

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

November 2024

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## Did You Know...

The first year of dedicating November as "National American Indian Heritage Month" was in 1990. It was proclaimed by President H.W. Bush and has continued each year under subsequent presidents. Under President Barack Obama in 2009, the celebration title was changed to "National Native American Heritage Month."

## Events:

### November: Níłch'its'ósi - Small Winds

- November 11: Veteran's Day
- November 28: Thanksgiving Day
- November 29: Navajo Nation Family Day

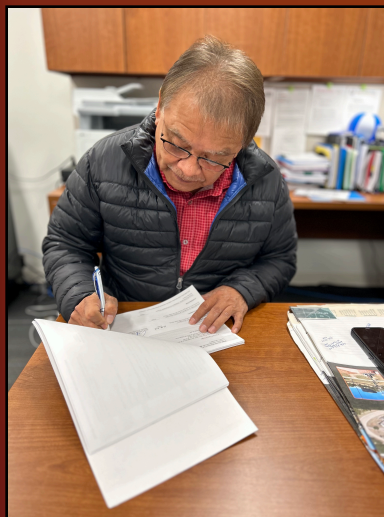
### December: Níłch'itsoh - Big Winds

- December 7: National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- December 14: National Energy Conservation Day
- December 21: First Day of Winter/Winter Solstice
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 31: New Year's Eve



## Collaborative Housing Project Takes Next Steps: DCD Partners with Homes Direct for Modular Housing Development

The Navajo Nation Community Housing and Infrastructure Department (CHID) has taken a significant step toward addressing housing needs with the award of Work Order 1 - Modification #1 for the construction of 50 modular housing units. This contract has been awarded to Homes Direct, a leader in modular construction.



Following the approval of the signed work order, plans are already underway for a meeting to outline next steps, finalize timelines, and coordinate construction logistics. As a cornerstone of this partnership, collaboration will ensure that this modular housing project is executed efficiently, aligning with the Navajo Nation's goals for community development.



## **Project Overview**

The project, spanning various chapters across the Navajo Nation, will include the delivery and installation of 50 high-quality modular homes. Each home will feature three bedrooms and one or two bathrooms, ranging in size from 900 to 1,400 square feet. Homes will comply with ADA standards, featuring accessible entry and interior doors, a 60" turning radius in bathrooms, grab bars, and other features to ensure inclusivity.

## **Scope of Work**

Homes Direct will build these units to Modular IRC Code Specifications with a focus on quality and durability. The project includes:

- Site Development: Ground clearing, soil compaction, and grading.
- Utility Connections: Restoring or connecting water, electric, gas, and wastewater systems within a 5–6 foot radius of each unit.
- Quality Assurance: Comprehensive factory testing for plumbing, electrical wiring, and thermal performance.
- Delivery and Setup: Homes will be transported, blocked, leveled, and secured with windstorm protection at the designated sites.

## **Features and Amenities**

The homes will include:

- ADA-compliant layouts and features
- Propane ranges, electric HVAC systems, refrigerators, and water heaters
- High-quality interior and exterior finishes

## **Timeline and Next Steps**

Work officially began on October 23, 2024, with site visits and coordination currently underway. Maps and specific site locations will be finalized and provided to the contractor shortly. All homes are expected to undergo final inspections and include a one-year warranty upon delivery and acceptance.

## **Partnering for Impact**

This project represents a significant step toward addressing housing needs within the Navajo Nation. Homes Direct looks forward to collaborating with the CHID team and community leaders to ensure the successful completion of this initiative.



# CPMD Project Updates

## Finalization of Contractual Agreement between the Navajo Nation and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative, Inc.

November 2024  
by Dwayne Waseta



The Navajo Nation and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative Inc. are pleased to announce the successful completion of negotiations for a new contractual agreement, which will be finalized in December 2024. This agreement establishes a significant partnership between the Navajo Nation and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative, Inc. to provide electrical services to several communities in the Eastern Agency of the Navajo Nation.

Under the terms of this agreement, Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative will assume responsibility for the delivery and maintenance of reliable and sustainable electrical services to the specified communities. The partnership will focus on enhancing energy access, ensuring service reliability, and supporting the economic and infrastructure development of the Navajo Nation.



The agreement represents a crucial step forward in fostering collaboration between the Navajo Nation and utility service providers. It underscores the Nation's commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents, while also promoting energy independence and sustainability within its borders. Additionally, the partnership is expected to bring long-term benefits, including the creation of local jobs and the advancement of infrastructure projects that will positively impact the region.

Key provisions of the agreement include:

- **Service Expansion:** The provision of electrical services to several underserved communities within the Eastern Agency.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Joint efforts to upgrade and maintain electrical infrastructure, including grid improvements, to meet growing demand.
- **Community Engagement:** Ongoing consultations with the Navajo communities to ensure that their needs are met and that the provision of services aligns with local priorities.
- **Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship:** Commitment to integrating environmentally sustainable practices in the operation and expansion of electrical services.

Both parties are enthusiastic about the potential of this partnership and are committed to working together to ensure that the agreement is implemented effectively and to the benefit of the Navajo people. The finalization of this contract marks a new chapter in the relationship between the Navajo Nation and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative Inc., with the goal of creating a more connected, empowered, and sustainable future for the communities served.

## Execution of Contractual Modification between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA)

The Navajo Nation, through its Capital Projects Management Department, has initiated the process of modifying its existing partnership with the Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA) in October 2024. This modification aims to expand the scope of collaboration to include new projects funded by the State of New Mexico, specifically focused on the construction of bathroom additions for several rural communities within the Navajo Nation.

Under the terms of the revised agreement, NECA will play a critical role in the construction of forty-six sanitation additions (bathroom additions) at identified homesites across various Navajo rural communities. The expansion of this partnership is designed to address the longstanding issue of inadequate access to basic sanitation facilities, which has significantly impacted the quality of life for many Navajo families.

The inclusion of these projects under the State of New Mexico's funding is a vital step in advancing the Navajo Nation's infrastructure development goals. This initiative will provide much-needed improvements to essential living conditions, offering residents greater access to sanitation services, and ultimately contributing to the overall health, safety, and well-being of the affected communities.





Key objectives of this contractual modification include:

- **Expansion of Partnership:** The extension of the existing collaboration between the Navajo Nation and NECA to include the construction of sanitation additions funded through the State of New Mexico.
- **Construction of Bathroom Additions:** The planned construction of forty-six-bathroom additions at various homesites within rural Navajo communities, ensuring that families have access to modern sanitation infrastructure.
- **Quality of Life Improvement:** Direct enhancements to the living standards of families who lack basic infrastructure, promoting health and hygiene through the provision of private sanitation facilities.
- **Project Schedule:** The construction efforts are set to proceed according to the established timeline, with a focus on completing all bathroom additions in a timely manner to ensure maximum benefit to the targeted households.

This modification represents a critical investment in the future of Navajo communities, and both parties remain committed to the successful implementation of these vital infrastructure projects. The efforts undertaken through this partnership will significantly improve access to essential services, demonstrating the Navajo Nation's ongoing commitment to the welfare and prosperity of its people.

## **October Monthly Report of Activities – October 31, 2024**

During the month of October 2024, the Capital Project Management team continued to make significant progress by preparing and requesting several cost fee proposals from our IDIQ (Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity) firms for various State of New Mexico and Navajo Nation projects. These work orders will support our department in developing and advancing the outlined projects. Below is a summary of the key activities and work orders requested during the month:

### **State of New Mexico Projects for Warehouse/Equipment Storage Planning & Design Services**

Capital Project Management requested proposals for planning and design services for several chapters. The following chapters are included under the Warehouse/Equipment Storage Planning & Design Services:

- Chichiltah Chapter
- Lake Valley Chapter
- Smith Lake Chapter
- Standing Rock Chapter

These work orders are essential to support the strategic planning for new warehouse and storage facilities across these locations.

### **New Construction Planning & Design Services:**

1. **Ojo Encino Chapter House Renovation:** A drafted work order has been issued to our IDIQ firms for inspection and assessment of the existing Ojo Encino Chapter House. The primary objective is to determine the building's condition and create a renovation scope of work that aligns with the chapter's needs and long-term sustainability.
2. **Torreon-Star Lake Chapter Community Library Construction:** A drafted work order was prepared for programming and design services related to the new community library for the Torreon-Star Lake Chapter. This project is in the early stages of development, and this work order will guide the planning and design efforts for the new facility.
3. **White Rock Chapter Multi-Purpose Building:** A drafted work order has been requested for the programming of a new multi-purpose building for the White Rock Chapter. Due to limited funding, this project will focus on the programming phase only, with the goal of creating an initial design for the facility, though full architectural designs may not be fully developed at this time.
4. **Tiis Tsoh Sikaad (Burnham) Chapter Multi-Purpose Building:** Capital Project Management has also prepared a drafted work order for the programming and design of a new multi-purpose building for the Tiis Tsoh Sikaad Chapter. This project will provide essential community space and will focus on the development of the architectural design as part of its planning phase.

### **Summary:**

Throughout October 2024, significant strides were made in preparing for the upcoming projects for the State of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation. The work orders requested will provide the necessary assessments, programming, and design services to help guide the successful development of these critical infrastructure projects. Moving forward, our department will continue to work closely with our IDIQ firms to ensure these projects proceed efficiently and meet the needs of the respective communities.



## Opening and Transfer of the Thoreau Veteran Center Facility to the Local Chapter and Veteran Organization



BY DWAYNE WASETA

On November 11, 2024, a significant milestone was reached for the local veteran community as the Capital Projects Management Department (CPMD) issued the formal occupancy notice for the Thoreau Veteran Center Facility to the Thoreau Chapter of the Veteran Organization. This momentous occasion coincided with National Veterans Day, a day dedicated to honoring the service and sacrifice of veterans across the nation.

The veteran organization, deeply grateful for this new space, celebrated the formal transfer of the facility by hosting a special dinner for local veterans. The event was a heartfelt occasion that brought together veterans, their families, and community leaders to enjoy a meal and reflect on the importance of supporting those who have served our country. The Thoreau Veteran Center now stands as a symbol of pride and unity for the local veteran community, offering them a dedicated space to gather, connect, and continue their mission of supporting fellow veterans.



BY DWAYNE WASETA

This transfer marks the beginning of a new chapter for the Thoreau Chapter and the veteran organization, as they now have a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a hub for activities, resources, and services dedicated to the well-being of veterans. The center will play a key role in fostering camaraderie and providing vital support to those who have served, ensuring that the legacy of their sacrifice is honored and remembered.

We extend our deepest congratulations to the Thoreau Chapter on the opening of the Thoreau Veteran Center Facility and look forward to the positive impact it will undoubtedly have on the local veteran community for many years to come.



BY DWAYNE WASETA



# Former Indian Wells Head Start Building Transformed to the Indian Wells Senior Center

By Leonard Hardy

A former Head Start building has been given new life as a fully renovated senior center, marking a new trend of converting underutilized Head Start facilities into spaces dedicated to senior services. The transformation was made possible through the use of Sihasin Funds, which supported a comprehensive renovation of the facility, ensuring it meets the needs of the local senior community.

Key upgrades include a new metal roof, a fresh stucco exterior, and the installation of a handicap-accessible entrance complete with a roof canopy and handrails. The building also received new floor tiles, and its restrooms were reimagined with adult-sized fixtures and handicap-accessible features to replace those originally designed for young children.



The facility was further modernized with new weatherized windows, exterior metal doors, gutters and downspouts, and a new grease trap to improve functionality.



While these upgrades represent a significant improvement, additional funding is required to complete the project. Plans are underway to equip the building with a commercial kitchen featuring stainless steel counters and tables, as well as a state-of-the-art range exhaust system with exhaust and supply fans.

This project stands as a testament to the innovative use of existing resources to serve evolving community needs, providing seniors with a comfortable and accessible space to gather, dine, and participate in programs. The effort demonstrates a commitment to enhancing quality of life for local residents while maximizing the use of community infrastructure.

Stay tuned for updates as the final phase of this inspiring transformation takes shape!





# Enhancing Tsaille's Senior Center Facilities Through Comprehensive Renovations

By Leonard Hardy

The Tsaille Chapter is celebrating a series of much-needed building renovations that have significantly improved the functionality and safety of its facilities. These updates ensure a more comfortable and user-friendly environment for community members and visitors alike.

Among the standout additions is a metal-framed gazebo, providing a new outdoor space for gatherings and events. This improvement complements the facility's upgrades, enhancing its utility and charm.

One of the more pressing issues—a serious dip in the pavement drive—was repaired, ensuring smooth and safe access for vehicles. The light poles were also re-energized, with new light bulbs installed to improve visibility and safety during evening hours.



Inside the facility, practical enhancements have made daily operations more efficient. The gas range, previously cumbersome to clean, now has wheels for easier movement, allowing for better maintenance and hygiene. To further improve the kitchen area, stainless steel sheeting was installed behind the range, creating a durable and cleanable surface for the wall.

The building's infrastructure also received attention, with cracked windows and floor slabs repaired, restoring the structural integrity and appearance of the facility. In addition, the front desk was outfitted with flexi-glass panels during the COVID years, providing a barrier for added safety.

Emergency preparedness and accessibility were also prioritized. New emergency and exit light fixtures were installed to enhance safety during power outages or emergencies. Furthermore, new handicap fixtures were added to improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

The laundry area saw upgrades with the installation of a new washer and dryer, ensuring modern, reliable equipment for the facility's needs.



These renovations reflect the Tsaille Chapter's commitment to maintaining and improving its spaces for the benefit of the community. With these updates, the facility is better equipped to serve as a welcoming and functional hub for everyone.





# Tse' Lichii Chapter Secures New Mexico Capital Outlay Funds for Land Use Plan Update

By Marlene Hoskie

The Tse' Lichii (Red Rock) Chapter is making strides toward its future with the recent allocation of New Mexico Capital Outlay funds. These funds will be used to update the Chapter's Land Use Plan, a critical document that will guide the community's development over the next five years.

To initiate this important effort, a productive kick-off work session was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from November 19-21, 2024. During this session, Chapter leaders, community members, and planners worked together to discuss the Chapter's goals and priorities.

## Progress Through Collaboration

The opportunity to work with local chapters and communities on planning projects has proven both rewarding and impactful. Bringing together a local group to discuss their projects, goals, and aspirations results in meaningful accomplishments, including:

- **Continued Progress in Local-Level Planning:** Teamwork and collaboration were fostered through facilitated planning sessions, strengthening the capacity for effective decision-making.
- **Empowering Participants:** The sessions enhanced participants' knowledge and skills, enabling them to contribute more effectively to group goals and initiatives.
- **Strengthened Program Accountability:** The group built a robust framework for maintaining accountability and ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.
- **A Culture of Learning and Ownership:** Members embraced continuous learning, applied newly gained knowledge, and took ownership of their roles to achieve sustained success.

## Overcoming Challenges

While projects continue to advance, challenges and barriers remain part of the process. For instance, one project faced delays and required corrections before successfully receiving an account number for its contract. These experiences underscore the importance of persistence and adaptability in overcoming obstacles and ensuring progress.

The updated Land Use Plan reflects a collective vision for Tse' Lichii's future. It addresses key areas like infrastructure development, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. With ongoing collaboration and a shared commitment to success, the Chapter is laying the groundwork for a brighter, more resilient future.

For more information and updates, watch for announcements about upcoming public meetings and workshops.



TSE' LICHII (RED ROCK) CLUP COMMITTEE, CHAPTER OFFICIAL AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS





# DCD Staff Celebrate Thanksgiving

On Thursday, November 21, the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development (DCD) staff came together in Gallup, NM, for a Thanksgiving luncheon, creating an opportunity to reflect, reconnect, and celebrate their collective accomplishments. The gathering was a moment of gratitude and camaraderie, bringing together team members from various departments to pause from their busy schedules and acknowledge the impact of their hard work on the Navajo Nation's communities.

Division Director Arbin Mitchell opened the luncheon with words of appreciation, highlighting the team's

progress in advancing key initiatives and addressing community needs. He emphasized the importance of taking moments like this to reflect on the blessings in their lives, not only as professionals but also as individuals with families and personal journeys. Mitchell encouraged the staff to find balance in their commitments, cherishing both their work and their loved ones.

Department managers also addressed the group, sharing updates on projects that span infrastructure improvements, community engagement, and resource allocation. Their remarks reinforced the significance of the collective effort required to bring meaningful change to Navajo communities. Each department's contributions were acknowledged as critical to achieving the overarching goals of DCD.

The luncheon featured a delicious and hearty meal, served in a festive and welcoming atmosphere that allowed staff to connect with colleagues outside of the daily demands of work. Conversations flowed as team members shared stories, laughter, and reflections, strengthening bonds and fostering a sense of unity.

After the meal, staff returned to their duties, reinvigorated and inspired to continue the important work of serving the Navajo Nation. As the holiday season unfolds, this gathering served as a reminder of the values of gratitude, teamwork, and dedication that drive the Division of Community Development's mission forward. Moments like these underscore the importance of community—not only in the areas DCD serves but within the organization itself.

DCD remains committed to delivering results for the Navajo Nation while fostering an environment that values the people behind the work.





# Happy Thanksgiving



*from all division staff*



# Community Housing Infrastructure Department Updates

## Renovation Success Story: The Journey to Completing Marie Brown's Home



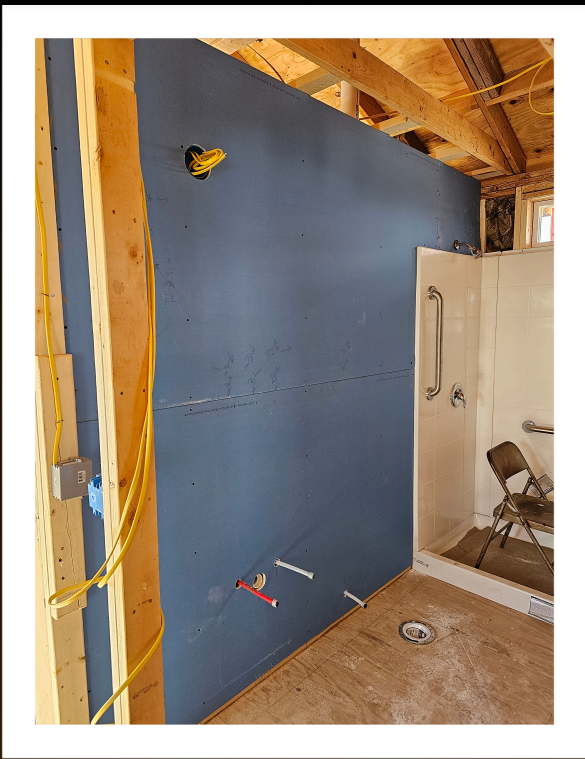
The Community Housing and Infrastructure Department (CHID) recently marked a significant milestone in its commitment to improving lives across the Navajo Nation. Among the many renovation projects completed, one stands out for its complexity, emotional depth, and the transformative impact it had on one individual's life. The story of completing Marie Brown's home is not just a tale of construction—it is a testament to resilience, compassion, and the power of community-driven action.

### A Home Left in Limbo

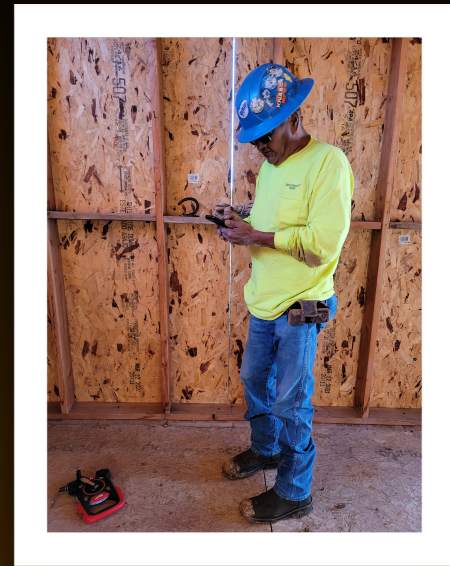
In late 2022, CHID was approached about the uncompleted home of Marie Brown, a resident who had faced years of uncertainty and hardship. The home, initially promised as part of a housing initiative under the late Carl Smith, former Division Director of the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, had been abandoned mid-construction.







When we first met Ms. Brown at her homesite, her pain and perseverance were evident. She recounted her experience of couch-surfing with family since 2018 when a catastrophic fire destroyed her home and belongings. That event not only left her physically displaced but also emotionally scarred. Although Carl Smith had assured her a new home would be built, the project stalled inexplicably, leaving Ms. Brown with a skeletal structure that offered little hope.



In the years that followed, Ms. Brown attempted to finish the home on her own, hiring laborers to complete the flooring, walls, and roof. Unfortunately, these efforts were plagued by incompetence, resulting in financial loss and further delays. When we visited her site, her voice carried the

weight of years of frustration and heartbreak. Her question, “What can Community Housing and Infrastructure provide?” was both a plea and a challenge.

### CHID Steps In

Determined to bring resolution to her plight, CHID’s Department Manager, Patrick Dalgai, authorized a full assessment of the home. Senior Carpenter Sean Pioche and I conducted a detailed evaluation, documenting the scope of work required to transform the unfinished structure into a safe, livable home. Once the assessment was complete, Mr. Dalgai gave the green light for “Project Marie Brown.” At the same time, CHID was heavily involved in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) initiative, which required homesite assessments across all 110 chapters of the Navajo Nation. Balancing this extensive task with the demands of Ms. Brown’s project was a challenge. However, her urgency—facing another winter without a completed home—propelled us to find ways to prioritize her renovation.

### The Work Begins

The scope of work for Ms. Brown’s home was extensive. CHID’s skilled team addressed a wide range of needs, including:

- Structural Repairs: Reinforcing and finishing all exterior and interior walls.
- Roofing: Completing the roofing to provide a weatherproof and durable solution.





- **Subflooring:** Reconstructing the damaged subfloor with new, high-quality materials.
- **Utilities:** Installing house wiring, including pulling and connecting 2AWG wiring from the sub-panel to the main service panel.
- **Additional Construction:** Ensuring the home met all safety and quality standards through precise carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work.

This multifaceted project drew on the expertise of rough and trim carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and roofers. Each team member brought a high level of craftsmanship and dedication to their role, ensuring the home was not only functional but also built to last.

### Overcoming Challenges

Progress was not without its hurdles. The demands of ARPA assessments significantly limited the time available for CHID’s renovation projects. However, by mid-2024, with the addition of two skilled carpenters and a laborer to the team, CHID regained its operational capacity. This allowed us to intensify efforts on Ms. Brown’s home, accelerating the timeline and ensuring all unfinished tasks were completed.



### A New Beginning

The culmination of this project was a moment of triumph not just for Ms. Brown but for everyone involved. After months of living with friends and relatives, Ms. Brown’s dream of returning to a home of her own became a reality.

During the final walk-through, Senior Carpenter Sean Pioche and I guided Ms. Brown through the completed home. From the sturdy walls to the reliable utilities, every detail reflected the care and quality invested by CHID’s team. Finally, we handed her the keys—a moment filled with emotion and gratitude.

Ms. Brown’s reaction was profound. Tears of joy replaced years of frustration as she stepped into a home that symbolized stability, security, and the end of a long, arduous journey.

### The Bigger Picture

The completion of Ms. Brown’s home serves as a powerful reminder of CHID’s mission: to provide quality housing solutions that restore dignity and hope to our community members. This project exemplified the department’s ability to overcome challenges, adapt to competing priorities, and deliver exceptional results. Marie Brown’s story is more than a case study in project management—it’s a testament to the profound impact that community-focused initiatives can have on individual lives. By addressing her housing needs, CHID not only provided a physical structure but also renewed her sense of belonging and hope for the future.

As we look ahead, CHID remains committed to continuing this vital work, ensuring that every member of the Navajo Nation has access to safe, reliable housing and the opportunity to build a better life.



By: Jeffrey Goodluck, Construction Supervisor  
Community Housing and Infrastructure Dept. (CHID)  
Navajo Nation Division of Community Development



# Housing Improvement Program Update

## HIP/BIA ARPA Update: Progress on Housing Projects

### *Work Order #1 of 5*

The ARPA-funded housing initiative is making significant progress across the Navajo Nation. Here's the latest update:

- Kayenta, AZ: The first of 30 homes was delivered on November 20 and successfully set up, leveled, and anchored on November 21. Skirting, gutter systems, and front/back door platforms with steps will be completed by the Housing Improvement Program (HIP). (Photos attached)
- Coyote Canyon, NM: The second home in this series is scheduled for delivery and setup during the week of December 2, 2024.
- Karsten Homes, Albuquerque, NM: The first 10 homes in this project are being completed with coordinated color schemes and interior décor.

Homes 11–20 will feature a different color scheme.  
Homes 21–30 will have another distinct color scheme.  
All units are designed as 2-bedroom, 1-bath homes.

The Housing Improvement Program is thrilled to utilize ARPA funding to assist more families, supplementing its regular yearly funding allocations.

### *HIP's Ongoing Efforts*

With its annual allocation, HIP typically assists 10 or fewer families per year, supported by two dedicated construction crews working tirelessly to build homes across the Navajo Nation.

Current projects funded by regular allocations include:

- Tolani Lake, AZ: Construction of a 1-bedroom unit, currently 15% complete.
  - Shiprock, NM: Renovation of a 2-bedroom unit, now 45% complete.
- These efforts reflect HIP's commitment to addressing housing needs and improving the quality of life for families throughout the Navajo Nation.

Prepared by:  
Emmett O. Tsosie  
Planner/Estimator

## Housing Improvement Program

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CHINLE AGENCY  
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Fax No.# (928) 674-2266

EASTERN AGENCY  
Google maps location  
MVM2+83  
Crownpoint, New Mexico





# ARPA Update: Progress on Housing Projects Cont.





# DCD ARPA Updates

## Strategic Planning Work Session Sets the Stage for Section 11 Progress



Albuquerque, NM — On November 25-26, 2024, key stakeholders convened at the Wells Fargo Room in the WESST Center for a pivotal Strategic Planning Work Session focused on the ongoing progress of Section 11 initiatives. This two-day meeting brought together representatives from the Navajo Nation, NECA, and DCD to align on critical components of the Section 11 Bathroom Renovation Program and related projects.

The agenda covered comprehensive updates, collaborative planning, and actionable strategies to enhance program efficiency and impact.

### **Day 1 Highlights: Foundation and Framework**

The work session kicked off with warm welcomes and introductions, followed by an Overview/Recap of Section 11, which showcased:

**Accomplishments to Date:** Progress milestones and project completions.

**Work Order Summaries:** A snapshot of ongoing and completed tasks.

**Bathroom Work Statistics:** Key data insights driving the program forward.

NECA presented updates, followed by an in-depth review of Resolution CO-41-42, focusing on council delegate feedback, bathroom renovations, and septic system installation progress.

### **Day 2 Highlights: Process Development and Strategic Planning**

The second day concentrated on refining processes and workflows. Key discussions included:

**Application and Assessment Procedures:**

Finalizing application forms for chapters and applicants.

Streamlining tracking methods using shared tools like Google Drive.

Defining responsibilities for site assessments, including mobilization goals and environmental considerations.

Discussing triggers for escalating renovations to bathroom additions.

**Septic System Integration:**

Establishing specifications for percolation tests, septic tank sizes, and drain field designs.

Exploring OEH designs and evaluating existing HSL compatibility.

**Work Order and Construction Processes:**

Developing standards for scope submittals, drawings, and cut sheets.

Determining how renovation work orders will be finalized and estimated by NECA.

Creating workflows for construction progress updates, chapter coordination, and stakeholder communication.

### **Closeout Procedures:**

Proposing a family-sign-off template for project completion to ensure transparency and accountability.

### **Vision for the Future**

The session underscored the importance of collaboration, with roles clearly defined for chapters, OEH, and NECA. The group aligned on average monthly goals for assessments and renovation construction, ensuring consistent progress in improving living conditions for Navajo families.

### **Looking Ahead:**

Discussions emphasized the importance of leveraging resources, streamlining processes, and maintaining open communication channels. By fostering a unified approach, the Section 11 team is poised to address challenges and meet the growing demand for bathroom renovations and septic system upgrades effectively.

As the program evolves, its impact will continue to enhance health and safety standards across the Navajo Nation, demonstrating the power of strategic planning and partnership-driven initiatives.



# Internet Upgrades Enhance Connectivity for DCD Offices

By Sylvia Jordan

Andrea Chato, an office specialist at the Chinle Administrative Services Center (ASC), expressed her enthusiasm about the recent upgrade to internet services at the facility. Chinle ASC is the third Department of Community Development (DCD) location to benefit from the enhanced connectivity provided by Starlink, which is quickly becoming the preferred solution for DCD offices.

This month, two DCD office locations in Shiprock also underwent similar upgrades, significantly improving their internet capabilities. These enhancements aim to better support chapters by enabling offices to host training sessions and meetings on-site. Additional DCD offices are scheduled for upgrades in the near future, further strengthening communication and operational efficiency across the organization.



*Thank You CPMD for  
your help!*



# Administrative Services Centers

## November Highlights

In November, the Administrative Services Centers (ASC) continued its critical work assisting the Navajo Nation's 110 chapters in finalizing their FY2025 Annual Allocation Budgets and FY2024 to FY2025 Carryover Budgets. As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure fiscal sustainability and accountability, the ASC team helped chapters navigate the complexities of funding allocation, working closely with division programs and Navajo Nation offices to provide targeted support.

In addition to this essential work, the ASC partnered with the Department of Emergency Management to offer FEMA Emergency Management Training to all 110 chapters. This training is part of our commitment to building resilience and enhancing emergency preparedness across the Nation, equipping chapter leaders with the knowledge and tools needed to respond effectively in times of crisis.

Our eight local ASC offices also hosted various training sessions, including new employee orientations, project management workshops, and best practices for fiscal management, helping to strengthen the capacity of chapters and support their ongoing growth. Through these initiatives, we are dedicated to ensuring that each chapter has the resources and training necessary for success.



# FEMA





# Spotlight on Community Engagement: Tuba City High School College and Career Fair

On November 14, 2024, our Tuba City ASC team proudly participated in the Tuba City High School College and Career Fair. Office Specialist Michelle Billy, Administrative Services Officer Kristen Charley, and Senior Programs & Projects Specialist Milford Maloney engaged with students, sharing insights about the Division of Community Development's exciting career opportunities.

This event was an excellent opportunity to connect with the next generation of professionals, inspire their aspirations, and showcase the diverse paths available within our organization. Thank you to Milford, Kristen, and Michelle for representing our team and inspiring students to dream big!

(Photos courtesy of Michelle Billy)





# Whitecone Chapter Hosts Thanksgiving Dinner and Honors Volunteers

On November 19, 2024, the Whitecone Chapter hosted a heartfelt Thanksgiving dinner for the community during their chapter meeting. The event, organized by Virda Yazzie (CSC) and Onaiwa Begay (AMS), brought people together for a festive meal and celebration. Volunteers were recognized with awards of appreciation from the Whitecone Administration, highlighting their dedication to the chapter's success. Special thanks to the Dilkon ASC Office—Eunice Begay, Toni Mina, and Jennifer Ruskin—for supporting the chapter. Kudos to everyone who made this event memorable for the Whitecone community!

(Photos courtesy of Jennifer Ruskin)





# Welcome New Staff!



## Everett Lee, AMS Low Mountain Chapter

We are excited to announce that Everett Lee has joined our team as the new Accounts Maintenance Specialist (AMS) as of November 18, 2024.

Everett is no stranger to the chapter, having previously worked with chapter as a project coordinator and administrative assistant. In his new role as the chapters AMS, he will oversee tasks such as reconciling accounts, verifying billing statements, and ensuring compliance with tribal regulations. His expertise in managing complex financial records and generating detailed reports will be a valuable asset to the chapter.

Please join us in giving Everett a warm welcome!



## 'StarCar' Diné woman entrepreneur presents Sunbeam Tours and Railways, EV passenger coach at Navajo Tourism Conference

By The Navajo Times

PAGE

A modernistic Sunbeam Tours and Railway "StarCar" was shown for the first time last week at the Navajo Tourism Conference here at the Marriott Conference Center.

STAR Founder/CEO Celesta Littleman unveiled a photo of the proposed StarCar, an all-weather, EV passenger coach that will be built with a fiberglass body onto an all-steel chassis.

If awarded an EOA – emergency operating agreement – by the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, her company, Sunbeam Tours and Railway, will provide people from around the world with a thrilling experience using the newest EV technology to travel through some of North America's captivating landscapes of mesas and plateaus of vibrant colors.

The concept is to use 45 miles of the former Black Mesa and Lake Powell Railroad track, said Littleman, who is Naakii Dine'é and born for Tsi'naajinii. Her maternal grandfather is Bjih Bitoodnii and her maternal grandfather is Tódích'í'nií.

Littleman is originally from LeChee, Arizona. She is the daughter of Lester and Rose Ann Littleman, who run Mystical Antelope Canyon Tours and Arrowhead Campground.

"This is like a ride at Disneyland, only it's Navajoland," Littleman said. "It's not a trip through a canyon, on a lake, or around a bend in the river. It's one woman's invention of an EV vehicle to take eager tourists who want a Navajo experience through beautiful scenery while learning about the Navajo people, how they survived, and how they live today."

StarCar on BMLP Railroad, first presentation

Her first public presentation went much better than she expected.

"My audience gasped with their mouths hanging open when they saw our prototype vehicle, we've dubbed the StarCar," she said. "STAR is our acronym, and the name



Courtesy | Celesta Littleman  
Diné entrepreneur Celesta Littleman, the founder and CEO of Sunbeam Tours and Railway, is from LeChee, Ariz.

StarCar was just a placeholder until my team decided, "That's it!"

Her plan, she said, is to use the former BMLP Engine House on the former NGS lease area as a depot. From there passengers will board for a 90-mile round trip "rail journey."

The 30-mph scenic ride will take about three hours. It will include stops at a Vendor Village with a restroom break at Midway. There the StarCar will reverse direction without leaving the tracks for an entirely new scenic trip.

This is a people-friendly way to experience cultural tourism in a zero-impact, zero-emission vehicle designed to support sustainable travel, according to Littleman.

"My goal is to offer a different and unique experience and serve my communities of LeChee and Kaibeto with employment," she said.

Inspiration from leaders, scenic views

When asked why she is enthusiastic about her proposed business, Littleman said she's loved trains since she was a girl but was inspired by the words of today's young Navajo leaders.

"I heard President (Buu) Nygren and Speaker (Crystalyne) Curley say they wanted to reverse the Navajo brain drain," she said. "Dr. Nygren says he wants young, educated Navajos to return home, start businesses, employ other Navajos, help build the Navajo economy, and generate revenue for the Navajo Nation. When I heard that, I thought, 'He's talking about me, and I want to come home.'"

"The new approach will benefit the Navajo Nation and support our local economy," she said.

Each StarCar will be ADA compliant – Americans with Disabilities Act – so individuals who need wheelchair access will be able to enjoy the trip. The StarCar is designed with comfortable seats and large windows in all directions so all ages can enjoy 360-degree scenic views.

"From mile marker 33, passengers will be able to see from Navajo Mountain to the San Francisco Peaks at the same time. It's stunning," Littleman said. "I know because I worked in the NGS Railroad and Heavy Equipment Department for six years."

Having worked in the energy industry where safety is the highest priority, she said each StarCar is designed to be safe, secure, and luxuriously comfortable. She said they are equipped with air-conditioning for summer and heating for winter.

"It's a fully enclosed, high-ceiled coach," she said. "It's perfect for safe operation in all weather and temperature conditions, from the spring winds through the summer male rains and 100 degrees (Fahrenheit) to the beautiful winter snow."

Asked if she thought her business would be successful, she said, "I'm going to have to create a production line to keep up with the demand my StarCar will create."

Read More: <https://bit.ly/3Zjn1CP>

## \$100,000 broadband planning award for Navajo Technical University



The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) has announced that Navajo Technical University (NTU) in Crownpoint, NM

will receive \$100,000 to help the university plan for the deployment of fixed wireless internet services for unserved and underserved populations on the Navajo Nation. Planning assistance will include working with students, initial grant funding, and preparation for engineering/quotes for service. The award marks the 21 given out by the office as part of the state's Grant Writing, Engineering and Planning Program (GWEP). The Navajo Nation becomes the eighth tribal community to receive funds under this state program. Awardees can use the money for broadband grant writing, planning services, engineering and design projects. "This is a great use for these funds, and this important award will help deliver better, faster internet

speeds out to NTU's students and the community," said OBAE Project Manager Eric Rodgers. "This is another step forward to help rural regions get high-speed internet to provide services and information that will enhance these communities." NTU is the largest tribal college in the country with a student enrollment of 1,710. Other tribal communities that have received a state GWEP award include Pueblos of Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Picuris, San Ildefonso and Tesuque. Today's announcement comes during Native American Heritage Month, a time to honor the cultures, histories, and contributions of all New Mexico's tribal communities. The state had allocated \$5 million to the GWEP program to help tribes, local governments and electric and telephone cooperatives obtain grants to help them provide broadband to unserved areas. OBAE has awarded \$2 million to entities. There is still \$3 million available, and the state encourages entities to seek more of these grant writing, engineering and

planning grants. Entities that have already received these awards are allowed to receive another. The broadband grant writing, engineering and planning awards are assistance grants, meaning entities do not need to compete for the funding. The money must eventually go toward infrastructure. Internet Service Providers are not eligible to apply for GWEP dollars. The maximum award is \$100,000, and the funding can also be used to get other grants, like the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. NTU is a public tribal land-grant university chartered by the Navajo Nation in 1979 as the Navajo Skill Center. In 2006 tribal leadership renamed the institution as Navajo Technical College, and seven years later it became NTU. The school offers certificates, and associate, bachelor's and master's degrees.

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/3Ooji07>



# Bulletin Board

## \$7 million Beacon Bisti Water Project breaks ground, will bring clean water to 6,800 Diné residents in 8 communities

COYOTE CANYON, N.M. – With the ground-breaking of the \$7 million Beacon Bisti Water Project, Rita Capitan envisions a brighter future for her community.

"We have been meeting on this for several years now," said Capitan, president of the Crownpoint Chapter. "I remember calling and deciding on our organization's name, and that's where we came up with Beacon Bisti."

Communities from Coyote Canyon to Crownpoint and Lake Valley gathered here Oct. 25 for the 46-mile water pipeline's groundbreaking.

When completed by Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, the water project, known as BBN9, will bring clean water to about 6,800 Diné residents who live in Coyote Canyon, Tse'ii'ah, Nahodishgish, Crownpoint, Little Water, Becenti, White Rock and Lake Valley.

The Beacon Bisti Lateral is part of the larger Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, said Division of Natural Resources Director Mike Halona. The project is a collaboration led by the Bureau of Reclamation with the Navajo Nation, the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the City of Gallup.

"The goal was to bring about 37,000-acre-feet of water in," Halona said.

In a letter from Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren read by Office of the President Eastern Agency Representative Shar Soce, he said it is an exciting time for chapters to receive these new water infrastructure projects.

"These communities now have the potential to grow and develop in line with sustainable models," he wrote. "I

encourage all of our people to participate in the chapters' planning efforts to maximize access to water."

The President was unable to attend the groundbreaking because he was at the Gila River Indian Community. He attended President Joe Biden's visit for his announcement of his apology for the treatment of Native children in federally run Indian boarding schools.

Navajo Nation Controller Sean McCabe said the Navajo Nation should turn money into a re-source like water, "and that's what we're here to do."

"When you think about the water that we're bringing, the land that we're using, these are all resources that we manage and care for, and are there for the use of the people," McCabe said. "Money's no different. It's just another resource the people should use and have to continue to push forward."

The President said the project would not have been possible without the dedication of past leadership. Thanks to support from community consent and contractors Souder Miller, NECA, NTUA and IHS, the \$7 million pipeline project will soon be a reality.

"The Navajo Department of Water Resources' work to secure our water rights and bring water to our communities is already transforming lives," the President said.

Bart Deming, construction engineer with the Bureau of



Reclamation's Interior Region 7 – Upper Colorado Basin, acknowledged the significance of the project.

"Water is life," Deming said. "It is vital to everything that we do. It is long overdue for the Navajo people to have clean, reliable, sustainable drinking water."

The groundbreaking included a traditional blessing ceremony led by cultural healer Richard Anderson, Sr. He said community voices are important in leadership.

The new pipeline had been ceremonially honored with leadership songs, white cornmeal and corn pollen.

"This bundle is attached to the water line," he said.

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/4fEKC6p>

## Navajo Nation Council joins President Nygren in signing a \$148 million legislation to improve all Navajo Nation senior centers

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Wednesday, members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren at the Leupp Chapter House as he signed resolution CO-43-24, approving \$450,000 to renovate the Crownpoint Senior Center and over \$148 million to the Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support to improve 85 senior centers across the Navajo Nation.

Resources and Development Committee Vice Chair Casey Allen Johnson, who represents Leupp Chapter, thanked President Nygren for signing the resolution without implementing any line-item vetoes. Council Delegate Johnson said the condition of the current Leupp Senior Center greatly needs repair.

"We finally got it done. I've made it a mission to see that the Leupp Chapter, the first Navajo chapter to be established, receives a new senior center," Delegate Johnson said. "I want to thank President Nygren, his staff, the chapter officials, and all the elders in the community. This is for you. We're going to continue to take care of every one of you, and make sure your needs are met."

Although President Nygren signed the legislation without any line-item vetoes, in his letter accompanying the signed resolution, he indicated the need for a thorough assessment of all senior centers to be undertaken by the Navajo Department of Health to assure that the needs of all senior centers are met.

Council Delegate Helena Nez Begay had previously worked



as a Senior Center Supervisor in Kaibeto for over 22 years. She also served as a temporary Program Supervisor II, providing oversight for all Western Navajo Agency senior centers. Delegate Begay thanked all the senior center staff in attendance who continue to work tirelessly serving the Nation's elders.

"I'm grateful to receive funding for four new senior centers. Kaibeto will receive a brand new senior center. The current facility can only accommodate 30 seniors. Tonalea will receive a new senior center," Delegate Begay said. "For the longest time, both Bodaway Gap and Coppermine Chapters were satellite centers. Both will receive new centers that will serve a significant number of elders who will benefit from these services."

Law and Order Committee Vice Chair Cheryl Yazzie said the signing of the legislation was based on the love that the

Nation holds for its elders. She thanked the gathered elders for their continued guidance and wisdom.

"For me, this legislation is about making sure that our elders get the services that they need so they can continue to be healthy. Elder nutrition is very important," Vice Chair Yazzie said. "For my area, two of my senior centers will receive funding for renovations. I'm very proud of this."

Council Delegate Shawna Ann Claw said that many elders have come full circle from being working professionals to dedicating their lives in raising their families.

"I want to thank our elders for all their work in raising the leaders of the next generation. They are integral parts of our communities," Delegate Claw said. "This legislation is well-deserved in providing our elders a place to come together and enjoy each other."

President Nygren thanked Delegate Danny Simpson for sponsoring the legislation and Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty for her efforts in amending the original project scopes to include a comprehensive breakdown of anticipated costs for each senior center.

"Thank you elders for your guidance. We'll continue to use the teachings that our grandparents have instilled in us," President Nygren said.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/4eIC835>



# Bulletin Board

## Leupp is first Purple Heart community on Navajo Nation

By Alexandra Wittenberg,  
Navajo-Hopi Observer Nov 12, 2024



On Nov. 7, the Leupp Veterans Organization installed signs recognizing the town as a Purple Heart Community. A celebration followed in Navajo and English, with an invocation, Presentation of the Colors, moment of silence, and dedication messages from special guests.

When coming into Leupp from the east, south and west, visitors and locals can now see a "Welcome to our Purple Heart community" sign with the Purple Heart symbol of George Washington's profile in his continental uniform.

The Purple Heart is a symbol of sacrifice, which originated in the Revolutionary War. It is given to those hurt or killed during war, and was received by many Navajos during World War II alongside



the Navajo Code Talkers.

While Leupp was recognized as a Purple Heart community in December 2022, the signs weren't installed until now.

"Leupp's always been the first of everything," Leupp Veterans Organization Commander Gilbert Chee said. "It was the first chapter on the Rez, and today we're the first Purple Heart Community on the Rez."

To earn the designation of a Purple Heart Community, a municipality must have one service member who received a Purple Heart. There are five Purple Heart recipients in the

Leupp and Birdsprings, Arizona area, according to Chee, and many more that never made it home or are no longer with us.

Chee served three years in the Army and has been the commander of the Leupp Veterans Organization for 16 years. He and the Leupp Veterans Organization members worked with Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) Chapter 793 out of Flagstaff, Arizona, to get Leupp recognized.

MOPH representative John Davidson came out to help Chee and Coconino County District 4 Supervisor Judy Begay lead the ceremony.



Other speakers and presenters included Leupp Veterans Organization Vice Chair Mary Iron, who served in the Marine Corps; Leupp Chapter Manager Vida Golaway and Vice President Angie Cody;

Ryan Chee and Annabelle Smallcanyon of Leupp Elementary School; Western Navajo Agency Commander Gaby Mehle and Navajo Nations Veterans Director Bobbie Baldwin; former Coconino County District 4 Supervisor Jim Parks and Board of Supervisors' candidate BJ Dempsey.

"We have over 30,000 Navajo warriors out there and those who are serving still today in active duty," Baldwin said. "Our council delegates and our previous leaders had the foresight to say, 'We're going to create these trust funds, we're going to start this program for our veterans,' and traveling nationwide and meeting with other nations and seeing the way we provide and help each other and make sure we have family members that are loved... that's what creates this high bar for other Indian nations to reach. We are very blessed and I think it's due to all of your warrior spirits."

Also in attendance was the widow and daughters of Nelson Thompson, one of the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers who received a Purple Heart and lived in Leupp.

Lydia Thompson gave a heartfelt speech about how her grandad passed away in 1982, and didn't get the same recognition as Purple Heart recipients are getting today.

### Purple Heart recipients

Locals Leroy Cody and Harry Kee Yazzie were born in 1946 and started their military careers in 1967.

Cody, from Leupp, decided to join the Marine Corps like others in his family. There have been books and movies on the company he was with in Vietnam, Echo Recon.

Cody traveled there from San Diego, California, stopping in Anchorage, Alaska, Yokohama, Japan, and then Taiwan, where he waited "five hot days" to catch a ride to the plane to Vietnam.

"When we got off the plane at Vietnam there was a whole bunch of machine guns going off and bombs exploding," Cody said.

He got injured on St. Patrick's Day, after crossing from combat to the bases across a river. A fellow Marine in front of him got skimmed by a bullet and his face turned white. "The next thing I knew I saw blood," Cody recalled. "I was gushing out blood like a water hose."



Cody thinks he was shot by a Type 79 submachine gun from 15 feet across the river. He was transferred to a secure area and told his team that he was turning white and probably needed an IV or a blood transfusion. One of his comrades, from Tucson, pushed everyone out of the

way and cut his shirt, putting it around his hand to stop the blood.

"I finally got a blood transfusion. That's how I survived," Cody said.

A month later, Cody was honorably discharged and notified of his Purple Heart by his then-commander, General Christensen.

Cody received his Purple Heart at a ceremony at Leupp Elementary School in December 2022.

He has since turned his Purple Heart into an intricate cuffed, silver bracelet with other stones. He wears that on one hand, along with a thinner bracelet featuring a prominent purple stone on the other hand.



Yazzie did his Army training in Texas and flew out of Port Benning Airport in Georgia to get to Vietnam. He was working recon on the field when he got hit. He was surprised with his Purple Heart while he was recovering at the hospital. He keeps his Purple Heart on a plaque in his Birdsprings home.

Those men, along with Marine Corps veterans Raymond Thompson and George Kee of Wide Ruins, Arizona, received a standing ovation from the audience.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/4elq8J2>



## PERSONNEL NEWS -- DCD OPEN POSITIONS

POSITION TITLE	LOCATION	PAY RATE	CLOSING DATE
<b>Administrative Service Centers</b>			
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Indian Wells, AZ	\$31,257.36	12/10/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Coyote Canyon, NM	\$31,257.36	12/12/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Coalmine Canyon, AZ	\$31,257.36	11/28/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Rock Point, AZ	\$31,257.36	12/06/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Huerfano, NM	\$31,257.36	12/10/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Oak Springs, AZ	\$31,257.36	12/11/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Shiprock, NM	\$31,257.36	12/04/2024
Accounts Services Officer (S)	Kayenta, AZ	\$51,364.80	11/27/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Tolani Lake, AZ	\$31,257.36	11/27/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Torreon, NM	\$31,257.36	12/06/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Red Valley, AZ	\$31,257.36	12/16/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Oljato, UT	\$31,257.36	12/06/2024
Community Service Coordinator (S)	Manuelito, NM	\$44,098.56	12/17/2024
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Crystal, AZ	\$31,257.36	12/11/2024

### Capital Projects Management Department

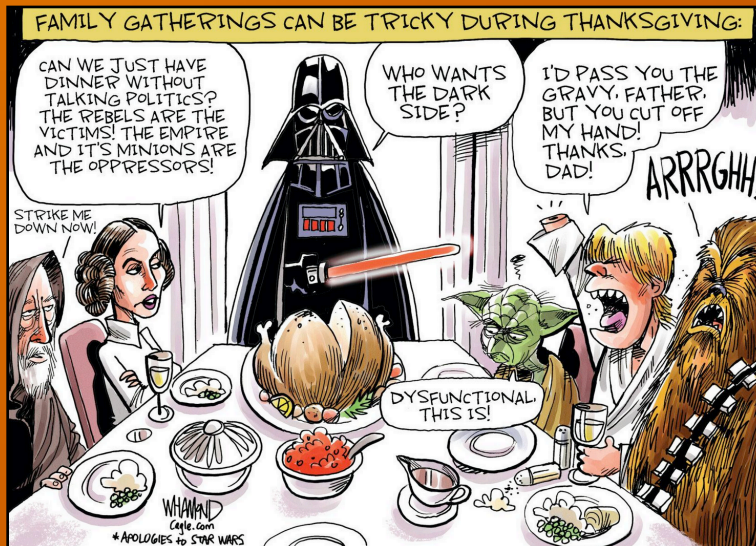
Project Manager (S)	Window Rock, AZ	\$51,364.80	11/27/2024
Senior Engineering Technician	Window Rock, AZ	\$37,062.00	12/05/2024

(OUF) Open Until Filled

(S) Sensitive Position (subject to background check) Closing Dates may change

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at  
<https://apply.navajo-nsn.gov/>

### Comic of the Month



### Quote of the Month

#### Country Living

*"Thanksgiving Day is a good day to recommit our energies to giving thanks and just giving."*

—Amy Grant



Anna Bogush // Getty Images



## **Census Bureau Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Updates to the Census Bureau's Race/Ethnicity Code List**

November 18, 2024

Press Release Number: CB24-CN.25

Today the U.S. Census Bureau published a Federal Register notice (FRN) asking for public comment on proposed updates to its race/ethnicity code list as part of the Race/Ethnicity Coding Improvement Project. The updated code list will be used when the combined race/ethnicity question is implemented in the American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2030 Census. This effort is designed to ensure that detailed race/ethnicity responses are accurately coded and tabulated in future data releases.

Coding is the process of assigning a numeric code to each response to the race/ethnicity question. The race/ethnicity code list shows how detailed responses to the race/ethnicity questions are coded and classified, which informs how data are tabulated in ACS and decennial census data products.

The Census Bureau classifies and tabulates race/ethnicity data following standards set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD 15), which were updated earlier this year. The Census Bureau is only seeking feedback on how race/ethnicity groups and American Indian or Alaska Native tribes and villages will be internally coded. This FRN is not seeking feedback on OMB's updated SPD 15 standards.

All feedback provided to the FRN will be considered by the Census Bureau, but code list updates must meet three criteria: there is strong federal scientific research and evidence supporting the update, stakeholder feedback supports the update, and the update aligns with the definitions of the seven minimum race/ethnicity reporting categories in the updated SPD 15.

The public may provide feedback to the FRN from now until February 18, 2025.

Census Bureau subject matter experts will discuss the Race/Ethnicity Coding Improvement Project in detail during a webinar to be held November 19.

You can learn much more about what the race/ethnicity code list is, how it works, and the types of feedback the Census Bureau is seeking in the blog, "Updating the Race/Ethnicity Code List for the American Community Survey and the 2030 Census."

For additional information, visit the Census Bureau's Race/Ethnicity Coding Improvement Project press kit, the Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Race and Ethnicity Standards press kit, and OMB's webpage about Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.

**READ MORE AT:** <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2024/aian-month.html>





# HOUSING QUALITY

One primary purpose of the American Housing Survey (AHS), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is to track the quality of the housing units American households call home. Housing quality data from the AHS make it possible for HUD to assess progress toward the national goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family. The AHS collects more than 100 items related to quality.

## Of the 133.2 million occupied housing units in the United States in 2023:



**15.7 million** saw signs of mice or rats inside their home in the last 12 months.



**10.0 million** were uncomfortably cold for at least 24 hours.



**3.9 million** reported mold in the last 12 months.



**13.2 million** were uncomfortably hot for 24 hours or more.



**7.2 million** had open cracks or holes inside their home.



**3.7 million** had exposed wiring.



**11.8 million** reported water leakage from outside their home.



**4.9 million** had foundation crumbling or open cracks or holes.



**2.9 million** had broken plaster or peeling paint inside their home.



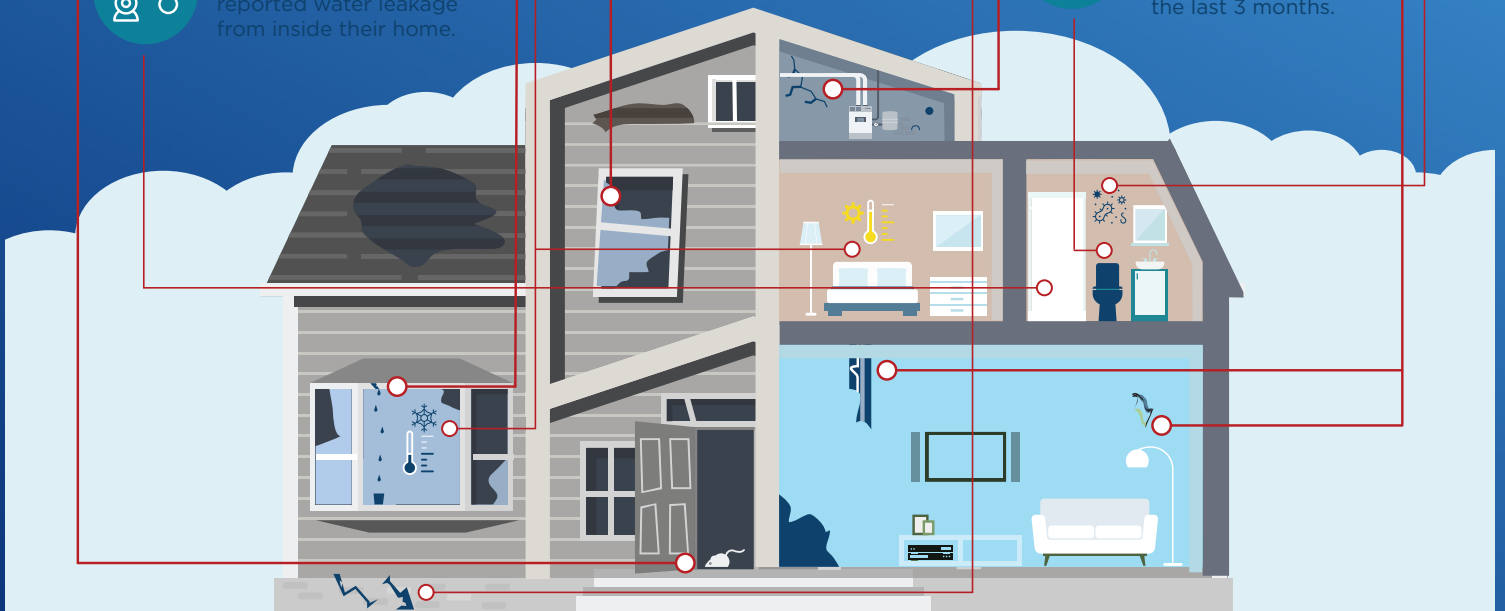
**11.2 million** reported water leakage from inside their home.



**4.1 million** had a broken window.



**2.3 million** had no working toilet at some point within the last 3 months.



Note: Information on confidentiality protection, methodology, sampling and nonsampling error, and definitions is available at <[www.census.gov/ahs](http://www.census.gov/ahs)>. The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product to ensure appropriate access, use, and disclosure avoidance protection of the confidential source data used to produce this product (Data Management System (DMS) number: P-7533599, Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY24-POP001-0113).



U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](http://census.gov)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2023 American Housing Survey.



# Fun Facts: Thanksgiving Day - 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of November



## A History of Giving Thanks

- In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims—early settlers of Plymouth Colony—held a 3-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. Many regard this event as the nation's first Thanksgiving.
- The legacy of thanks and the feast have survived the centuries, with the event becoming a national holiday as of October 3, 1863. It was then that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national day of thanksgiving.
- Later, President Franklin Roosevelt clarified that Thanksgiving Day should always be celebrated on the fourth (not last) Thursday of the month to encourage earlier holiday shopping. Sometimes the last Thursday of November is the fifth Thursday.



## Turkey Towns and Cranberry Counties

**4** - The number of places in the United States named after the holiday's traditional main course.

- Turkey Creek, Louisiana (Population - 402)
- Turkey, Texas (Population - 325)
- Turkey, North Carolina (Population - 214)
- Turkey Creek, Arizona (Population - 457)\*

\*This data is from the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**5** - The number of census places in the United States named Cranberry, a popular side dish at Thanksgiving.

- Most populous: Cranberry township, Butler County, Pennsylvania (Population - 34,516)
- Second most populous: Cranberry township, Venango County, Pennsylvania (Population - 6,242)



*What's the sleepest thing at the Thanksgiving table?*

*Napkins!*

## Which states were forecasted to raise the most turkeys in 2024?\*

- Minnesota (33.5 million)
- North Carolina (27.5 million)
- Arkansas (25.0 million)
- Indiana (20.0 million)
- Missouri (15.5 million)
- Virginia (15.4 million)



**Did You Know?** The six largest turkey producing states account for 67% of all turkeys produced in the United States.

## Food for the Big Feast

In the United States in 2022, there were approximately:

- 63,000 supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores.
- 2,800 baked goods stores.
- 3,900 fruit and vegetable markets.



Sources: Data on this page come from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 Population Estimates, 2022 County Business Patterns, Quickfacts and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service.



# Protect Your Email – Safeguard Your Community

## A Warning to Navajo Nation Chapters: Keep Your Email Passwords Safe



### Did You Know?

Sharing your email password—even with someone you trust—can lead to serious risks for you, your chapter, and the Navajo Nation. Bad actors can exploit shared or stolen passwords to gain unauthorized access, causing harm to your operations and community.



### The Dangers of Sharing Passwords

- **Unauthorized Access:** If your password falls into the wrong hands, someone could access your sensitive emails and misuse them.
- **Data Theft:** Critical chapter information could be stolen, exposing financial, operational, and personal data to criminals.
- **Impersonation:** Hackers can use your account to send harmful messages, scams, or misinformation, damaging your reputation and trust.
- **Community Impact:** A breach of one chapter email account could impact the entire chapter's operations and resources.



### Real Consequences Include:

- **Financial Loss:** Fraudsters can manipulate email accounts to divert funds or steal donations.
- **Disruption of Services:** Hackers can lock you out of your account, halting critical communication and services.
- **Legal Troubles:** Mishandling sensitive information could result in compliance issues or penalties.



### If You Think Your Account Has Been Compromised:

1. Change your password immediately.
2. Notify your chapter leadership and DCD IT support.
3. Review recent activity in your account for suspicious actions.



### How to Protect Your Email Account

- **Never Share Your Password:** Your password is for you alone. Sharing it—even with colleagues—creates unnecessary risks.
- **Use Strong Passwords:** Create a unique password with a mix of letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid using personal information like your birthday.
- **Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA):** Add an extra layer of protection to your account. 2FA ensures only you can access your email, even if someone knows your password.
- **Watch for Scams:** Don't fall for phishing emails asking for your password or personal information. Legitimate organizations will never ask you for your password.



### Stay Vigilant, Stay Safe

- Your email is a gateway to sensitive information. Protect it to protect your chapter and the Navajo Nation.
- For questions or help with email security, contact the Division of Community Development IT or your chapter's tech support, if available.

**Together, we can keep our community safe from cyber threats. Don't let your guard down--secure your email today!**



Division of  
Community  
Development



# November 2024



The DCD Newsletter, "Community Info", is produced monthly by the Division of Community Development and is a resource for division staff and chapters.

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