



Overview of the First Nations Water and Wastewater Program

Geoff Cole
Director, Program Design and Partnerships, INAC

September 27, 2016



INAC·A·A·N·C





Our Challenges

- INAC provides funding and support for over 725 water and 450 wastewater systems in approximately 620 communities
- Our goal is to bring on-reserve water and wastewater systems to a level of service comparable to what is enjoyed by Canadians living off reserve.
- Unfortunately, the state of water and wastewater in some First Nations communities is unacceptable.
- Poor quality drinking water and problems with wastewater management can have far-reaching impacts:
 - Family life
 - Community life
 - Spiritual and cultural practices
 - Environment
 - Economic Development





Current Strategy

- Increased, steady funding
 - Capital investment
 - Operation and maintenance
 - Training
- Address long-term drinking water advisory infrastructure needs
- Support and increased capacity
- Develop support tools
 - Protocols / guidance documents
 - Prevention of long-term DWAs
- Team effort
 - Strengthen existing and develop new partnerships
 - Develop and apply common standards across regions





Investments

The Government of Canada firmly believes that all Canadians should have access to safe, clean, reliable drinking water.

Budget 2016 announced \$1.8 billion over five years for investments in First Nations water and wastewater infrastructure, starting in 2016-2017, and an additional \$141.7 million over five years to improve the monitoring and testing of on reserve community drinking water.

This level of investment more than doubles the targeted funding per year provided under the previous First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan.





Success looks like:

- Address and resolve long-term drinking water advisories affecting INAC-funded systems within 5 years
- Deliver a minimum of 140 water and wastewater minor and major capital projects per year
- Continue bringing existing water and wastewater systems up to standard
- Respond to current infrastructure gaps and future growth needs
- Expand existing capacity development initiatives and foster alternative technical service delivery models
- Strengthen partnerships and enhance community capacity

INAC·AANC





Current Status of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure: More work ahead...

- Progress to date on improving risk levels of water and wastewater systems on reserve (based on the 2011 National Assessment and Annual Performance Inspection):

Water Systems

| | 2011 Baseline | 2015 - 16 |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| High Risk | 37% | 17% |
| Medium Risk | 36% | 27% |
| Low Risk | 27% | 56% |

Wastewater Systems

| | 2011 Baseline | 2015-16 |
|-------------|---------------|---------|
| High Risk | 14% | 3% |
| Medium Risk | 52% | 52% |
| Low Risk | 34% | 45% |

INAC-AANC





Circuit Rider Training Program

- Operation and Maintenance, operator qualification, and record keeping account for 60% of the risk measured in performance inspections.
- Having trained and certified operators for reducing risk and helping to ensure safe drinking water in First Nations communities is of critical importance.
- Circuit Rider Trainers play a crucial role in improving the health and quality of life of people in First Nation communities by:
 - Providing First Nation operators with ongoing, on-site training and mentoring
 - Supporting 24-hour hotlines for advice during normal operations as well as emergencies
 - Coordinating certification training
 - providing advice to Chiefs and Councils helping them understand their responsibilities with respect to management and operation of their water systems
- We would like to continue to work with you to achieve the important goal of eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on INAC-funded systems in the next five years.





Operator Certification

- Thanks to the efforts of the Circuit Rider Trainers, the number of First Nation operators who are certified, trained but not yet certified, or in-training toward certification is steadily increasing.
- In 2015-16, the percentage of First Nations systems with primary operators that were fully certified to the level of the drinking water or wastewater system exceeded the Department's targets:

| | Target | 2015-16 Results |
|------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Drinking Water Systems | 60% | 66% |
| Wastewater Systems | 50% | 55% |

- The Department is committed to building on this success by improving and strengthening the effectiveness of the Circuit Rider Training program.





We want to hear your views:

- How can operator capacity be better supported on reserve?
- What are the main obstacles to operators attaining certification?
- How can INAC better support the Circuit Rider Training Program?
- How can INAC better support First Nations through the Circuit Rider Training Program?

