

Canada's Approach to Supporting Clean Drinking Water for First Nations

AFN Water Symposium – November 2019
Community Infrastructure Branch



Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Indigenous Services
Canada

Canada

Overview

- Mandate
- Community Infrastructure Reform
- Reforming Water and Wastewater Management
- First Nations Water and Wastewater and the Government's role
- Federal Investments and Commitments
- Water and Wastewater Initiatives
- Looking towards Long-term Sustainability

Mandate

The mandate for ISC is set through the 2019 *Department of Indigenous Services Act*

The Act directs the Minister to:

- Ensure access to services, to address persistent socioeconomic gaps
- Implement the gradual transfer of departmental responsibilities to Indigenous organizations
- recognizes and promotes Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing

Community Infrastructure Reform

Vision

First Nations have access to high quality, culturally appropriate community infrastructure and control the organizations delivering community infrastructure services

Multi-dimensional approach

Infrastructure Reform: Support First Nation-led institutions delivering programs that address community needs and priorities

- BCHIC, Atlantic First Nations Water Authority, etc.
- Funding engagement with communities, leadership and Tribal Councils on their institution building priorities

O&M Policy Reform: Adopt an Asset Management life-cycle approach

Housing Reform: Charting a path for transition to care and control of housing with end goals of improving housing and increasing options

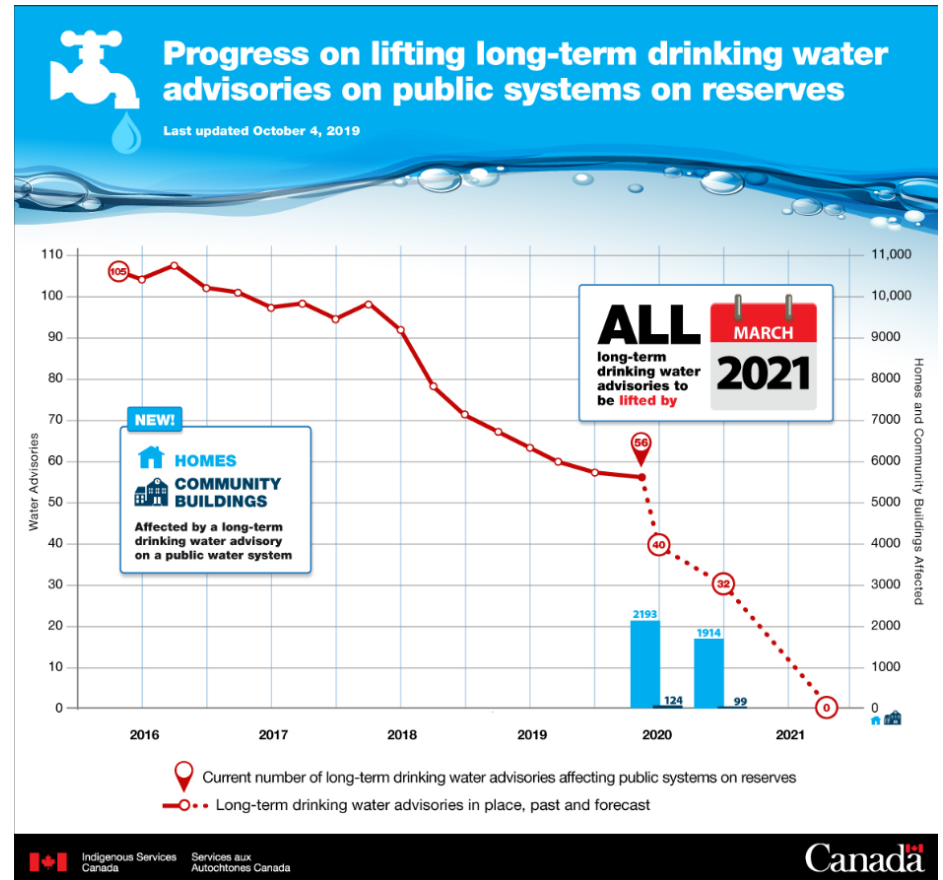
First Nation Initiatives

- Indigenous organizations are advancing along the path to transfer already
- ISC working with them toward their vision of self-determination
- Work continues with partners to support longer-term sustainability
 - On-going support for training for water operators
 - Working to encourage more women and youth to become water operators
 - Promoting the recognition of water operators, including delivering a National First Nation Water Leadership Award
 - Exploring greater service delivery through Technical Service Delivery Hubs (e.g. Tribal Councils)
 - Piloting community-led, Indigenous-specific tendering processes



State of Drinking Water in First Nation Communities

- To date, over 226 water and wastewater projects have been completed
- 87 long-term drinking water advisories have been lifted
 - The most recent First Nation: God's Lake (MB) July 29, 2019
- 57 long-term drinking water advisories remaining
- Also track short-term (2-12 months):
 - 145 ST resolved since Nov 2015
 - 15 in effect



Overview of Water and Wastewater Projects



Federal Investments for Water and Wastewater

- Budget 2016: \$1.8 billion over 5 years
- Budget 2017: \$49 million over 3 years
- Budget 2018: \$173 million over 3 years
- Budget 2019: \$739 million over 5 years
 - *plus \$184.9 million per year ongoing*
- These investments have enabled some good progress
 - We know there is much more to do



Long-Term Approach on Water and Wastewater

Vision

All individuals on reserve have access to safe, clean, reliable running water and adequately managed wastewater

- Commitment to eliminate all long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on reserve still on track for March 2021
- A long-term strategy is needed for water and wastewater beyond 2021

Multi-dimensional Approach

Safe Drinking Water Legislation: Enabling formal mechanisms to protect drinking water

Long-term Strategy on Water and Wastewater: Phased approach to transfer water and wastewater services and resources to Indigenous control

- Building readiness via improved infrastructure and capacity support, and charting a path locally with First Nations to transition and transformation at their own pace and in their own way

Objective: Long-term Sustainability

- Long-term and chronic water and wastewater management issues will not be fully addressed by lifting drinking water advisories
- Sustainability requires proper supports:
 - Safe Drinking Water Legislation
 - Operations and Maintenance Reform
 - Addressing underlying causes of advisories
 - Work with First Nations on long-term sustainability of water and wastewater infrastructure

Next Steps

- Learn from input received on how to build the strategy
- On-going engagement for implementation

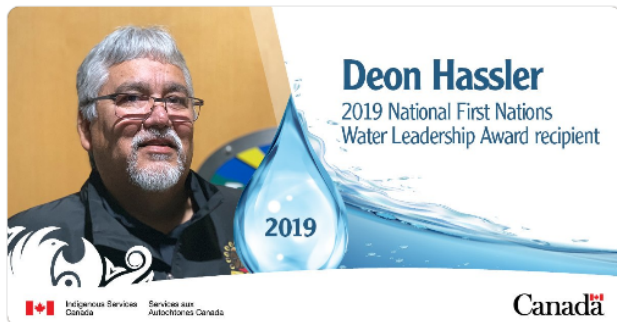
Thank you to First Nation leadership, water and wastewater operators and all others with a role in water/wastewater



Minister Seamus O'Regan ✓
@Min_IndServ

Follow

Pleased to congratulate Deon Hassler, winner of the 2019 National First Nations Water Leadership Award. His knowledge and expertise have helped to ensure that #FirstNations communities have access to safe, clean and reliable drinking water. ow.ly/sO3R101LiY #FNInfra



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GCIndigenous ✓ @GCIndigenous · Mar 22

Congratulations to the winners of the 2019 #AWWAO Operator of the Year and Water Taste Test awards! The #GoC commends the efforts of the recipients in ensuring their communities have access to safe, reliable drinking water. ow.ly/YikZ30o9JqV #cleanwater #worldwaterday



THANK YOU, MIIGWETCH, MERCI



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