

Data Quality Record for Long-Term Performance Goals

Long-Term Performance Goal Text: By September 30, 2026, in coordination with other federal agencies provide access to basic sanitation for an additional 36,500 American Indian and Alaska Native homes.

Corresponding Annual Performance Goal: Number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes provided access to basic sanitation, in coordination with other agencies.

Goal Number/Objective: Goal 5/Objective 5.1

NPM Lead: Office of Water (OW)

1a. Purpose of Long-Term Performance Goal:

The purpose of this long-term performance goal (LTPG) is to document progress and to describe how the Congressionally appropriated funds that support sanitation for American Indian and Alaska Native homes are used.

1b. Performance Measure Term Definitions:

Sanitation: Interchangeable with terms such as, but not limited to wastewater, wastewater infrastructure, sewer, centralized, decentralized, onsite, septic, drainfield lagoons, treatment ponds and wastewater treatment.

American Indian and Alaska Native homes: Defined by the Indian Health Service (IHS), and further described in Section 2a below.

1c. Unit of Measure:

This LTPG tracks the number of tribal homes that have been provided basic wastewater sanitation.

2a. Data Source:

The source of this data is the IHS Sanitation Tracking and Reporting System (STARS). STARS is managed by the IHS Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEHE), Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC). The system is password protected, and IHS maintains ownership and oversight responsibilities. EPA staff have read-only access to select portions of the IHS DSFC data systems. The data systems are utilized to establish funding priorities for federal funds identified for water and wastewater infrastructure in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. IHS staff identify sanitation deficiencies for American Indian and Alaskan Native homes in several ways, the most common of which include but are not limited to:

- Consultation with Tribal members, community members and other agencies
- Field visits by engineers, sanitarians, or regional health corporation staff
- Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) Sanitary Surveys
- Community Master Plans for Development
- Telephone Surveys
- Feasibility Studies

Sanitation deficiency data entered into STARS undergo a series of highly organized quality control (QC) reviews at various levels within IHS (field, district, and area). The data QC reviews consist of performing several established data queries and reports, which identify errors and/or inconsistencies. In addition, the top sanitation deficiency projects and corresponding community deficiency profiles for each area are reviewed against their budgets including detailed cost estimate reviews.

STARS is comprised of several sub-data systems, including the Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS), which contains the data that is used to calculate this LTPG. The SDS is an inventory of sanitation deficiencies for Indian and Alaskan homes and communities. Data are updated on an ongoing basis. STARS routinely undergoes standard ongoing support and updates to maintain database integrity, efficiency, and accuracy. A second sub-data system called the Housing Inventory Tracking System (HITS) is a map-based housing tracking system. The utilization of a map-based housing inventory allows for the connection of specific homes to specific projects in SDS.

Performance data are reported annually. There is an approximate six-month data lag. The smallest unit for which data are collected is an individual home/residence.

Additional information is available at:

- Indian Health Service (IHS), Division of Sanitation Facilities (DSFC). Criteria for the Sanitation Facilities Construction Program, June 1999, Version 1.02, 3/13/2003 at <https://www.ihs.gov/dsfc/resources/>.
- Indian Health Service (IHS), Division of Sanitation Facilities (DSFC). Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS), "A Guide for Reporting Sanitation Deficiencies for American Indian and Alaska Native Homes and Communities," September 2019 at <https://www.ihs.gov/dsfc/resources/>.
- Indian Health Service (IHS), Annual "Sanitation Deficiency Levels" Reports to Congress at: <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/reportstocongress/>.

2b. Data needed for interpretation of (calculated) Performance Result:

As of Summer 2021, this is a new performance measure so prior year reference point data are not applicable.

The universe (the complete set of elements from which the performance levels are drawn) is the count of total American Indian and Alaska Native village homes. At the end of FY 2019, the IHS reported there are a total of 413,454 American Indian and Alaska Native village homes in STARS (as per "Annual Report to the Congress of the United States On Sanitation Deficiency Levels for Indian Homes and Communities, FY 2019" <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/reportstocongress/>). In FY 2019, the IHS reported that 9,114 American Indian and Alaska Native village homes were provided with improved access to basic sanitation, in coordination with other federal agencies (as per IHS DSFC staff data analysis).

3. Calculation Methodology:

IHS staff enter data into STARS, and IHS Headquarters (HQ) staff sort, filter, and quality assure (QA) the data. EPA Regional Project Officer staff and EPA HQ staff review and QA the data against the previously reported data, and results are compiled in a measures-monitoring spreadsheet. Results are reported as appropriate to EPA.

4. Quality Assurance/Quality Controls:

Sanitation deficiency data entered into STARS undergo a series of highly organized quality control (QC) reviews at various levels within the IHS (field, district, and area). The data QC reviews consist of performing several established data queries and reports, which identify errors and/or inconsistencies. In addition, the top sanitation deficiency projects and corresponding community deficiency profiles for each area are reviewed against their budgets including detailed cost estimate reviews.

Housing information undergoes quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) and is compiled annually at the end of the construction year (typically each spring) to capture progress over the previous construction season. For example, housing information collected through March 2021 reflects progress through calendar year 2020. Analysis and data reviews are conducted around spring/summer and the results are made available in the late fall/winter.

5. Data Limitations/Qualifications:

The data are limited by the accuracy of reported data in the IHS data systems, the quality assurance procedures performed by IHS, and IHS' policies and procedures within the aforementioned documents.

6. Technical Contact:

Primary: Matthew Richardson (OW), Office of Wastewater Management, Water Infrastructure Division, Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure Branch, (202) 564 2947, richardson.matthew@epa.gov

Secondary: EPA Regional offices (Grant and Interagency Agreement Project Officers)

7. Certification Statement/Signature:

I certify the information in this DQR is complete and accurate.

DAA Signature Original signed by Benita Best-Wong **Date** 5/19/2022