’s very true. When we plan for any type of water projects, we are planning for future generations, not just for today or tomorrow. Clean water is a necessity for life,” said Vice President Myron Lizer.

“Clean water should be protected not only by the Clean Water Act, but also by the Navajo Nation’s treaty rights. It is a necessity of life that is vital to preservation of Navajo culture and tradition,” added Navajo Nation Attorney General Doreen N. McPaul.

Department Manager for Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency’s water programs Ronnie Ben said, “Since the inception of the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency’s water programs, our main purpose and goal has always been to protect our Nation’s water sources. However, our job becomes difficult when the federal government rolls back environmental regulations in favor of polluters. We currently have organizations on the Navajo Nation who are not in compliance with Navajo Nation and Federal environmental laws and laxing Waters of the United States doesn’t help bring these companies into compliance.”

President Nez and Vice President Lizer thank Navajo Nation Attorney General Doreen N. McPaul, Navajo Nation Department of Justice Attorney Michael Daughtry, Contract Attorney Jill Grant, and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency water program personnel for their efforts in bringing this suit on behalf of the Navajo people.

READ AT: <https://bit.ly/2CTS9Bh>

## Indian Community Development Block Grant projects will support economic and housing development for Native American families

**\$120 million in Indian Community Development Block Grants awarded to tribes across the nation**

### News Release

National American Indian Housing Council

On June 4th, 2020, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson announced nearly \$120 million in Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) awards to Tribes across the Nation. The Indian Community Development Block Grant



National Council of Urban Indian Health President Maureen Rosette, Chippewa Cree Nation. (Photo: National Council of Urban Indian Health)

program provides funding to use in developing American Indian and Alaska Native Communities, including decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities, primarily for low- and moderate-income persons. “The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development is committed to helping Native Americans thrive and the funding announced today will have a positive impact on building sustainable communities,” said R. Hunter Kurtz, Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing. These funds, through the Indian Community Development Block Grant program, will be used to support 107 projects on Tribal lands across the United States.

View Indian Community Development Block Grant awardee list here. <https://files.constantcontact.com/7bfad56c001/90d61133-bf25-429a-8b92-5a3a33cbf29e.pdf>



Image: National American Indian Housing Council

Read at: <https://bit.ly/2AXVJcq>



# Bulletin Board

## Navajo Navajo Nation commends the U.S. Senate's approval of the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** - Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer commend the U.S. Senate's approval of S. 886, the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act through unanimous consent on Thursday, a bill that the two leaders have advocated strongly for to secure funding and water resources for Navajo families in the state of Utah. The Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act also requires the approval of the House of Representative through H.R. 644 sponsored by U.S. Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT).

"Providing clean water for the Navajo people is a challenging task and we have worked with our friends in Congress and across the country to move this important measure forward. As the Navajo Nation continues to struggle to address COVID-19, we welcome the passage by the United States Senate of the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act, which would provide desperately needed funding for clean drinking water to our members," stated President Nez.

He added, "On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I would like to thank Senator Romney for his leadership in advancing the bill through the Senate. I would also like to thank Senators McSally and Udall for their crucial work with the Senate Committee on Indian

Affairs in expediting the bill's passage as well as Senator Sinema for her strong support of the legislation. Because of the drinking water crisis on the Navajo Reservation, which COVID-19 has compounded, we ask our friends in the House to pass the legislation without delay."

In June 2019, President Nez called on lawmakers to enact into law the bipartisan H.R. 644, during testimony before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife. In September, President Nez met with Senator Romney and other Senators to request their continued support.

More than 40-percent of Navajo households in Utah lack running water or adequate sanitation in their homes. 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.

"This bill would solidify water rights in this landmark settlement between the Navajo Nation, the United States, and the state of Utah. The U.S. Senate has demonstrated true leadership through the passage of this bill, which also advances the commitments contained 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 a permanent homeland. We commend the Senate for their support and we respectfully request the support of the House members," Vice President Lizer stated.

The Nez-Lizer Administration also requests the support of the Navajo people for Legislation No. 0116-20, which addresses the CARES Act funding that provides \$600 million to the Navajo Nation. President Nez and Vice President Lizer stated that the funds could provide water infrastructure to benefit many Navajo people. Please submit written supporting comments for Legislation No. 0116-20 to [comments@navajonnsn.gov](mailto:comments@navajonnsn.gov), [24thNNC@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:24thNNC@navajo-nsn.gov), and [navajonationpubliccomments@gmail.com](mailto:navajonationpubliccomments@gmail.com).



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez testifying in support of the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife in Washington D.C. on June 26, 2019.

# Bulletin Board

## **Naabik'iyáti' Committee receives Division of Community Development CARES Act report at work session**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council met via teleconference Jun. 4 for the eighth Naabik'iyáti' Committee work session discussing a possible Navajo Nation CARES Fund Act expenditure plan. Navajo Nation Division of Community Development (DCD) Executive Director Dr. Pearl Yellowman presented on current projects, impacts due to the unforeseen impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19), DCD's unmet needs and those of the Navajo Nation chapters it supports and information regarding the return of Navajo Nation employees after COVID-19.

Dr. Yellowman's verbally reported that, before 2018, DCD authorized over \$9 million to 40 capital outlay projects. As part of Navajo Nation Council Resolution No. CAP 35-18, 149 Sihásin Fund capital outlay projects were allocated roughly \$100 million.

For 2018-2019, Tribal Infrastructure Funds from New Mexico were allocated \$5.8 million and Utah Navajo Trust Fund projects were allocated approximately \$7.1 million. The Navajo Nation matched \$5.7 million through general matching funds for the related projects.

Dr. Yellowman stated that at the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, the State of New Mexico did not fund 60 projects planned for Navajo Nation communities. The economic downturn essentially froze all project spending in the state.

DCD is now advocating to New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to review these projects for 2020, since they are directly related to COVID-19 prevention, safety, and precautionary measures. The projects include power lines, water lines, heavy equipment and vertical build.

Dr. Yellowman also emphasized that Navajo Nation chapter house facilities need to be assessed before reopening, with special consideration to bathrooms and sinks. Reopening would require additional safety regulations and safety officers to assess each chapter. Visible markers, thermometers, gloves, masks, and bleach would all need to be provided to chapters. Additionally, Dr. Yellowman stated that chapters have a role in providing personal protective equipment (PPE) to chapter officials who would be returning to work, as well as to elders.

Dr. Yellowman asked the 24th Navajo Nation Council for support in implementing Health Command Operations Center's (HCOC) objectives formulated through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. She said proper decontamination of chapter facilities will cost roughly \$5,000 for "a certain square footage" or about \$500,000 for all 110. She emphasized the need for training, certification, standardized practices, codes, and precautionary measures at the chapter level to successfully mitigate chapter exposure risk.

DCD acknowledged the difficulty local communities were having in terms of exercising their local governance authority. All non-Local Governance Act certified chapter staff have been put on administrative leave by the division, which effectively shut chapters down with limited remote work arrangements. Dr. Yellowman commended chapters for accommodating to the circumstances as best as possible.

DCD is also hoping to address the Navajo Nation solid waste management plan. She stated that there used to be a sanitation plan, but that was ended by the former DCD director. Dr. Yellowman suggested hiring additional staff for this issue and expressed the need for a plan and support from the Council.

After Dr. Yellowman's official presentation, Speaker Seth Damon (Baahaali, Chilchiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) made a request for the written form of DCD's report to incorporate specific budget items in a future expenditure plan. Dr. Yellowman stated that she will follow the meeting with the written report.

Council delegates expressed their gratitude for Dr. Yellowman and DCD's work on COVID-19 relief related projects. In particular, DCD has been involved in providing PPE to chapter officials. They emphasized the need for cooperation and communication at the chapter level and between departments.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Cove, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Red Valley Tse'alnaozi't'i'i, Sheepsprings, Beclabito, Gadiiahi/To'Koi) stated, "We would need to empower all 110 chapters to not only have an emergency plan, but also have the appropriate tools to implement the plan," including training, planning, coordination, and practice simulations. She also expressed concern for overlapping rural addressing issues affecting elders and the sick in rural areas.

Dr. Yellowman responded, stating that she was aware of this issue and she has reached out to a Navajo- owned mobile phone software development company in hopes of finding solutions to communicate better with those in rural places. It may enable the Navajo Nation to track real time data related to COVID-19. "We can and should use technology," stated Dr. Yellowman, though she was aware that it might not be entirely accessible to those in dead zones.

There were also concerns regarding long-term solutions to pre-COVID-19 existing issues. Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Chilchimbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) stated that food boxes are not long-term solutions and suggested distributing seeds, fruit trees and sheep to community members, like organizations in San Juan County, Utah, and amending the Junk Food Tax. Dr. Yellowman has been in conversation with project managers in Utah and supports amendments to the Junk Food tax.

Delegate Brown also strongly recommended not immediately reopening the Chilchimbeto Chapter because it is one of the communities hardest hit by COVID-19. He also expressed his wishes, along with others, for part of the expenditure plan to include funds for disinfecting homes.

Other issues brought up by council delegates were the need for backhoes for funerals, waiving costs of potable water to avoid cash issues and using Navajo-owned businesses in moving forward with an expenditure plan. Dr. Yellowman affirmed these concerns and stated that DCD was working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) to see if waived water fees could be recouped since those costs are now allocated to DCD.

While there was no official deadline stated for when these projects could be implemented, Dr. Yellowman said DCD is doing more than their best. The meeting closed with Speaker Damon thanking Dr. Yellowman for her time and expressed a sense of urgency in receiving written reports to accompany the executive director's teleconference presentation.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/2VwIE1a>

# PERSONNEL NEWS

## DCD OPEN POSITIONS

| POSITION TITLE                               | LOCATION        | PAY RATE  | CLOSING DATE |
|--|-----------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b><u>Administrative Service Centers</u></b> |                 |           |              |
| 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          |
| Administrative Service Officer (S)           | Baca, NM        | 42,473.60 | 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

"My children, as you journey throughout life from generation to generation; do not forget your language, your culture, and your way of life. That identifies who you are."

- Navajo Chief Manuelito

**YOUR CLOTH FACE MASK MAY PROTECT THEM.  
THEIR CLOTH FACE MASK MAY PROTECT YOU.**

**WEAR A MASK**



**AROUND OTHERS**

**DIKOS NTSAAÍGÍÍ-19**  
CORONAVIRUS

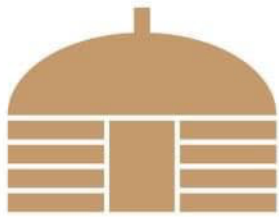
**SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.  
WEAR A CLOTH FACE MASK IN PUBLIC SETTINGS.**

**The Navajo Nation PPE Project  
is distributing  
free handmade face masks to ensure the well being and safety of all.**

**To request handmade face masks please visit:  
[www.nncovidprevention.com](http://www.nncovidprevention.com)**

Questions and additional information:  
Phone: (928) 871-7378/7397 Email: [navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:navajoeconomy@navajo-nsn.gov)

Handmade  
with Love



# Isolation vs. Quarantine What Is The Difference?



## ISOLATION

*For people who are COVID-19 positive*

- Separates sick people from those who are not sick to help stop the spread of COVID-19
- Restricts public contact until the risk of transmission of COVID-19 is low

**Time frame:  
14 days or more**



## QUARANTINE

*For people who may have been exposed to COVID-19*

- Stay home to monitor symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Prevents the spread of infection or contamination

**Time frame:  
14 days**

## Summer 2020: June 20-September 22

JUNE 20, 2020

RELEASE NUMBER CB20-SFS.79

From the National Weather Service, Climate Prediction Center:

### Summary of the Outlook for Non-Technical Users

“The June-July-August (JJA) 2020 temperature outlook favors above-normal temperatures across the West, Gulf Coast States, and along the East Coast. The largest probabilities (above 70 percent) of above normal temperatures are centered over the Four Corners region. Equal chances of below-, near-, or above-normal temperatures are forecast from the upper to middle Mississippi Valley along with parts of the northern to central Great Plains. The JJA precipitation outlook features increased chances of above normal precipitation for much of the eastern and central U.S., while below-normal precipitation is more likely across the Pacific Northwest, northern Great Basin, and much of the Rockies. Above-normal temperatures are favored throughout Alaska during JJA with increased chances of above-normal precipitation forecast for the Aleutians and most of mainland Alaska.”

**READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/2020/summer.html>**

## American Housing Month: June 2020

JUNE 2020

RELEASE NUMBER CB20-SFS.65

The U.S. Census Bureau’s housing data present a comprehensive picture of housing in America. You will find a wide range of data on the size, age and type of American homes; and home values, rents and mortgages, the housing and construction industry, and more.

We measure the housing and construction industry, track homeownership rates and produce statistics on both the physical and financial characteristics of our homes. Together, these statistics present a comprehensive picture of housing in America, allowing data-driven decision-making at all levels of government.

The key housing information we release is critical to measuring our national economy. The housing industry represents more than one-quarter of our nation’s total investment dollars and about 5 percent of our total economy.

**READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/2020/american-housing-month.html>**

# For Navajo Nation In Arizona, The Election Process Is Complicated And Problematic



Tonalea on the Navajo Nation in northeastern Arizona is the hometown of Darrell Marks. His mother and grandmother still live there.

"That's about 5 miles of zigzagging down a dirt road to get to their residence," Marks says.

He says it has always been difficult for his family to get their mail. They rely on a P.O. box at the trading post.

"There were times she only checked it once or twice a month," Marks says. "So I was very familiar as a child growing up seeing the past due notices because my mom wasn't checking it regularly because there were other things that were a little bit more important."

Marks says she was busy hauling water, feeding the family and working a full-time job.

If they miss the mail-in ballot deadline the drop box is 100 miles away in Flagstaff. And in November, dirt roads can become muddy and impassable.

Voting in Indian Country has long been problematic, primarily because of the lack of street addresses on many reservations. Now state officials are pushing for mail-in balloting to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. That has made the election process for Native Americans even more complicated.

"We saw time and time again that there were just unreasonable distances people had to travel in order to cast their vote," says Jacqueline De León, a staff attorney at the Native American Rights Fund and a member of the Isleta Pueblo.

The fund recently held field hearings all over Indian Country to better understand the obstacles to voting that Native Americans face, and it released a report with its findings.

"People rely on P.O. boxes and they share P.O. boxes. I'm talking about like 10 to 15 people sharing a P.O. box," De León says.

In Alaska, it's not unusual for the mail to be delayed several weeks if icy and windy weather prevents planes from landing in remote villages. In northern California, many Karuk tribal members live in RVs, which are considered temporary housing by election authorities. And in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, the Navajo Nation has sued over the lack of translators. Navajo isn't traditionally a written language. So there's no translation on a mail-in ballot. De León says that's a major problem given the push to vote by mail this election because of the COVID-19 crisis.

"Adoption of just mail-in balloting would be devastating in Indian Country," she says.

Internet access is another registration hurdle. More than a third of Native Americans living on tribal land lack broadband, according to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. On the Navajo Nation it's two-thirds of the population. As the tribe works to stop the spread of the coronavirus, no one is out trying to register people in person.

"Those events are not happening right now," says Patty Ferguson-Bohnee, who directs Arizona State University's Indian Legal Clinic. "The tribes are not encouraging people to come onto the reservations right now because of the pandemic. So what are the alternatives? Are there alternatives?"

Election officials have to get creative when it comes to registering and voting. Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs says voting early will be key. She points to one county that plans to use a mobile voting booth.

"It was a food truck and they converted it into a voting van," Hobbs says. "They can do curbside voting where two of the poll workers from different parties come out and help the voter vote at their car."

Spreading the word is the problem now. The secretary of state's office has created bilingual radio commercials in Navajo and Spanish.

"Those early voting options don't do any good if we're not telling voters that they're there," Hobbs says.

Hobbs says the farther someone has to drive, especially if they don't have gas money, the less likely they are to vote.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/29/883940407/for-navajo-nation-in-arizona-the-election-process-is-complicated-and-problematic>

# Census field workers back on Navajo Nation, with work cut out for them



Experts can cite any number of historical and logistical reasons why Native Americans have relatively low response rates to the Census, but Arbin Mitchell points to a very new, and very specific challenge this year – COVID-19.

“People need to understand we were just out in the field for three days, from March 15 to March 18, and we only managed to drop off just a little over 3,000 questionnaires in those three days,” before field operations on the Navajo Nation were shut down by the virus, Mitchell said.

Mitchell, whose title is tribal partnership specialist and area Census office manager, said field operations started up again last week. But enumerators have their work cut out for them: While the national response rate was 61.5% as of Thursday and the response rate for Arizona was 58.1%, just 1.5% of Navajo Nation residents had returned their forms, according to the Census Bureau.

And the Navajo are not alone. Most tribes in Arizona are well below the state average, with the highest response coming from the Ak-Chin Indian Community, which had a 52% response rate. The Navajo rate was just the third-lowest, with just 1% of Hopi returning forms and no Census response from the Havasupai Tribe.

Even the Ak-Chin have felt the effects of COVID-19 on their Census efforts.

“We did kind of get a late start due to the pandemic that is going on, and also we were out of work for a couple of months,” said Dorissa Garcia, enrollment coordinator for the Ak-Chin.

Garcia said she and Vanessa Soliz, the tribe’s enrollment technician, have been organizing incentive programs and advertising the Census on social media and through different tribal departments.

Tribal officials stress the importance of what’s riding on their members’ response to the Census. Not only are the numbers used to determine representation in Congress and statehouses, but they are used in federal formulas used to allot funding for everything from roads and schools to transit and public assistance.

Garcia said filling out the Census is “just a good impact for the tribal community.”

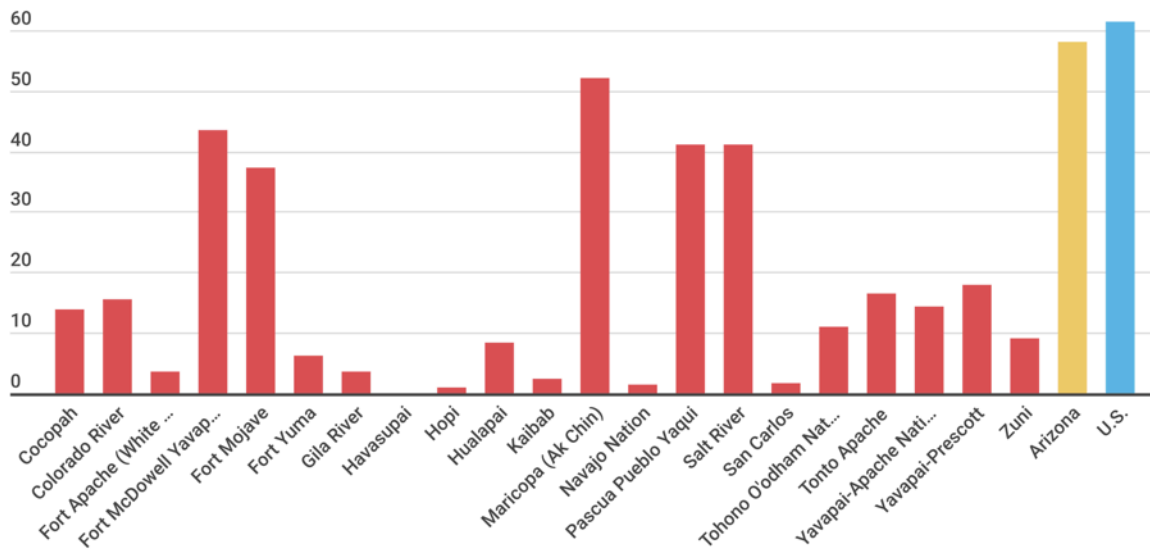
## Counting in a time of COVID-19

After weeks when COVID-19 kept them out of the field, Census workers have headed out on the Navajo Nation. The Navajo have been hit hard by the virus, and response rates have suffered. Across Arizona, tribes are gaining ground but still trail state and national response rates. The rate by tribe in Arizona as of June 18:

Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon stressed the importance of getting people to fill out their Census forms in a statement last week, as enumerators were returning to the field.

“Our main priority is to get every Navajo person counted by responding to the 2020 Census questionnaire as soon as they receive the information,” Damon’s statement said.





Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Response Rates.

Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez said this week that the nation’s 1.5% response rate so far “is very concerning.” But he blames the low rate in part on the spread of COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation, which has one of the nation’s highest infection rates per capita.

When multiple family members live in a house, he said, “this bug – the virus” can make it difficult to collect information if someone in the house becomes infected.

When enumerators took to the field last week in the areas around Window Rock – one of the last cities in the country to resume field operations – it was with special COVID-19 protections in place.

Mitchell said enumerators have badges, bags, and signs in their vehicles that all identify them as Census workers, all of whom are following social distancing and health guidelines set by the tribe. When they go to a house, he said, they hang a plastic bag containing the Census questionnaire on the doorknob and knock on people’s doors.

“We have no interaction with the household. We just leave the questionnaire and if somebody comes out, we just wave and hold your sign up, hold your bag up to show the Census symbol and hopefully people are aware census folks are around,” he said.

The virus has scrapped plans for events that would have helped people fill out the questionnaires, but people still have until Aug. 11 to answer by mail, phone or through the internet.

It’s a level of support that tribes did not always receive in the past, said Shannon O’Loughlin, executive director of the Association on American Indian Affairs.

“This is something that is historical – and why sometimes there are tribes that are not very good at responding,” she said. “Because in the past, there is a history of the U.S. doing Census numbers in order to basically count tribes out of existence.”

O’Loughlin acknowledged the challenges of pushing tribe members for Census responses during a pandemic, and suggested that’s why response rates have been low so far.

“Protecting the health and safety of tribes and individuals is more important than the Census at this time,” she said.

But she also said that answering the Census is a way for tribes to protect their communities, even as they grapple with COVID-19.

“This is really about protecting our tribal collective rights – our tribal community rights. And it’s our individual responsibility to fulfill so that we can protect those collective rights of our tribal nations and communities,” she said.

Nez said he is encouraging people to fill out the questionnaires through the weekly town halls where he gives coronavirus updates to the nation.

Mitchell agreed that it is important for tribes to increase their response rate so they can get the representation and funding they are due.

“That’s the hope – that’s my hope – is that we have a response rate that is respectable,” Mitchell said of Navajo participation.

Damon said it is more than just a hope for tribal leaders, it’s an imperative.

“We, as Navajo Nation leadership, must stress the importance of the 2020 Census to every Navajo household,” Damon said. “Answering the 2020 Census questionnaire by mail, phone or via the internet will ensure every Navajo person is counted once, at the right time and at the right place.”

READ MORE AT: <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2020/06/18/census-field-workers-back-on-navajo-nation-with-work-cut-out-for-them/>

## COVID-19 SIMPLIFIED FACT SHEET

- SOCIAL DISTANCING:** means not shaking hands, avoiding crowds, standing several feet away from other people, and staying home if you feel sick.  
**Why is this necessary?** The ultimate goal is to break the chain of transmission. You want to decrease the risk of infecting a lot of people at the same time. As an individual, you have a very real & important role in breaking this transmission because, for every individual who gets infected, two to three others will be affected.
- SELF-MONITORING:** might include regularly checking your temperature & watching for signs of a respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath).  
**Why is this necessary?** Say you attended a party/conference, and you found out later that someone there tested positive for the virus:
  - If you weren't near them = **SELF-MONITOR** since you're not at risk
  - If you had a long conversation with them/ that person was coughing & sneezing near you = **SELF-ISOLATE** chance you have the virus & can spread to others
- SELF-ISOLATION:** when you're sick/show symptoms of the virus (high temperature, new continuous cough).
  - if you have symptoms, stay at home for **7 days**
  - if you live with other people, they should stay at home for **14 days** from the day the first person got symptoms**Why is this necessary?** An individual who is sick can pass the virus on (to family, neighbours, or people on the bus). Some of these newly infected people may end up in hospital since they're a lot weaker, and they'll fill up a LOT of beds needed by other people (cancer patients, new-borns, car accident victims, etc).
  - Yes, you *might* have to **SELF-ISOLATE** more than once to break the chain/transmission, for example:
    - o you go into 2 weeks of self-isolation because you *thought* you had the virus
    - o Afterwards, you go out & *actually* get the virus– you **need** to self-isolate **again** to break this chain, so it's not passed on.

Source(s):

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://choice.npr.org/index.html?origin=https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/03/16/816490025/quarantine-self-isolation-social-distancing-what-they-mean-and-when-to-do-them>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/mar/16/how-to-social-distance-convince-friends-family>



**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  
#DineDabidziil

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

June 2020



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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