

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

Division of Community Development Newsletter

JULY 2021

## In this Issue

- Navajo Nation WACG Team Receives Award for Best Native Story Map From ESRI
- 8 Bathroom Additions Completed with Sihasin Funds in Houck
- DCD Hosts Outdoor Gathering with Delegates
- Heavy Equipment Updates
- DCD Sets up Monsoonal Flooding Webpage
- ASC Initiating Supervision Training
- How an Indigenous-Owned Adventure Company Is Bringing Bike Tourism to the Navajo Nation
- Energizing Navajo Nation: How Electrification Can Secure a Sustainable Future for Indian Country
- Internet Dead Zones and 'Thick' Homework Packets Took an Emotional Toll on Navajo Students During COVID-19 School Year. They Didn't Give Up.
- Bulletin Board
- Personnel News
- Navajo Nation Census Information Center News
- COVID-19 Safe Practices: Reopening Guidelines for In Person Training and Meetings

## Did You Know...

The Navajo terms for some common everyday objects were borrowed from Spanish. For example: **cent**. In Spanish, it is **centavo**; In Navajo, **sindao**.



## Events:

**July: Ya'iishjaashtsoh - "Planting of Late Crops"**

July 4: Independence Day

July 5: Independence Day (Observed)

July 20: National Moon Day

**August: Biniant'aats'ozhi - "Ripening of Early Crops"**

August 9: International Day of the World's Indigenous People

August 14: Navajo Code Talkers Day

## NAVAJO NATION WACG TEAM RECEIVES AWARD FOR BEST NATIVE STORY MAP FROM ESRI



The "Navajo Safe Water: Protecting You and Your Family's Health" story map was selected as one of the winners of the 2021 Esri Tribal Story Map Challenge.

In an email to the Water Access Coordination Group, James Adakai, DCD Deputy Director and WACG member, wrote "Congratulations! to the team members - David Harvey, Wilson Yee, Ryan Clapp, Crystal Tulley-Cordonva, MC Balwin, Dr. Yellowman and others.

Thank you for the support, teamwork effort and making this award recognition possible. Good job!"

The "Navajo Safe Water: Protecting You and Your Family's Health" story map was selected as one of the winners of the 2021 Esri Tribal Story Map Challenge.

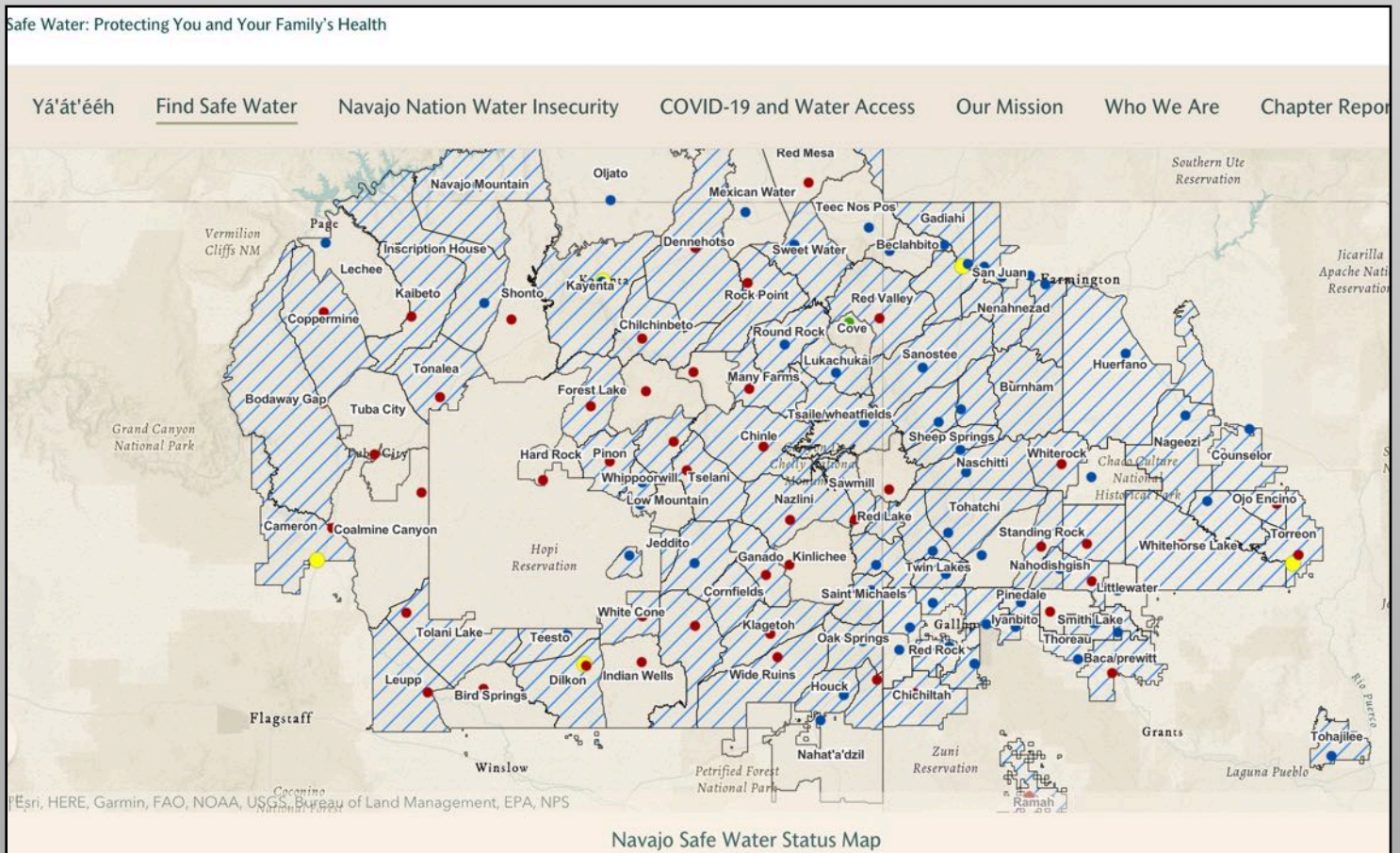
From the Esri website, "The Tribal Story Map Challenge is open to all federally recognized tribes in the United States. Esri invites you to get creative and think of the compelling stories your tribe has to tell. Judges will select the best story, one from each category, to win great prizes. ... Stories created using ArcGIS StoryMaps combine one or more web maps with narrative text, great images, and multimedia content to tell stories about neighborhoods, communities, nations, and the world using the common visual language of geography. Over 1,000 stories are created each day."

July 2021

The WACG group created a story map using Esri software titled, "Navajo Safe Water: Protecting You and Your Family's Health". The story map was announced a winner in the policy category. The story map "provides information on how tribal residents without piped water in their homes can gain access to water from safe sources. The group also stresses using safe water for cooking and drinking."

Read more about the awards at: <https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/government/departments/tribal/tribal-challenge/winners/2021-winners>.

You can see the WACG's story map at: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1b4dc0d978c74d97a559e615730d4cd4>



### MAP FROM THE NAVAJO SAFE WATER STORYMAP SITE

The Navajo Nation COVID-19 Water Access Coordination Group (WACG) is a cross-sector working group focused on addressing the urgent water needs facing Navajo Nation. Supported by \$5 million of funding that IHS received from the CARES Act, its members include representatives from:

- Navajo Nation government,
- Navajo Nation water utility operations and construction,
- seven federal agencies (the IHS, HUD, the USDA, the EPA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Reclamation),
- New Mexico and Arizona state governments, and
- nongovernmental organizations (including nonprofit, university, and research partners).

The WACG's mission is to consolidate all water supply resources and partners to coordinate an efficient plan to identify water access problems and mechanisms to address them.

(SOURCE: <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/four-ways-improve-water-access-navajo-nation-during-covid-19>)

# 8 Bathroom Additions Completed with Sihasin Funds in Houck

- Sihasin funds were used to construct 8 bathroom additions
- The Contractor was NECA
- The project started March 22, 2021 and completed on July 02, 2021
- Final Walk-thru on June 22, 2021



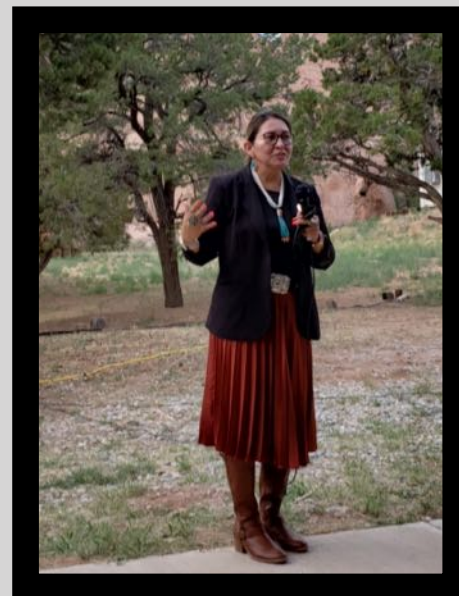
# DCD Hosts Outdoor Gathering with Delegates



DCD hosted an outdoor gathering on Tuesday, July 20, to come together with Resource and Development Committee (RDC) members and other Council Delegates during the Summer Session for DCD managers to reconnect with leaders. Dr. Pearl Yellowman and DCD department managers were on hand to discuss current projects and activities with the RDC. Attending the gathering were Honorable Navajo Nation Council Delegates: Mark Freeland, Raymond Smith, Jr., Thomas Walker, Jr., and Edison Wauneka. Speaker Damon was represented by Melinda Arviso-Ciocco, Legislative Staff.

According to Mr. James Adakai, DCD Deputy Director, the gathering was "an opportunity to establish close relationships and collaboration with the oversight committee members in working towards prioritizing community development needs, and solving issues related to projects, budgets, and basic infrastructure concerns". Dr. Yellowman stated, "I value our relationship and our partnership with RDC."

Thank you to the DCD staff who helped set up the location and brought food items for the gathering.





# Heavy Equipment Updates



**Heavy Equipment Policies and Procedures now available on [nndcd.org](http://nndcd.org) website and you can click--> [HERE](#)**

## **JULY DELIVERIES**

- July 7, 2021 Casamero Lake: Heavy Duty Truck
- July 8, 2021 - Burnham Chapter: Backhoe/Motor Grader
- July 13, 2021 - Rock Springs Chapter: Backhoe
- July 13, 2021 - Crownpoint Chapter: Backhoe
- July 14, 2021 - Beclabito Chapter: Water Truck
- July 14, 2021 - Cove Chapter: Heavy Duty Truck
- July 15, 2021 - White Cone Chapter: Water Truck
- July 20, 2021 - Leupp Chapter: Backhoe
- July 21, 2021 - Oaksprings Chapter: Motor Grader
- July 23, 2021- Beclabito Chapter - Sport Utility Vehicle



# DCD Sets up Monsoonal Flooding Webpage

Due to all the recent monsoonal flooding across various parts of the Navajo Nation, DCD has set up a webpage to provide links to resources and information for chapters affected by the flooding events. On Monday, July 26, a meeting was convened by the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President to address the issues caused by the recent monsoonal events. The Division of Community Development was tasked with coordinating a response to mitigate flooding related incidents and to provide guidance on these activities.

The webpage can be accessed by going to the Division of Community Development's website at <https://www.nndcd.org> and clicking on the "monsoon relief information" link.

The screenshot shows the website's header with navigation links: Home, Documents, 2020 Census, CARES Act Funds, Contact Us, Navajo Chapters, ASC, CPMD, CHID, and NNAA. The main navigation menu includes CHAPTERS, PROJECTS, HOUSING, RURAL ADDRESSING, and ABOUT DCD. A circular callout on the right side of the page highlights an announcement: "Monsoon Relief Information" with a "Read More" link. The background features a large image of a desert canyon with a prominent natural rock arch.

The webpage is titled "Monsoon Relief center" and features a banner with four images: a lightning bolt, a desert landscape, a storm over the ocean, and a flooded area. Below the banner, the text asks, "Is your area experiencing heavy monsoon rain or flash flooding?" and instructs users to "Select the following links to submit a Form". Three submission options are provided: "Submit an Monsoon Event Report" (with a collage of weather-related images), "Navajo Emergency Management Department Situation Report" (with the Navajo Nation seal), and "Storm Reports" (with the NOAA logo and the text "Alerting the NWS to local weather").

# ASC Initiating Supervision Training



The Administrative Services Center (ASC) will be initiating supervision training for all supervisors at the chapter level and one way to make this happen is through amendments to the ASC plan of operation.

In 2018, amendments to Administrative Services Centers (ASC) Plan of Operation were made through the Navajo Nation Resources & Development Committee (RDCAU-71-18). The ASC was established to provide technical assistance, administrative support, professional development, customer service, leadership training, and financial management training to support accountable administrative and fund management systems with all 110 Navajo Chapters.

Currently, ASC has eight service areas and ASC staff who provide technical assistance and training to both the 65 non-LGA-certified chapters and the 45 LGA-certified chapters. In the new amendments to the ASC Plan of Operation, direct local supervisors will be required to go through necessary training on supervision.

“We have received numerous requests for orientations, technical assistance and training in supervisory skills at the chapter level,” states Sonlatsa Jim-Martin, ASC Department Manager. “We have some new leaders and new challenges with supervision after the COVID pandemic so we are looking forward to focusing on direct local supervision training.”

Direct local supervisors at the chapter level will be able to participate in supervisory training prior to taking on the role and responsibility and will complete a certain number of training sessions to receive a certification first. Supervisors will get training in developing leadership skills, communication, managing and resolving conflict as well as focused training on personnel policies and procedures and information on employee performance issues. The Division of Community Development is establishing partnerships with professional organizations, colleges, universities and with the Navajo Peacemaking Program to develop training modules for direct local supervisors at the chapter level.

“Direct local supervisors who complete the supervision trainings will get a certificate of completion and can step into the supervisor role with the tools and knowledge needed to supervise at the chapter level,” states Jim-Martin. With additional funds coming to Chapters from ARPA funds and with the changes in government operations due to COVID safety, skilled and trained supervisors are going to be critical in improving chapter services.

The eight ASC service areas will be reassigned to a certain number of chapters so ASC staff can better assist the 110 chapters within each agency and within each council delegate district.



# Delegate Stewart's Meet and Greet Trail Ride in Crystal Community



**Riding from Sawmill to Crystal; then to Red Lake;  
on to Ft Defiance; then Window Rock to Council Session.  
July 16-19, 2021.**





# How an Indigenous-Owned Adventure Company Is Bringing Bike Tourism to the Navajo Nation

Dzil Ta'ah Adventures' cycling tours pair desert landscapes with Navajo creation stories—and all tour revenue is reinvested into Navajo communities.

BY STEPHANIE VERMILLION

July 12, 2021

It's been more than a year since COVID-19 halted the Navajo Nation's tourism, but just this month, popular attractions like Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park and Four Corners Monument partially reopened—and travelers have a new way to experience these sun-blasted landscapes: by bikepacking. It's the first iteration of an Indigenous-led effort to bring bike tourism to the Navajo Nation.

Bikepacking, a heart-pumping blend of mountain biking and camping, is well established on long-distance bike routes like the Colorado Trail and Alaska's Denali Park Road. Similar to backpacking, it's an immersion into the elements, from camping beneath bright cosmos to cycling through unspoiled wilderness—two natural features the Navajo Nation is blessed with across its 27,000 square miles of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah.

But until recently, the reservation's bike tourism was more than lacking—bike tours weren't legally recognized as a permitted tourism category. In 2016, avid Navajo mountain biker and former racer Jon Yazzie of Kayenta, Arizona, set out to change that. He and his partner Nadine Johnson slashed miles of red tape, campaigning the Navajo Nation's parks and recreation department to grant their adventure company, Dzil Ta'ah Adventures, a permit to run overnight bikepacking tours, as well as half-day mountain-biking excursions, on Navajo land. Their wish was granted in early 2020, but celebrations waned swiftly as COVID-19 swept through the reservation.

Instead of using that hard-earned permit to run tours, Yazzie and Johnson spent the pandemic lockdown scouting trails, testing campsites, and spreading bikepacking interest among Navajo youth. Now, with the Navajo Nation's reopening underway, their bike-tour dream can finally become a reality.

## The inaugural bike-tour experience

Navajo Nation bikepacking tours aren't your average cycle-and-sightsee excursions. Dzil Ta'ah Adventures leads guests deep into the red sands of Navajo Nation's backcountry, blending adventure with culture as Navajo guides share stories about their ancestors and the land they're cycling—something the Navajo Nation hopes to see more of across its tourism offerings in the coming years.

"It's important for Navajo Nation to be in charge of this story, because more often than not, that story has been told for, not by, Navajo people," says Navajo Nation member Donovan Hanley, a legislative staff assistant spearheading tourism development for Navajo Nation Council's Office of the Speaker. "Jon's push to tell stories on bikes, the push for adventure, responsible tourism, and sustainable tourism—it really aligns with the Navajo way of life."



Dzil Ta'ah Adventures recently launched bike tours run the gamut, with customized itineraries based on comfort level and time, from half-day rides to immersive multi-night bikepacking journeys. Milder overnight trips, like the jaunt up to Hunts Mesa with about 80 percent flat dirt road, promise rare golden-hour views of the sandstone chimneys sprinkled across Monument Valley. As a mountain-bike racer himself, Yazzie also plans hair-raising tours for even the best-trained riders. "We have everything from soft-blow sand to riding on shale shelves, a little bit of single track, a lot of double track, and sandstone everywhere," he says. (Currently, Dzil Ta'ah is only booking private tours.)

As Yazzie and Johnson cultivate the bike-tourism movement, Hanley says another local organization, Navajo YES, is building new bike trails and infrastructure to further place Navajo Nation on the outdoor-adventure map. The newly designated Chuska Mountain Bike Trail, an 80-mile traverse along the spine of the Chuska Mountains straddling Arizona and New Mexico, is one of many projects likely to amplify Navajo Nation's adventure tourism, Hanley says.

### **A Navajo-led movement**

These mountain and desert vistas are jaw dropping, but bikepacking here is about so much more than a stellar backdrop. This is one of few Navajo Nation tourism movements that's entirely Navajo run—with all tourism dollars staying in the Navajo community.

"In Kayenta right now, only a [fraction] of tour companies are Native-owned," Yazzie says, noting he was initially inspired to start a bikepacking group so he and his friends could get permits to camp on Navajo lands only accessible to registered tour companies. But Yazzie quickly realized these permits could do so much more. By "spreading the bikepack stoke" across the Navajo Nation, particularly among youth, they could ensure bike tourism profits the Navajo people for generations to come.

With full-time jobs, Yazzie and Johnson don't need the profit from Dzil Ta'ah Adventures for themselves. Instead, they will put tour money toward a Navajo-youth bike program to help the next generation of Navajo bike-tour guides learn everything from riding techniques and topography, to Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WAFA).

On a deeper level, Yazzie hopes welcoming youth into the bike movement will also help them appreciate their connection to this land, their ancestors, and the Navajo creation stories—just like it did for him.

"I was raised with these stories, but they didn't make any sense until I was actually out there riding," he says, noting one of his biggest aha moments struck while biking past Bears Ears National Monument. "These stories come from our grandparents and our ancestors, and the tours we run revolve around both the authentic creation stories and our modern-day struggles."

READ MORE AT: <https://www.cntraveler.com/story/how-an-indigenous-owned-adventure-company-is-bringing-bike-tourism-to-the-navajo-nation>

The background image shows a vast desert landscape under a clear sky. In the distance, a power plant with several tall smokestacks is visible. The foreground features a person, possibly a Navajo, wearing traditional clothing and a hat, looking towards the camera. The overall scene is a mix of natural beauty and industrial presence.

# Energizing Navajo Nation: How electrification can secure a sustainable future for Indian Country

The pandemic—and more recently, the Texas power crisis—have brought attention to infrastructure challenges that have long plagued American Indian tribes and their citizens. Over the past 150 years, the Navajo Nation has been a site of resource extraction, but has not received the infrastructure necessary to use those resources to the benefit of the Navajo people. To this day, many Navajo citizens live without electricity.

The Navajo Nation possesses the necessary expertise and experience to electrify all homes on its reservation, but it needs help to do so. Created in 1959, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) is a tribally owned non-profit. The average cost for NTUA to connect a home to an existing electric distribution line is \$40,000. While other homes across the U.S. gained electricity in the early 1930s, the first large scale effort to do so on Navajo Nation was not until 1980 when NTUA received financial assistance to do so, through its first loan from the USDA Rural Utility Service. While loans are certainly better than no funding at all, treaty and trust responsibilities create a federal obligation to support electrification in Indian country by providing grant funding. The federal government established the Navajo reservation as a “permanent homeland” for the Navajo people. Electricity is essential to modern life and a standard of living off-reservation. In the 21st century, electricity is a necessary condition for any lands to be a permanent homeland.

Understanding why Navajo Nation does not possess adequate electricity requires an understanding of the history of energy development on the Nation. Mining of coal and uranium on the Nation was initially pushed by the United States under the guise of “modernization.” The federal government believed that the Nation needed to transition to a capitalist, industrial economy through resource development. The Nation possessed a highly valuable collection of fossil fuels. Several private sector coal companies sought to mine coal on lands shared by the Navajo and Hopi, while at the same time, the U.S. federal government coveted the Nation’s rich stores of uranium.

The top-down, industrial approach to mineral extraction on the Navajo Nation had severe environmental and health consequences. The

royalties went to the Navajo General fund, but the Nation was paid far below the market rate for its coal. This legacy of extraction also threatened the ability of the Navajo people to maintain traditional ways of life while exporting energy away from the reservation. As a result, Navajo Nation was left with all the negative harms of energy extrapolation with little, if any, of the benefits.

While the Department of Interior signed leases on behalf of the Nation allowing Peabody Energy and other companies to extract these resources, the federal government simultaneously failed to build much needed infrastructure. In 1966, under pressure from energy lobbyists, Congress enacted a developmental ban on land near the Black Mesa Mine, commonly known as the “Bennett Freeze.” The Freeze wasn’t completely lifted until 2009. Accordingly, for over forty years, the extension of electricity was legally prohibited on over 1.5 million acres of Navajo land.

At present, a dizzying array of cooperatives provide power to the Navajo Nation, each of whom have their own service territory, making it difficult to coordinate between cooperatives. Despite being surrounded by power plants that electrify Phoenix, Los Angeles, Albuquerque and other distant cities, almost 30 percent of homes do not have electricity on the Navajo reservation. And so, when the pandemic struck, many Navajo families were left to fight a battle against disease and bone chilling cold in the dark.

For the past year, the pandemic has ravaged the Navajo Nation, which has experienced more COVID-19 cases than any other tribe in the United States. With a mortality rate of approximately 8 per 1,000 (1,358 deaths out of a population of 173,000), the Nation has lost almost 1% of its population in one year and faces an existential threat to the survival of traditional knowledge due to the loss of its elders, who are the gatekeepers of cultural history and traditional teachings.

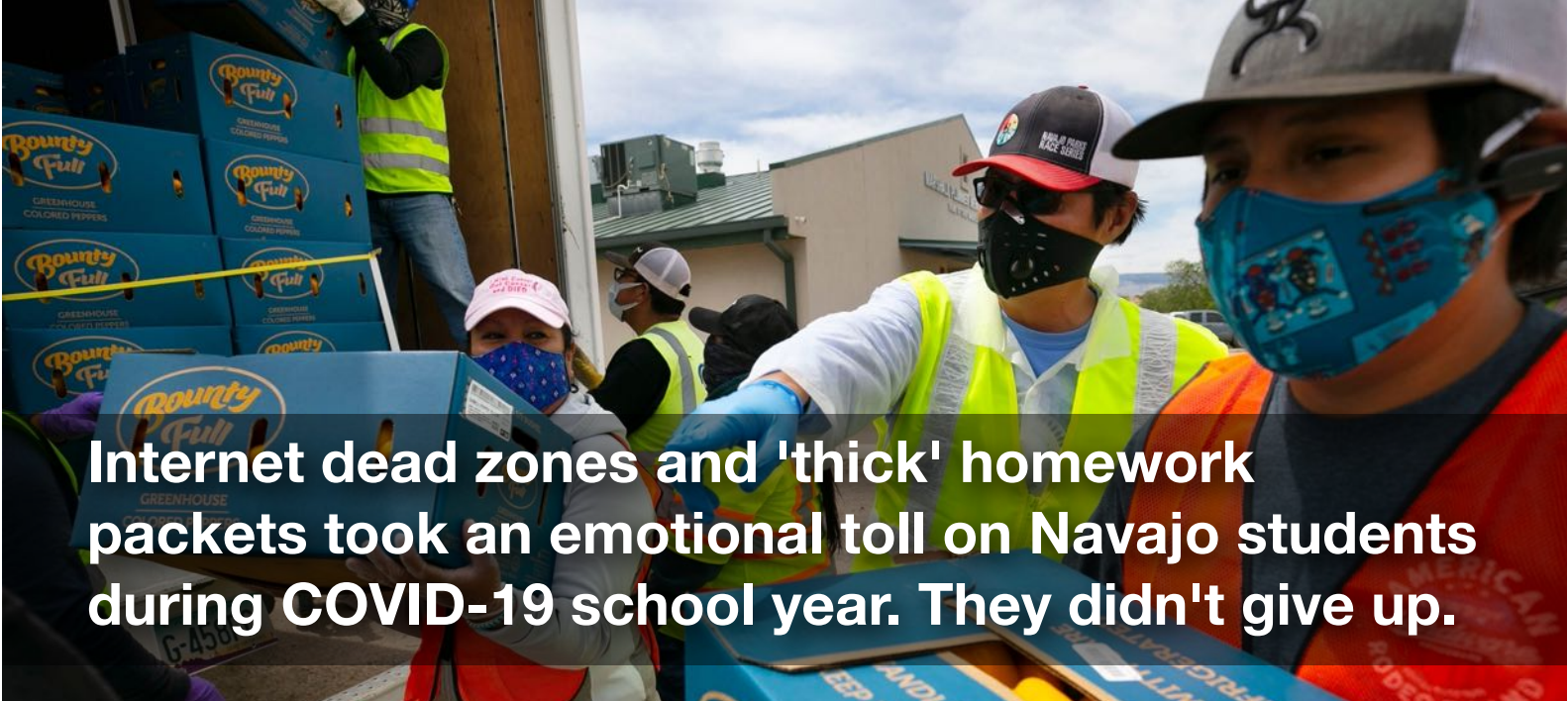
While the rest of America logged onto their Wi-Fi to work remotely and ordered groceries online for no-contact delivery, many within the Navajo Nation were unable to take basic precautions against COVID-19, forced to haul water over a mile, and heat their homes with lumps of coal burned in wood stoves.

Electrification brings heat, light, better medical care, and improved education. To save future lives, Navajo Nation must be electrified. The Biden Administration’s recent actions are a step in the right direction. First, the Administration has announced its commitment to fulfilling federal treaty and trust responsibilities to tribes. In line with this commitment, when the Administration announced its intent to rebuild America’s infrastructure, Tribal communities were included.

The federal government should fulfill its treaty and trust responsibilities by providing grant funding to empower Tribal governments to take action, but leave the actual decision making to the tribes who know their land and people best. Specifically, working with local cooperatives, the NTUA is electrifying over 500 homes with CARE funds approved under the Trump Administration. The Biden Administration should specifically earmark money for electrifying all remaining Navajo households. In addition, the federal government could expand Job Corps or AmeriCorps to provide training and education for Navajo youth so that they can become the next cadre of solar engineers. Notably, once all Navajo homes are fully electrified, the work is not complete. The current grid is old and outdated, and requires significant improvements, upgrades and modernization —particularly to accept the variable energy produced by solar and wind power. One piece of low hanging fruit would be for the Biden Administration to train Navajo and other Native American engineers to begin the process of transforming the current coal based electrical grid in the Four Corners area. These engineers can work with the Nation to ready the grid to receive more solar and wind energy.

From a regulatory standpoint, the challenge for electrification, grid expansion and connection solutions for Navajo Nation is to ensure that energy projects reflect the will of the Navajo people, while meeting goals for economic development, cultural preservation, environmental protection, and sovereignty. Such investment will create jobs for the Navajo people on their ancestral lands, while providing them a safe and sustainable form of energy.

READ MORE AT: <https://brook.gs/2TbqvrQ>



# Internet dead zones and 'thick' homework packets took an emotional toll on Navajo students during COVID-19 school year. They didn't give up.

Snuggled between tumbleweeds and utility poles, with a view of Ute Mountain through the windshield, high school sophomore Evan Allen placed his school-issued laptop on the center armrest of his grandmother's truck and switched on his mobile Wi-Fi hotspot. Another school day was about to begin.

Every weekday, not long after the sun rested on the foothills of the Carrizo Mountains, Evan would rise from his foldout bed in his grandmother's home in T'is Názbaas, Arizona, on the Navajo Nation. At about 7:10 a.m., he'd grab his laptop, his school supplies and, if time allowed, some snacks, and make the 5 1/2-mile drive to the top of the hill above the local trading post, where a decent internet connection could be found.

School started at 8, but he made a point to get to the hill early and prepare for his seven classes from the driver's seat of his másáni's Chevy. He'd stay in the truck for up to 10 hours, surrounded by dirt roads, parched juniper and desert terrain that stretched beyond the horizon.

Evan, now 16, attended virtual classes from the top of that same hill for more than a year, starting last March, when his school in the Navajo (Diné) community of Shiprock, New Mexico, went remote because of the COVID-19 pandemic. His grandmother's house was in an internet and cellular dead zone, so the hotspot in the truck was his only option.

"It's exhausting, physically and mentally," he confessed this spring. "I have to constantly do all this stuff that's back-to-back, and I don't have time to rest."



Evan wasn't alone. Thousands of schoolchildren on the Navajo Nation live without internet access, computers, cellular service or basics like electricity. When the pandemic hit, more than 23,398 Native American students in New Mexico lacked the high-speed internet and devices they needed for remote learning, the state's Public Education Department

concluded. The true figure is significantly higher, since the agency's calculation didn't include the thousands of Indigenous students in Bureau of Indian Education schools, Albuquerque Public Schools and others.

Students had to drive or be driven miles from home in search of a Wi-Fi connection. They sat in vehicles, for hours on end, on land fought for by their ancestors, drawing on their resilience.

## A day in the life of Navajo Nation high school student Evan Allen

A typical morning for Evan began with music class, and he sometimes moved his laptop to the tailgate of the truck and played his percussion instruments: concert snare, marching snare, mallets, bass drum.

After band, he did work for his "career exploration" course. Then it was on to Navajo language and, finally, biology, with a five-minute break between classes.

He got just 45 minutes for lunch, so he usually stayed on the hill and ate the food he packed or bought something at the Teec Nos Pos Trading Post, a small general store in the Four Corners area, near the intersection of New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona and Utah.

"I usually wait up there because coming back down here and going back up, I don't have much time," he said.

After lunch came English, and then the class Evan looked forward to least – Integrated Math 2, followed by history. The final class let out at 3:30 p.m. But because he didn't have internet access at home, he sometimes remained parked on the hill until 6 or 6:30, doing homework.

In the winter, he sat in the truck wrapped in a heavy wool blanket, hoping the cold weather didn't cause an internet outage. The Chevy got stuck in the snow and mud once, prompting him to find a backup spot for bad weather.

During the monsoon, in July and August, internet access was even spottier. Evan often had such a poor connection that he couldn't log on. Even when he described the situation, some teachers insisted on counting him absent, he said.

"They just say, 'Yeah, the weather's bad, but it's your responsibility to be here, and that's up to you,'" he said. "It's frustrating because they don't understand that some students actually want to be there, but it's what they have that's not working – the hotspot's not connecting, or the internet is slow. They just blame you."

His grandmother's home, where he lives with his mother, is off Indian Route 5114, not far from the

T'is Názbaas (Teec Nos Pos) Chapter House, in Arizona. (In the Four Corners area, students often attend schools in neighboring states.) Initially, Evan's school offered him a hotspot for internet access. But the device didn't work in the house, so his mother, Letitia Moone, asked the school for help. She received little or none.



"They were just like, 'Keep trying, do what you're doing.' They'd tell Evan he's doing a good job, and that was it," Moone said.

The school did give Evan a different hotspot, saying the new one would work better.

"It didn't," Moone said.

Evan's school performance began to suffer. One teacher emailed Moone, saying that Evan was logging in late and struggling to get homework turned in. Moone, though she couldn't afford it, started shopping for their own hotspot. She called every internet provider on and near the reservation: They all told her she lived in a dead zone. She eventually did buy a device, but it worked only on the top of the hill.

Lunch was another problem. Evan's school in Shiprock – 30 miles southeast of his home – typically supplied the meal to students, all of whom are low-income and qualify for free lunch. But Evan didn't receive the food all year, Moone said.

Some students had their lunch delivered by bus, she discovered. But when she asked the school about a delivery for Evan, Moone said she never got a response.

She could see how neglect from the school was affecting her son. Heartsick, she tried to do everything she could to make things easier on him, especially since she knew other students were afforded conveniences he was not.

The school never gave "caring support," she felt.

"It's really not support at all, because I never really

got answers and I never really got help," she said.

### Lost connections: The lasting impact of remote learning on Diné students

Help was in short supply across all of Indian Country.

Indigenous students in New Mexico sat in the cold and heat outside of community Wi-Fi hotspots that were set up in school buses parked at gas stations or on dirt roads. Students drove for miles to work outside of schools or chapter houses in a desperate search for signals. And even at these hotspots, they often grappled with slow internet speeds that made it difficult to do schoolwork or download and upload assignments.

"Most of us, we don't like it," Evan said. "Some classmates just gave up. They left school, or didn't even sign up at all."

Problems with internet access on the Navajo Nation were not new – government agencies had documented them for more than 15 years – but the situation was vastly exacerbated when the pandemic struck and all schools switched to remote learning.

The coronavirus swept through the Navajo Nation with ferocity, fueling some of America's highest infection rates. As of July 6, more than 31,000 Diné had tested positive for the virus, according to the Navajo Department of Health and Navajo Epidemiology Center. While the majority recovered, at least 1,354 died. More than 4,000 children between the ages of 10 and 19 tested positive.

COVID-19 vaccinations have not yet been approved for children under age 12, so they still face possible risks. But more than half of all adults on the Navajo Nation are now vaccinated, thanks to the tribe's successful vaccine rollouts. And since February, schools have slowly begun reopening on the reservation and in nearby towns.

Evan's school, funded by the Bureau of Indian Education and operated by a local nonprofit, chose to remain virtual for the remainder of the year, which suited Evan: He feared contracting the virus and wanted to keep working from his spot on the hill.

Students at other schools had the option of returning to traditional classrooms or continuing with remote learning, with its unstable internet connections and flawed digital platforms. Navajo families were left to choose between an effective in-person environment – or the safety of their children. Many chose the latter.

For Diné students, however, safety came at a cost. Many online learners dealt with depression, stress, isolation or despair. In cases like Evan's, they managed to survive by exerting formidable discipline and commitment. But it took its toll.

The lack of support resulted in some students dropping out of school; it led to bad grades and emotional exhaustion. And for kids like Evan, it meant working even harder for an education that may be their only hope of future success.



### Internet issues, times nine, for Mariano family of Shiprock, New Mexico

Shiprock residents Tammie and Clifton Mariano have 10 children at home, nine of whom attend three different schools in the Four Corners area of the Navajo Nation. Each had experiences like

Evan's.

Five children attended Mesa Elementary School; one went to Atsá Biyáázh Community School; and three went to Northwest Middle and High School, all in Shiprock.

The kids in elementary school waited more than half of the school year to get the digital devices they needed. The inequities couldn't have been more blatant: Tammie and Clifton were stuck guiding the children through paper workbooks while a teacher taught their wired classmates online.

"Some people are lucky that they have the money to get laptops and all that," Clifton said. "So it's kind of hard for people that are struggling."

Clifton and Tammie were students themselves: They graduated this spring from a Diné College branch. So they needed to do virtual schoolwork, too.

"At first, we were going to McDonald's and KFC" to find a good connection, Tammie said. But the Navajo Nation soon launched one of the strictest lockdowns in the country, with curfews and rigid travel restrictions.

Getting online became nearly impossible.

"We used our phone hotspot and we tried to turn in assignments, but they wouldn't go through," she said.

The couple eventually decided to invest in internet installation, which took weeks and cost about \$500; even then, the service was poor.

All of the children struggled.



One of the couple's sons, a third-grader, was given 21 math assignments in a single week, with lasting negative impacts, Tammie said.

"The homework packets were thick" – about an inch and a half – "and he basically stayed up doing it until like 12 or 1 in the morning. He would sit there pulling his hair," or he'd start crying.

With their budget decimated by the extra digital purchases, affording food for a family of 12 also became a problem. The kids attending Northwest initially got a free lunch daily, but that changed, without explanation, to only three days a week. The Marianos had to ask their children to save some of their lunch from one day so they'd have something to eat on the next.

All of the children's schools received not only federal Impact Aid, but also funding from the federal CARES Act. Although those funds are typically not enough to offset all costs, the lack of lunch distribution and tech resources left the Marianos wondering where the money went.

"Schools (everywhere) got all this money – what are they doing with it?" Clifton said. "Did all of it go toward where they say it's going to go, or just some of it? Basically, I guess we'll never know."

### A MacBook, Wi-Fi and running water for every child in 'a perfect world'

School staff and teachers, for their part, described difficult work environments that made it impossible to help students. Some had to make their own homework packets and pay for copies out of their own pockets. (Searchlight New Mexico contacted nearly a dozen staffers and teachers, but none wanted to go on the record, fearing retaliation and

loss of employment.)

Like students, many teachers had no broadband at home and had to drive for miles to get internet access. Some used personal laptops and bought cameras with their own money, just to be able to teach their classes from a parking lot in Shiprock. They shared stories of students disappearing from classes altogether, and of parents who never responded when staff tried to find the vanished children.

Gary Montoya, school board president for the Central Consolidated School District, saw still other crises. He traveled the dirt and washboard roads in the Four Corners region, off and on the Navajo Nation, to deliver homework packets to students, accompanied by his wife, Karla Aspaas-Montoya, a teacher in the district.

"There were weeks and days where we were driving 60 miles round trip to deliver to these kids and check on them," Montoya said.

The sprawling district – spanning nearly 3,000 square miles – serves more than 5,700 students.

Some families didn't have running water or electricity. Others had no vehicle. Some students were looked after by grandparents, who often had little formal education and couldn't help with the schoolwork. Parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents pleaded for assistance.

Montoya said at one point he realized that the best he and his wife could do to help was to deliver packets and try to stay in touch with families that needed it.

"It would be nice if in a perfect world every child had a MacBook, a Chromebook, had Wi-Fi and running water," he said.

### It's not an option to simply give up on school: 'My future is on the line'

While the troubles of remote learning formed an interwoven fabric of failure, it was the students who were most affected. Some have been scarred, afraid to return to school. Others will need to repeat a grade or will suffer in the coming school year because they learned so little during the pandemic.

Still, in pickup trucks on hillsides, students have also shown enormous resiliency.

Evan's mother said she saw it in her son every day. He and countless children like him chose to keep trying, keep driving up the hill, keep parking at trading posts, keep sitting outside their local chapter houses, keep logging on.

"I commend him for it because it takes hard work and he's very committed to his education," Moone said recently, fighting back tears. Evan had finished the spring term and officially become a high school junior. He is determined to forge a better life for himself, his mother said.

The fall semester starts in August. Evan doesn't know yet whether he'll be in a classroom or in a truck on the hill. But he'll be there.

Because for Evan, the risk in giving up is far greater for a reservation student learning out of his grandmother's truck in the middle of the desert.

"My future is on the line," he said. "If I don't do this, then there's nothing for me at all."



READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/2VNGf5t>

# Bulletin Board

## Crownpoint Chapter and summer youth workers celebrate the delivery of new heavy equipment



CROWNPOINT, N.M. – On Tuesday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, and Navajo Nation Division of Community Development Executive Director Dr. Pearl Yellowman joined Crownpoint Chapter officials and summer youth employees to celebrate the arrival of new heavy equipment that will be used to assist local Navajo residents and to complete community-based projects. Crownpoint Chapter received a new backhoe and flatbed truck, while additional equipment is expected to arrive in the coming days.

On Jan. 30, President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer approved over \$24 million from the Síhasin Fund through Resolution CJA-01-21,

which passed by the 24th Navajo Nation Council to purchase heavy equipment for Navajo Nation chapters. During Tuesday's event, President Nez had the opportunity to speak to a group of high school students who are working at Crownpoint Chapter to earn funds for their educational expenses.

"This is a part of local empowerment. With this new heavy equipment, the chapters will not have to rely on Window Rock or the central government to assist community members when they need help. T'áá Hwó Aji Téego, or self-reliance and self-determination, is one of the great teachings of our elders that we have to continue to pass down to our young people. It's great to see so many of our young people working and earning money for their education and giving back to their community. We need all of you to continue with your education and return home to help our Navajo people one day," said President Nez.

Crownpoint Chapter President Rita Capitan, Vice President Leonard Perry, Secretary/Treasurer Helen Murphy, Accounts Maintenance Specialist Felicia Singer, and Community Services Coordinator Aaron Edsitty also shared their personal experiences and offered encouragement for the summer youth employees. They also recognized and thanked President Nez, Dr. Yellowman, and Council Delegate Mark Freeland for their support of the Crownpoint community.

Dr. Yellowman also spoke to the students and encouraged them to enjoy their work experience and urged them to be respectful and helpful to elders who visit the chapter to request assistance with services. She told the students that it is an opportunity to help elderly people, and to improve the perception of all chapters across the Navajo Nation.

Chapter President Rita Capitan said local officials have long advocated for new heavy equipment to meet the needs of Crownpoint residents, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated that the chapter will no longer have to rely on other nearby chapters to assist Crownpoint residents with services that require heavy equipment. She also spoke to the students and encouraged them to continue pursuing their educational goals before marriage and before starting a family.

Under the leadership of Division of Community Development Executive Director Dr. Pearl Yellowman and Program and Projects Specialist Elmer Johnson, 88 heavy equipment items have been delivered to chapters and more will be delivered in the next several weeks, in accordance with Resolution CJA-01-21. The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks the Crownpoint Chapter for the invitation to the event.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/3ehn4Hm>

## President Nez approves funding for final phase of CARES Act Hardship Program for remaining applicants and enrolled members

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer signed Resolution CJN-35-21 into law on Friday, approving the final phase of the CARES Act Hardship Program to allow remaining applicants to receive the direct relief funding, and to reopen the application process for enrolled members who did not apply for the relief funds last year. The Nez-Lizer Administration, in coordination with the Office of the Controller, will host an online town hall and radio forum next week to provide more information.

During the first phase of the Hardship Program last year, over \$319 million in CARES Act funds was issued to approximately 308,000 enrolled members. \$41,979,377 remains unspent and will be used for the final phase of the Hardship Program.

Approximately 92,000 enrolled members have not received Hardship Program relief funds, which includes 1,865 individuals who submitted an application prior to last November's deadline, but were missing supporting documents to complete their application.

"The final phase of the Hardship Program will provide financial relief to the 1,865 individuals who submitted an application prior to last year's deadline, but they will have to work with the Office of the Controller to complete their application packet. The application process will also reopen to the 90,000 plus individuals who did not apply for the Hardship Program last year, and they will have the opportunity to submit an application. Yes, it is the peoples' money and we

understand that families are facing some financial hardships. We strongly encourage our people to use the funds to help their loved ones recover from the COVID-19 pandemic," said President Nez.

On June 25, the Navajo Nation Council approved legislation for the final phase of the program and included language in the resolution stating that the 1,865 individuals currently on the waiting list will receive direct financial relief comparable to the \$1,350 per adult and \$450 per minor amounts that was distributed last year. The Office of the Controller will begin contacting the 1,865 individuals to help complete their applications beginning next week.

For those who have not applied during the first phase, there will be a 60-day time period to allow those enrolled members to submit applications and based on the number of applicants received, the remaining funds will be distributed. Details about the application process will be provided by the Office of the Controller.

"We thank the Navajo Nation Council for supporting this legislation to provide financial relief for families who have not already received CARES Act Hardship funds. Many people have questions and we will do our best to provide as much information and answers to your questions through our online town halls and radio forums. As we continue to emerge from the pandemic, we must remain united and focus on recovery efforts, including the physical and mental well-being of our loved ones. These funds are a blessing for our people and we strongly urge everyone to use the

funds for essential needs and services," said Vice President Lizer.

The Office of the President and Vice President and the Office of the Controller will hold an online town hall and radio forum next week to provide more information. The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks the 24th Navajo Nation Council and many others for their support.

READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/36ERyzb>



### Public Notice

#### HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- Office of the Controller will be accepting applications for the Second Hardship Assistance funding on August 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021
- A new Toll Free Number has been established for the CARES ACT Hardship Assistance Program.  
The phone number is : 888-291-9748
- When you call the number, please leave your Full Name and Phone number. Please speak clearly when saying your name and your phone number.

# Bulletin Board

## Bashas' expands presence on Navajo Nation with newest Diné Market

Location in Shiprock, N.M., will be the chain's ninth store serving the Navajo people

Bashas' Family of Stores is expanding the reach of its grocery offerings for the Navajo people with the introduction of a Bashas' Diné Market in Shiprock, N.M. The Diné Market — Bashas' ninth grocery store on the Navajo Nation and second New Mexico location — will occupy what is currently a Kroger-owned City Market.

Although Bashas' is one of very few non-Native-American retailers with stores on the Navajo Nation, Bashas' Diné Markets have become the modern-day trading post for the Navajo people, says the retailer. Through its history serving the Navajo Nation, Bashas' has learned a great deal about creating stores by and for the Navajo people, from the products on store shelves to the visual elements that emphasize native design, symbols, and decorative art.

"Bashas' Diné Markets exist and succeed because of our commitment to the Navajo people," said Johnny Basha, vice president of special projects for Bashas' Family of Stores.

"From the beginning, we've considered it a privilege to work side-by-side with the Navajo, to learn about and from them, and to share in a vision for stimulating economic growth. The strength of this partnership rests largely on the value and emphasis we've put into developing our cultural proficiency and creating markets that serve the unique needs of shoppers."

The City Market will officially close at 8 p.m. on Monday, July 19, and reopen as a Bashas' Diné Market at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, July 21. Bashas' will occupy the entire 42,108-square-foot-store, making it the new anchor tenant of the Shiprock / Tse' Bit' A'i Shopping Center at the corner of US-491 and Highway 64.

The transition has been a collaborative effort between Bashas' and City Market, with the retailers working together closely to provide continuity as the only full-service market in the vicinity changes hands. Bashas' will hire a majority of the City Market associates who worked at the location. (Some City Market

employees will be transferred to other locations.) The store will employ approximately 50 people.

"Our Zero Hunger, Zero Waste social impact plan includes making sure our communities have access to fresh foods and essentials," said Steve Burnham, City Market president. "With this commitment in mind, we are pleased to be working with Bashas' as they take over the operation of this location, ensuring that the community continues to have access to the fresh food they need."

As the Navajo Nation prepares to welcome Bashas' as its new grocery partner in Shiprock, local tribe leaders are grateful for the contributions City Market (left) made to the community since its opening in 1986.

"On behalf of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, we would like to extend our upmost gratitude to City Market for the years they have served the Shiprock community and the Navajo Nation," said 24th Navajo Nation council speaker Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh). "We appreciate Bashas' stepping up to serve our Navajo people in the Northern Agency with this new grocery store."

The location will officially reopen as a Bashas' Diné Market on July 21 to ensure that the community can continue to be served, without the store closing for an extended period of time. Bashas' anticipates conducting a full store remodel of this location next year.

The new grocery store will provide several economic benefits to the Shiprock community. Each Bashas' Diné Market location gives back 25% of its profits to the Navajo Nation. Through this profit-sharing arrangement, in addition to rent and percentage rent, Bashas' has contributed upwards of \$48 million to the Navajo Nation for educational scholarship and economic development.

"We appreciate the Basha family's commitment to acquire the grocery store in the Shiprock/Tse' Bit'



A'i Shopping Center," said Navajo Nation Vice President Myron Lizer. "We welcome this new Bashas' Diné Market to Shiprock and look forward to seeing the many ways the Navajo Nation will benefit from this partnership."

Across the Navajo Nation, at least 95% of Bashas' Diné Market employees are Native American. According to its most recent employment figures, Bashas' currently employs nearly 500 people on the Navajo Nation.

"This is a great partnership between the Navajo Nation and Bashas' that will benefit Shiprock and surrounding communities," said Navajo Nation president Jonathan Nez. "I extend my appreciation to the Bashas' family for supporting our Navajo communities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and going above and beyond to ensure the safety of our community members and employees. With this new venture, we want to continue providing more healthy food and beverage options for our people to empower them to embrace healthy and active living to combat diabetes and other health issues. Congratulations to Bashas' and the Shiprock community!"

Chandler, Ariz.-based Bashas' Family of Stores operates more than 100 grocery stores under the banners Food City, AJ's Fine Foods, Eddie's Country Store and both Bashas' and Bashas' Diné. While the majority of stores are located in Arizona, the new Bashas' Diné store in Shiprock is the chain's second location in New Mexico.

READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/2TMSE9e>

## Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort opens again with limited hours



FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Twin Arrows Navajo Casino re-opened July 12 after being shutdown for more than a year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Navajo Nation is now under a 'Yellow' public health status, allowing businesses to operate with 50-percent occupancy, which includes restaurants, casinos, lodging/hotels, museums and zoos, and parks and marinas.

The Navajo Nation also allowed Navajo Nation roads to reopen to visitors and tourist July 8.. The public health emergency order also allows youth programs to operate under guidelines.

"Thank you for your patience, we certainly missed you," said Twin Arrows Facebook page.

The casino will be open with limited hours of operation in the following areas:

The casino will be open 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. daily; Arrows Sports Bar: 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.; Zenith Steakhouse: opens Wednesday, July 21.

Wednesday-Sunday: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. dinner.

The following venues will be closed until further notice: Grand Falls Buffet, Four Worlds Arcade, Bingo, Pool, Fitness Center and Valet.

The hotel is now accepting reservations.

"Here on the Navajo Nation, the data shows a consistent downward trend in new cases and deaths related to COVID-19, said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez. "We have a large majority of our Navajo Nation residents fully vaccinated. These two factors were critical in lifting more COVID-19 restrictions. We continue to urge all of our Navajo Nation residents to be very cautious, to get fully vaccinated, and continue wearing masks in public.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.nhnews.com/news/2021/jul/12/twin-arrows-navajo-casino-resort-opens-again-limit/>



# Bulletin Board

## Low Water Supply Prompts NTUA to Cut Off Water Allocations to Several Chapters

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — In late June, it was reported that Navajo Nation Chapters within District 7 (Teesto, Dilkon, Indian Wells, Greasewood Springs, White Cone, Low Mountain, Jeddito) and surrounding communities faced severe water shortages due to the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) shutting down domestic water allocation to several chapters, which caused low water supply for watering points and facility usage.

Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone, Greasewood Springs) of the 24th Navajo Nation Council informed the public that the water points at Dilkon Chapter and Teesto Chapter reached low levels that caused NTUA to shut down the water allocation in order to replenish the system.

"This drought is not a new emergence, it has plagued the southwestern part of the reservation for the last 14-15 years," said Delegate Begay. "I believe that the designation of ARPA funds to the Navajo Nation will provide new opportunities to solve the drought problem that were previously limited by the availability of the funds."

Both chapters are the last to be served on the Greasewood Water Line and are one of the most growing communities in terms of population. Further straining the water availability in the region.

These water points require to be physically monitored rather than automatically measured by a remote system, which unless community members issue a complaint about the low water levels, then NTUA may or may not have the latest update.

Delegate Begay inquired to the Navajo Nation Water Department about the commercial water leases the department issued to various construction companies and if they would be temporarily suspended in order to preserve the remaining alluvial water supply.

These commercial water leases, which are calculated depending on the monthly rainfall average and drought conditions, are specific to a water well in Dilkon and with contractors in the region extracting large amounts of water for their uses, it impacted the livestock well that was reported to only have 1-2 feet of available water per day.

Leaving many community members, ranchers, and Navajo residents to be without access to water for themselves as well. Eventually, the leases affected the domestic water supply for chapters within District 7, except for Greasewood Chapter, when the water was shut off.

Affecting the chapters' daily operations, meetings, and their services as they could not allow people to utilize the restroom and delivery of water services to families who depend on them.

Despite the water outages in Dilkon, Teesto, White Cone, Indian Wells, Jeddito Chapters and Birdsprings Chapter, Greasewood Chapter opened their watering point to those in the region if they had a NTUA card.

Alternative watering points were located in Winslow, AZ and other border towns in the area but to better alleviate the situation, ranch owners voluntarily downsized their livestock numbers from March to May.

While the water point in Dilkon will need to go under drought restrictions that involve limiting hours of usage and restricting the gallons per load to avoid completely draining the core system before it has time to replenish.

"I believe that through traditional methodology, in conjunction with the establishment of new infrastructure, we can begin finding answers to the drought," said Delegate Begay.

READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/3wTn3QF>

## Israeli, Native American partnership brings clean water to Navajo Nation

An estimated 10,000 families across Navajo Nation lack access to running water, and Israeli company Watergen aims to change this.



Israeli company Watergen has installed a Gen-M water generator at Rocky Ridge Gas and Market (RRGM), located in the Hard Rock Community of the Navajo Nation in Arizona as part of a pilot project to ensure access to clean drinking water for Indigenous American communities.

The Gen-M water generator's innovative technology creates high quality drinking water from air, and the pilot project aims to address the lack of access to clean drinking water within the Hard Rock community. According to a recent study by the Global Water Institute, an estimated 10,000 families across Navajo Nation lack access to running water.

The generator produces up to 211 gallons of purified drinking water per day, depending on climate conditions. The effectiveness of the generator will be monitored in the Hard Rock Community, and if it proves to be successful, Watergen will evaluate the extent to which their technology can help other communities within the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Nation is an Indigenous American territory covering parts of the states of Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, and is over 27,000 square miles in size. It is the largest land area still retained by an Indigenous tribe in the United States and has over 330,000 members, 175,000 of whom reside on the reservation.

Commenting on the decision to launch the pilot project, Doctor Michael Mirilashvili, President and CEO of Watergen, said, "the drinking water crisis is the most important issue of our time, and it is for that reason that Watergen is working tirelessly to realize one goal: to bring drinking water from the air to people everywhere."

"When I heard about the dire situation in Navajo Nation, I immediately decided that Watergen would be active in delivering our solution there as quickly as possible. It is our great pleasure to work together with the local leadership, StandWithUs, and Bright Path Strong in providing this sustainable and innovative source of clean drinking water. The result will be increased water access to local residents, which in turn fosters better public safety and health in this time of crisis."

I am sure that this is just the beginning, and that together we will bring even more devices to the region and to Native American communities around the country."

The project, which will be based at the RRGM Navajo-owned convenience store, was facilitated by store owner Germaine Simonson; Tó Nizhóní Ání, a community organization which protects the water of Black Mesa and Navajo Nation; StandWithUs, an international, non-profit and non-partisan Israel education organization; Bright Path Strong, a Native led non-profit; and 4D Products & Services, a Native American certified Small Disadvantaged Business and the exclusive Watergen distributor for Indian Country.

"StandWithUs is honored to work with members of the Navajo Nation on this important pilot project, and hope it is the first of many we do together," said Max Samarov, Executive Director of Research & Strategy at StandWithUs. "We are also deeply grateful to Watergen and their visionary President, Doctor Michael Mirilashvili. This partnership is a unique opportunity to engage with Israel and help ensure Watergen's technology reaches communities that need it most."

Also working in coordination with the project was Arlando Teller, former Arizona State Representative and current Deputy Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs for the US Department of Transportation, and Arizona State Representative Alma Hernandez.

In addition to the pilot project at RRGM, a crowdfunding campaign has been launched which aims to bring the Gen-M generator to additional Native American communities. As part of the campaign, Watergen and 4D will be matching donations up to \$400,000.

For StandWithUs, this partnership is at the center of a larger initiative called Connect for Progress.

Executive Director of Tó Nizhóní Ání, Nicole Horseherder, commented on the urgency of the project saying: "We live in a region in which drinking water sources have been compromised by coal mining. Any way to mitigate the need for water while the aquifers recover is critical."

"Access to clean drinking water has long been a threat to many Native communities and the onslaught of climate change is accelerating this challenge, said Bright Path Strong Board Member Dennis Hendricks. "Bright Path Strong is grateful for the opportunity to partner with Watergen to bring their life-giving technology to help alleviate this need within tribal communities — areas where some of the most vulnerable reside."

READ MORE AT: <https://www.ipost.com/international/israeli-native-american-partnership-brings-clean-water-to-navajo-nation-673225>

**PERSONNEL NEWS -- DCD OPEN POSITIONS**

<b>POSITION TITLE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>PAY RATE</b>	<b>CLOSING DATE</b>
<b>Administrative Service Centers</b>			
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Red Lake, AZ	26,726.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator (S)	Rock Springs, NM	37,709.28	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Forest Lake, AZ	26,726.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator (S)	Hardrock, AZ	37,709.28	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Alamo, NM	26,726.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Kaibeto, AZ	26,726.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Coalmine Mesa, AZ	26,726.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Navajo Mountain, AZ	26,726.40	OUF

**Capital Projects Management Department**

Department Manager II (S)	Window Rock, AZ	67,191.84	07/30/2021
---------------------------	-----------------	-----------	------------

(OUF) Open Until Filled

(S) Sensitive Position (subject to background check)

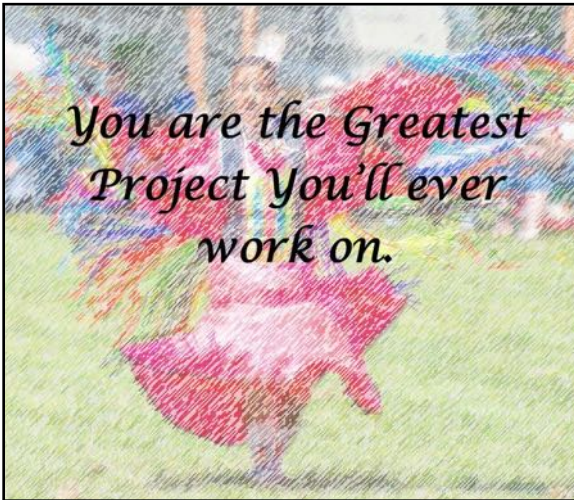
Closing Dates may change due temporary reduction in non-essential Navajo Nation government services

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**



## Upcoming Release of 2020 Census Redistricting Data Will Paint a Clearer Portrait of America



### **New Data Will Show How Racial and Ethnic Makeup of Neighborhoods Has Changed Since the 2010 Census**

AMERICA COUNTS STAFF | JULY 12, 2021

The U.S. Census Bureau by August 16 is set to release in-depth demographic statistics from the 2020 Census that will be used to redraw legislative voting districts.

These follow the April 26 release of the first results from the 2020 Census, which showed that the total population was 331.4 million. The first release determined each state's share of the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The August data release will provide the first look at the demographic characteristics of the nation by state, county and city (down to the census block level), including:

- Race and ethnicity.
- Voting-age population.
- Occupied and vacant housing units.
- People living in group quarters like nursing homes, prisons, military barracks and college dorms.

Aside from showing how the ethnic, racial, and voting age makeup of neighborhoods has changed since the 2010 Census, these detailed data will be used by most state legislatures to redistrict or redraw their political districts for elections.

"While the primary purpose of these data is for states to redraw their districts, these statistics will also tell us how many people live in each county, in each city and in each block," said James Whitehorne, chief of the Census Bureau's Redistricting and Voting Rights Data Office. "This information will provide a detailed demographic portrait of our nation's population for communities all across the United States."

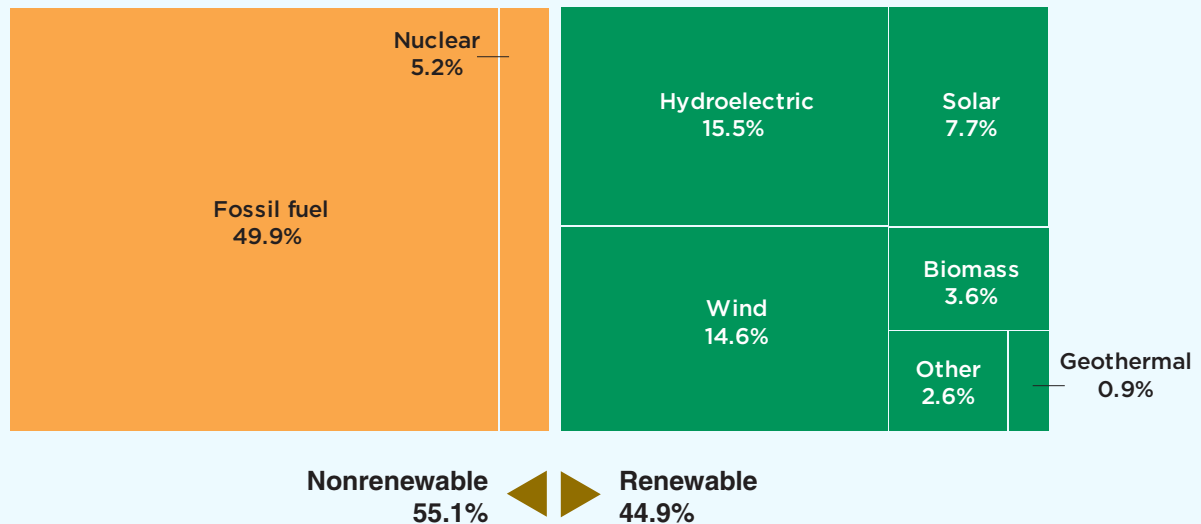
The August release will be in a "legacy" format that governments used in the 2010 and 2000 Censuses. States will use these files to begin their redistricting efforts. By September 30, the Census Bureau will make the same data available online in a more user-friendly format on [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/07/upcoming-release-of-2020-census-redistricting-data-paint-clearer-portrait-of-america.html>

# 4 in 10 Electric Power Generation Establishments Convert Renewable Energy

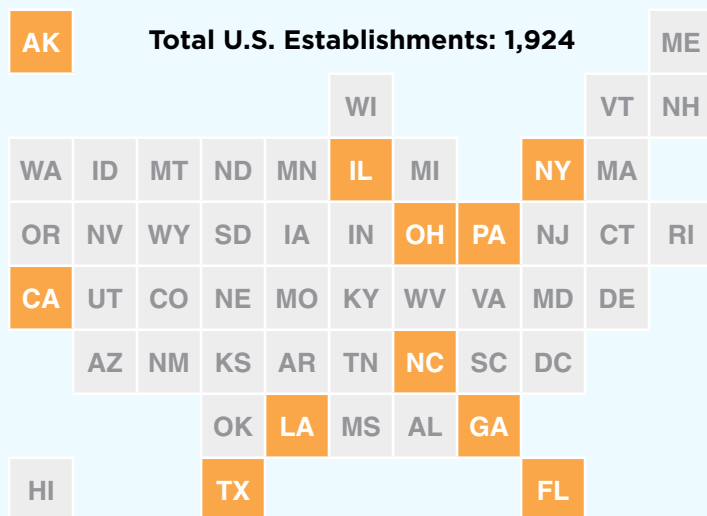
## Proportion of U.S. Electric Power Generation Establishments by Industry: 2019

These data pertain to the number of establishments (3,491 total) rather than the amount of electricity generated.

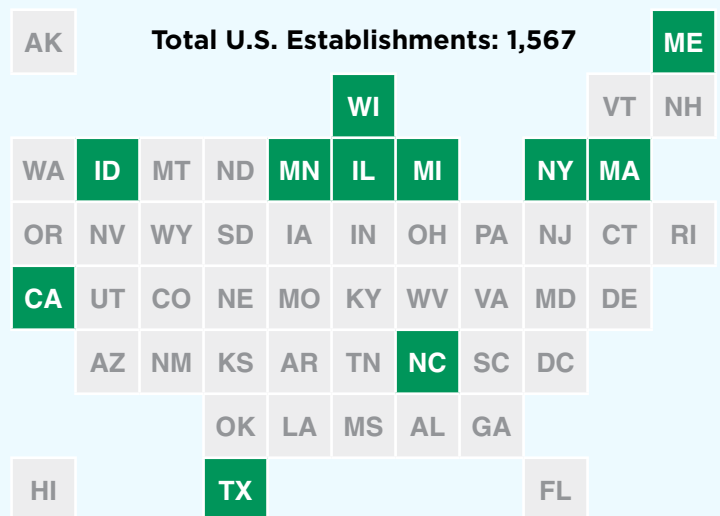


Other electric power comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating electric power generation facilities (except hydroelectric, fossil fuel, nuclear, solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass). These facilities convert other forms of energy, such as tidal power, into electric energy. The energy produced by nuclear power plants is renewable, but the material required to produce the energy is not renewable.

### Half (50.3%) of all Nonrenewable Energy Establishments Are in 11 States



### Half (50.7%) of all Renewable Energy Establishments Are in 11 States



These diagrams do not represent the relative sizes, locations, or relationships of states and their boundaries. They are designed only to illustrate data values for states. States highlighted may vary slightly due to nonsampling error and disclosure avoidance methods used to protect the confidentiality of the data.

# COVID-19 SAFE PRACTICES: REOPENING GUIDELINES FOR IN PERSON TRAINING AND MEETINGS



In person training and meetings must adhere to the Navajo Nation In-Person Training and Meetings Guidelines pursuant to the most recent Public Health Emergency Order issued by the Navajo Department of Health. All entities are responsible for understanding and implementing the guidelines to prevent COVID-19 transmission. Hosts and individuals attending in-person training or meetings shall follow the guidance in this document. Clearly communicate to attendees the steps to be taken before, during, and after the training/ meeting to ensure that the participants are aware of the safety protocols.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Only hybrid meetings are allowed:
  - The number of in person attendees must not exceed gathering requirements per current PHEO.
  - All other attendees must attend virtually.
- In person meeting timeframe limited to 6 hours or less.

## GETTING VACCINATED

- Eligible attendees are highly encouraged to get vaccinated.
- Being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is the most important step people can take to make training/work-sessions safer.
- If you would like information on making a vaccination appointment, contact the nearest federal (IHS) or Tribal health organization at <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19/COVID-19-Vaccine>

## HOST WILL BE FOLLOWING BASIC COVID-19 SAFE PRACTICES

- Practice the three W's:
  - WEAR A MASK: Mask wearing is mandatory.
- All participants must wear face masks prior to entering any venue, for the duration of the training/meeting, and while receiving training/meeting packets.
- Disposable masks will be made available for attendees.
- Mask may be removed when drinking.

- o **WASH HANDS:** Hand sanitizer will be provided, convenient, and accessible. Use hand sanitizer or wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds frequently, and do not touch your face, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- o **WATCH YOUR DISTANCE:** Keep 6 feet away from others.

## SCREENING PRIOR TO THE START OF THE TRAINING/WORK-SESSION

- All in-person attendees must be self-screened for COVID-19 symptoms using the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.
- Onsite registration is allowable for those individuals attending in person if the host does not have the capability to set up pre-registration options.
- All attendees of an in-person training/meeting may pre-register to avoid onsite registration. Only those who pre-register will be allowed to attend.
- All attendees of an in-person training/meeting may utilize text/SMS or QR codes during training/work-session to avoid onsite sign-in. Links will be provided prior to event.

## FOOD OR DRINKS

- No food will be allowed during the event. Bottled water and drinks in a cup with a lid will be allowed during the event.
- If lunch is provided, food must be prepackaged (to-go).

## HYGIENE AND SAFETY

- The host must clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and any areas before and after they are touched or used, such as seats, doorknobs, etc. Disposable disinfectant wipes must be made available for participants to utilize for cleaning and disinfection.
- Attendees are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer but will be provided hand wipes and hand sanitizer onsite.
- Doors and windows may be propped open for increased air circulation, in the event an HVAC system is not available.
- The host will maintain a record of all in-person attendees for at least 30 days to assist with contact tracing. Information collected must include name, date, phone number and email (if available). If a potential case of COVID-19 associated with the training/work-session occurs, this information must be provided within 24 hours, if requested, to contact tracers from federal (Indian Health Service) or Tribal health organizations.
- The host will limit the sharing or exchange of materials, e.g., awards, certificates, door prizes, work-session/training packets. When possible, packets may be provided to attendees beforehand via mail or email.
  - o Note: Door prizes must be in original packaging or in sanitized bags or containers.
  - o If feasible, certificates will be electronically mailed to personal emails.
- The host will clean and disinfect microphones after each use.

## ENCOURAGE 6 FEET OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING BY OPTIMIZING LOGISTICS

- The host will model physical distancing with appropriate main stage.
  - o Presenters and speakers may remove masks if they are 10 feet away from others.
- Attendees will be stationed appropriately to ensure compliance with all requirements and to limit congregation and crowding.

July 2021



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

**NEWSLETTER TEAM:**

Norbert Nez, Editor

Denise Copeland, Assistant Editor

Sylvia Jordan, Contributing Writer



Division of Community Development • P.O. Box 1904, Window Rock, AZ 86515  
(928) 871-7182  
[www.nndcd.org](http://www.nndcd.org)