



Fact Sheet on First Nations Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

The National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems - 2009–2011, specifically the 2011 National Engineering Assessment, reported that:

Water Systems

There are a total of 807 water systems serving 560 First Nations. The remaining 11 First Nations are serviced solely by individual water supplies.

The following summarizes the level of service provided to the homes within the First Nation communities:

- 72% of the homes (81,026) are piped
- 13.5% of the homes (15,451) are on truck delivery
- 13% of the homes (14,479) are serviced by individual wells
- 1.5% of the homes (1,880) are reported to have no water service.

Overall, 52% of the systems rely on groundwater, 19% rely on a Municipal Type Agreement and 29% rely on surface water. Direct use of raw water is the most common in British Columbia, where it is the case for 40% of the systems.

Of the 807 water systems inspected:

- 314 (39%) are categorized as high overall risk
- 278 (34%) are categorized as medium overall risk

Wastewater Systems

There are a total of 532 wastewater systems serving 418 First Nations. The remaining 153 First Nations are serviced solely by individual septic systems. Facultative lagoons are the most common type of treatment followed by Municipal Type Agreement systems.

The following summarizes the level of wastewater service provided:

- 54% of the homes (61,395) are piped
- 8% of the homes (8,861) are on truck haul
- 36% of the homes (40,803) are serviced by individual wastewater systems
- 2% of the homes (1,777) are reported to have no service.

Of the 532 wastewater systems inspected:

- 72 (14%) are categorized as high overall risk
- 272 (51%) are categorized as medium overall risk
- 188 (35%) are categorized as low overall risk.

Drinking Water Advisories

As of **March 31, 2015**, there were **135 Drinking Water Advisories** in effect in **90 First Nation communities** across Canada, excluding British Columbia. (source: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/public-publique/water-dwa-eau-aqep-eng.php>)

As of **April 30, 2015**, there were **32 Drinking Water Advisories** (27 Boil Water Advisories, 5 Do Not Consume advisories) in effect in **28 First Nation communities in British Columbia**. This includes water systems with 5 or more connections and smaller water systems that have public facilities. (source: <http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health>)

According to Health Canada's data, **38** per cent of advisories on October 31, **2011**, were in place for five years or more. **70** per cent were in place for more than **2** years. According to Health Canada's data, **56** per cent of advisories on December 31, **2014**, were in place for **5** years or more. **65** per cent were in place for more than **2** years.

In addition to the above information, the First Nations Regional Health Survey Phase 2 (2008/10) National Report on Adult, Youth and Children Living in First Nations Communities noted the following key findings.

Key Findings

- A small number of First Nations adults reported not having basic amenities in their home, such as hot running water (3.4%), cold running water (2.1%), and flush toilets (2.7%). No improvement was observed since previous RHS (2002/03).
- More than one-third (35.8%) of First Nation adults did not perceive their main water supply in their home to be safe for drinking year round. No improvement was observed since the previous RHS (2002/03).

Progression of Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act

2003 – INAC Water and Wastewater Assessment

“Based on the findings from the facilities assessment, specific actions are being taken to:

- ***Establish water quality standards, regulations and policies that will ensure adherence to established best management practices.”***

2003 – 2008 First Nations Water Management Strategy (FNWMS)

November 15, 2006 - Expert Panel Report on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations released

“First, and most critically, it is not credible to go forward with any regulatory regime without adequate capacity to satisfy the regulatory requirements.” (page 49, Volume 1)

April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2016 – First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP).

The federally targetted investments, described below, total \$3,096,486,118

- In Budget 2008, the Government of Canada provided \$330,639,806 over two years to support on-reserve water/wastewater infrastructure and complementary activities through the First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP).
- Budgets 2010, 2012 and 2014 each extended the program for an additional two years, with total new funding of \$985,015,644 over the six years.
- Canada's Economic Action Plan – Budget 2009 announced another \$165 million over two years for the completion of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects.
- Existing departmental reference levels of funding allocated for First Nations water and wastewater activities from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and Health Canada provide another \$1,615,830,668.

2009 – Engagement Sessions on the Development of a Proposed Legislative Framework for Drinking Water and Wastewater in First Nation Communities

July 2011 - National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems released.

"Nationally, based on the 10 year projected populations, the combined water and wastewater servicing needs are estimated to be \$4.7 billion plus a projected operating and maintenance budget of \$419 million per year."

May 26, 2010 - Bill S-11, An Act respecting the safety of drinking water on first nation lands (short title: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act), was introduced in the Senate.

February 29, 2012 – Bill S-8 Introduction and First Reading - Bill S-11 re-introduced as Bill S-8.

June 18, 2012 – Senate passed Bill S-8.

November 2013 – Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act came into force November 2013.

Other Considerations

Current Risk Evaluation Guidelines for Water Treatment Plants (as utilized in the National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems)

Water Source:	10%
Design:	30%
Operations:	30%
Reporting:	10%
Operators:	20%