

National Water Program’s FY 2022 Tribal Water Infrastructure Measures and Results

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) National Water Program evaluates the progress in developing and implementing effective programs to monitor, protect, and improve the waters of the United States. In October of 2021, EPA released the [Strengthening The Nation-To-Nation Relationship With Tribes To Secure A Sustainable Water Future](#) action plan to address critical challenges and provide vital water protections to **support public health, environmental protection, cultural activities, and subsistence practices in Indian Country**. As part of its evaluation efforts, the EPA tracks the following **seven Tribal infrastructure measures**:

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|  Number and percent of Tribal community water systems that have undergone a sanitary survey within the past three years. |  Percent of serviceable Alaska homes provided access to drinking water supply and wastewater disposal. |
|  Percent of community water systems out of compliance with Health Based Standards in Indian Country. |  Number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes that are provided access to safe drinking water in coordination with other federal agencies. |
|  Percent of the population in Indian Country served by community water systems that receive drinking water that meets all applicable health-based drinking water standards. |  Number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes provided with access to basic sanitation in coordination with other federal agencies. |
|  Percent of “person months” during which community water systems in Indian Country provide drinking water that meets all applicable health-based drinking water standards. | |

Collectively these measures tell the story of the state of Tribal water systems over time. This fact sheet presents the results of the seven Tribal measures FY 2014 through FY 2022.¹

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Provides \$154 million to Improve Drinking and Wastewater Services for Tribes and Alaska Native Villages

In [May 2022](#) the [Biden-Harris Administration announced](#) that through the Tribal Set-Asides of the Drinking Water and the Clean Water State Revolving Funds, EPA would distribute \$154 million in BIL funding to Tribes and Alaska Native Villages. Through this funding, EPA is working collaboratively with Tribal governments, Tribal utilities, and Tribal members to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation services on Tribal lands. Eligible infrastructure projects can include replacement of lead pipes, projects that address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other emerging contaminants, and other types of upgrades to drinking water or sanitation facilities or structures. These projects aim to (among other goals) directly improve performance on the measures reported in this fact sheet.

¹ (1) Region 9 data includes data reported from Navajo Nation; (2) data are submitted at different times of year and may result in discrepancies of universe counts across different measures; (3) data for the four measures on the left side of the table ( ,  ,  , and ) represents data reported to SDWIS-FED: Region 10’s FY 2020 data was underreported in this system.



At the national level, the number and percent of Tribal community water systems (CWS) that have undergone a **sanitary survey** within the past three years **hovers around 90% for the last two years.**

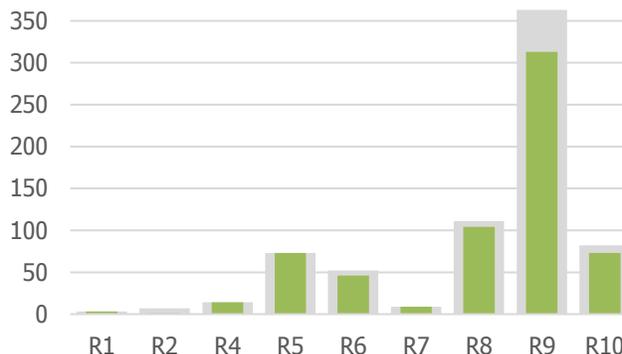
Percent of sanitary surveys completed

Region	Tribal CWSs 2022	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
R1	3	100%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
R2	7	0%	0%	100%	100%	29%	100%	86%	14%	14%
R4	14	50%	50%	57%	86%	86%	71%	100%	100%	100%
R5	73	88%	100%	76%	99%	100%	100%	99%	99%	100%
R6	52	92%	92%	72%	98%	100%	91%	100%	87%	88%
R7	9	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
R8	111	100%	98%	99%	99%	100%	97%	100%	97%	94%
R9	363	95%	93%	96%	96%	92%	93%	77%	87%	86%
R10	82	100%	91%	99%	100%	98%	80%	9%	90%	89%
National	714	93%	93%	93%	97%	95%	93%	78%	90%	89%

WHY MEASURE?

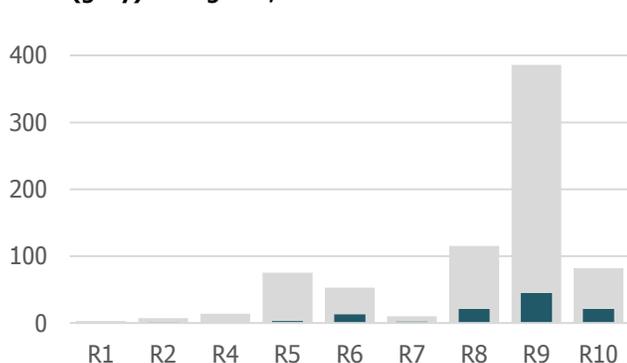
A sanitary survey is a review of the community water system to assess the capability to supply safe drinking water. Sanitary surveys are a proactive public health measure and component of the Safe Drinking Water Public Water System Supervision Program.

of sanitary surveys completed (green) out of total (gray) in regions, FY 2022



Across the agency, the national percent of community water systems **out of compliance** with Health Based Standards in Indian Country has **remained relatively stable (~14%) since FY 2018.** However, there has been some variability in results within regions.²

of CWS out of compliance (blue) out of total (gray) in regions, FY 2022



Percent of CWS out of compliance

Region	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
National	14%	14%	14%	15%	14%
R1	0%	33%	0%	33%	0%
R2	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%
R4	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
R5	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%
R6	42%	39%	36%	30%	25%
R7	18%	9%	18%	17%	20%
R8	22%	19%	27%	29%	18%
R9	8%	12%	10%	11%	12%
R10	10%	16%	10%	21%	26%

² (1) The total system inventory changes annually. In FY 2022, there were 745 Tribal community water systems; (2) data for this measure represents data reported to SDWIS-FED: Region 2’s FY 2022 data was underreported in this system. By the end of FY 2022, 100 percent of sanitary surveys in Region 2 were completed.

WHY MEASURE?

Community water system non-compliance with health-based measures reflects the protection of the Nation's public health associated with the delivery of safe drinking water (meeting the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations).

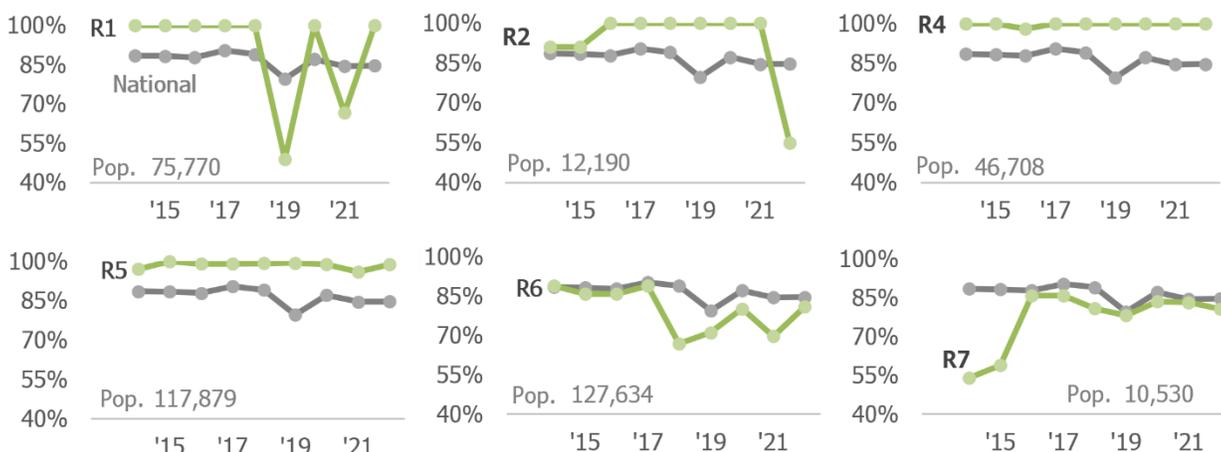
DID YOU KNOW?

A **community water system** or **CWS** is a public water system that supplies water to the same population year-round.

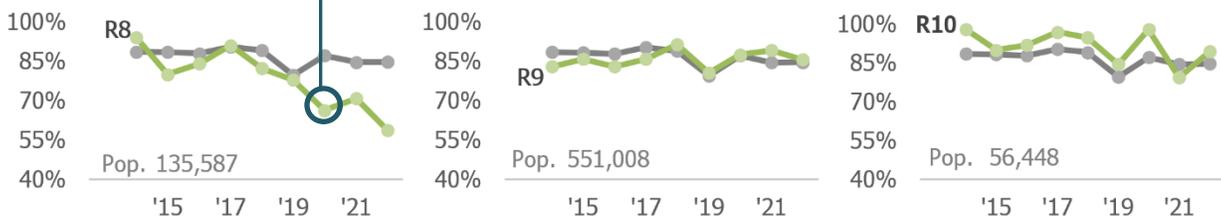
A **health-based standard** is the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) or treatment technique (TT) permissible of an enforceable contaminant in water delivered to users of a public water system.



At the national level, there has been a **slight decline since the FY 2017 high** for the percent of the population in Indian Country served by community water systems that receive drinking water that meets all applicable health-based drinking water standards.³



The drop in water demand during pandemic resulted in water aging in the distribution system which increased the presence total Trihalomethanes up to 76% over previous years.

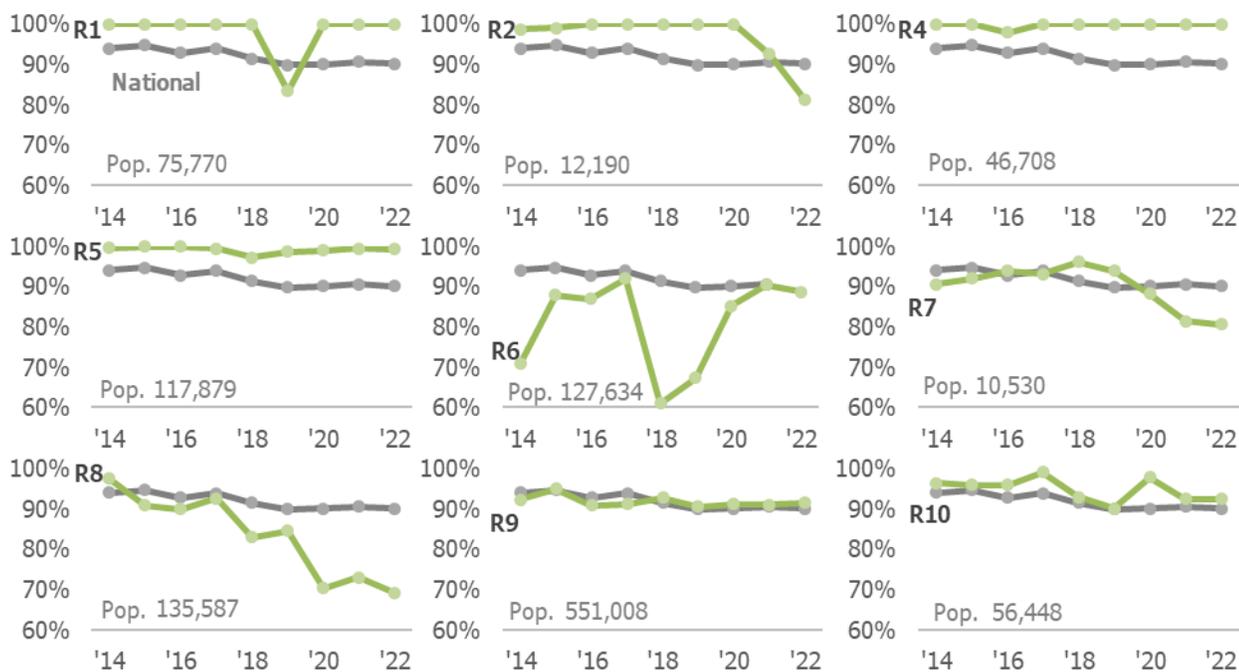


The previous measure (percent of CWS out of compliance) reflects the performance of the community water system, while this measure (reflects the percent of **Tribal persons affected** by the community water system's compliance, or non-compliance. Changes in the number of people a community water system serves would also affect the measure result.

³ Graphics also display the national result for comparison purposes and the estimated population numbers for each region.



Since 2018, the percent of “person months” during which community water systems in Indian Country provide drinking water that meets all applicable health-based drinking water standards **has held stable around 90%.**⁴

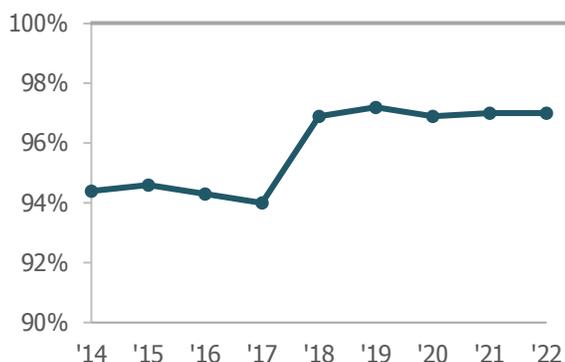


WHY MEASURE?

This measure reflects the **monthly realized effect** of the community water system’s compliance, or non-compliance on the Tribal population. So “person months” is the number of months in the most recent four quarter period in which health-based violations overlap, multiplied by the population served.

⁴ Person months is calculated by all persons served by community water systems multiplied by 12 months.

 **Alaska homes with access to drinking water and wastewater**



The percent of serviceable Alaska homes provided access to drinking water supply and wastewater disposal grew from 94% to 97% in 2018 and has remained stable since then.

WHY MEASURE?

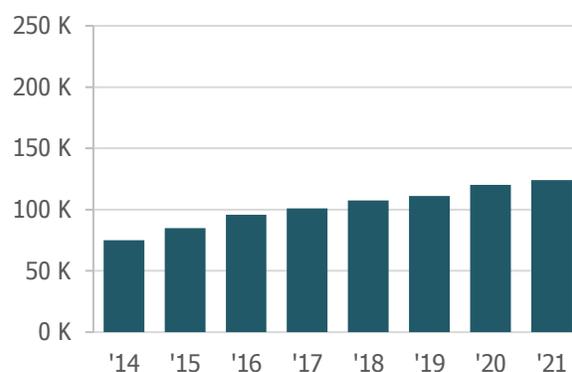
Significant human health and water quality problems exist in Alaska Native Villages due to lack of sanitation. The [Alaska Native Villages and Rural Communities Water Grant Program](#) works to address these challenges.

 The cumulative number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes provided with access to basic sanitation in coordination with other federal agencies **continues to grow over time.**

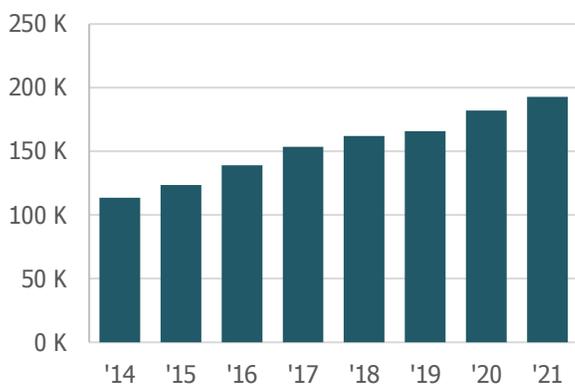
WHY MEASURE?

The cumulative numbers are the values that stem from the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal to reduce by half the proportion of people that did not have access to basic sanitation services.

Homes with access to basic sanitation⁵



 **Homes with access to safe drinking water⁶**



The cumulative number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes that are provided access to safe drinking water in coordination with other federal agencies **continues to grow over time.**

WHY MEASURE?

EPA partners closely with other federal agencies to provide technical assistance and to design and construct drinking water infrastructure, which supports compliance with this measure.

⁵ The way the Indian Health Service monitors and collects this exact measure changed in 2022. Currently this measure is under consideration for re-evaluation.

⁶ The Indian Health Service stopped collecting results for this measure in 2022.