



# Quarterly *highlights*

The California Area IHS reports its accomplishments during the first quarter of FY 2018, in alignment with the agency's priorities:

1. People
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4. Resources

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### Quality

Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) has received a 6-month extension for the first and second quarter of FY 2018. The SDPI budget cycle is calendar-year, which translates extended funding for SDPI grants from Jan. 1 to June 30, 2018.

- A two-year renewal for SDPI may be included in proposed legislation for CHIP reauthorization. If a two year renewal is passed, advocacy focus will shift to supporting a seven year renewal, which will include regular increases in funding and give SDPI its own legislative vehicle, rather than attaching it to other legislation.
- Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee (TLDC) voted not to recommend that IHS initiate Tribal consultation/Urban confer processes for the 3-month extension, as this would delay the distribution of awards to grantees, and could lead to a gap in funding. Should SDPI receive an additional authorization, TLDC will discuss whether and what type of consultation/confer process to recommend.

### Successes:

The Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention is offering education sessions twice monthly. We notify our programs of all of these trainings and they help to keep California programs on top of all new Standards of Diabetes Care. The California Area Office offers quarterly webinars to network our programs and keep good communication with the programs. The last webinar was on 11/29/17 and another is planned for 2/21/18. We will also be presenting an orientation for new Diabetes program Coordinators on 1/24/18. There was great interest in the sharing of digital stories last year at our Annual Best Practices Conference. The California programs are eager to share the great work they are doing.

### Challenges:

The failure to secure 100% of SDPI funding for FY2018 by Congress has been difficult. California Programs are reluctant to hire new staff and employees are concerned about job security. The changes in staff greatly affect the continuity of diabetes care and relationships that the community forms with the Diabetes programs. We are responding by supporting new Diabetes Program Coordinators by providing site visits, and orientation to SDPI grant process as needed. Many of our programs are challenged with hiring and retaining qualified staff for the Diabetes Coordinator role.



## Quality (continued)

### *Desert Sage Youth Wellness Center, Update:*



- Five earthquake drills were performed.
- Fire inspection was conducted by facilities staff.
- Semi-annual kitchen inspection completed.
- State water sampling requirements continued.
- Quarterly service of fire pumps quarterly completed and approved.
- Fire pump enclosure construction completed.
- Formulating and collaborating continues per state requirements, additional water protocols and procedures for water system.
- Interior coating and installation of protective cathode anodes in water tank completed.
- Leach field expansion completed.
- Maintenance included moving and assembling furniture, appliances, replacing ceiling tiles, fuses and lightbulbs, week removal, painting, installing bulletin-dry erase boards, and facility cleaning.
- Card readers and door bell installation completed.
- Door frames & windows at resident rooms building installation completed.
- Two government vehicle vans now at facility.
- Broken well pump replaced.
- Leaking backflow repaired.
- Grading from facility to access road completed.
- Drywall around new door frames painted.

## Quality (continued)

### *Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS):*

In October, the record breaking wildfire season in California reached a crescendo on October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> when 14 wildfires sprang up overnight impacting 8 tribal communities located in Lake, Mendocino, Napa and Sonoma counties. The Tubbs Fire in Sonoma County was particularly destructive as its path carried it to the city of Santa Rosa.

During the fires, hazardous air quality was a prevailing environmental health threat to both Tribal health care facility operations and community members. Recent studies have found that even short term exposure to particulates such as those associated with wildfire are especially hazardous to the elderly and children. During the emergency, Ukiah Environmental Health Officer LCDR Shelhamer was directly responsible for delivering and distributing more than 6000 N95 respirators and coordinating the distribution of 90 portable HEPA air filtering systems. This equipment served to help mitigate the impact of this life-threatening environmental health hazard to Tribal communities. Preparedness is always key to managing an emergency as it unfolds. To this end, the Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) provided an overview of the resources and services available to Tribal Health programs at the California Area Tribal Advisory Committee meeting on December 6. While the wildfire season may have come to an end with the New Year, DEHS staff are available to assist tribal health care program in emergency drill evaluation, the development of emergency response plans and identifying resources to fund training and other preparedness activities.



## People...

### *Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS):*

In 2017, DEHS staff completed 495 environmental health surveys of food service, child care, swimming pools and other facility types. The table below provides a summary of the surveys completed by our program in 2017:

CY 2017	
Facility Type	No. of Surveys
Healthcare Facilities	7
Clinic: Accreditation Support	4
Community Buildings	3
Café/Restaurants/Institutional Food Service	393
Swimming Pools/Spas	21
Trading Post	43
Recreational Areas (Campgrounds, RV)	24

In addition to surveys, the DEHS program provided 12 trainings that reached over 350 tribal employees and members. Trainings were provided on topics ranging from food safety and blood borne pathogens to hazard communication and infection control in childcare environments. DEHS staff also performed 1 facility plan review, 2 occupational exposure assessments for nitrous oxide and 5 environmental health investigations ranging from a pseudomonas outbreak and foodborne illness complaints.

**Environmental Health 2018 Work Plans:** During the month of January 2018, DEHS staff will be circulating their annual work plans for comment and feedback to Tribal Healthcare Program Directors. All feedback on environmental health program priorities and goals for 2018 is encouraged and very much welcome.

## Partnerships...

The CAO collaborated in October on the Creating Community Circles For Change (C-4), held Corning CA.



This community wellness event promoted the involvement and collective wisdom of all participants, who together supported creating solutions to current challenges facing Native people and communities today. This culturally grounded collaborative training engaged participants' in group facilitation activities that can be used to further their work centered on creating healthy futures for the next generation, by transforming the way we bring about change.

Local support and networking contributed significantly to the 56% increase in registration, compared to the prior year. Northern Valley Indian Health was the host organization and a key planning partner. Contributing partners this year included Healthy Native Communities Partnership, San Manuel Band of Mission Indian, American Cancer Society, Northern Valley Indian Health, Chapa De Indian Health, California Area Indian Health Service and all who attended. A total of 64 participated in the multi-day event, of whom 70% were AI/AN from 28 tribes. Northern California tribal members represented 54% of AI/AN attendees. Coming from 20 cities across the state, participants were professionally diverse and included Tribal Leaders, Tribal Health Leaders and Chief Executive Officers, Community Health Representatives, Diabetes Consultant and Coordinators, Family Support Workers and Caseworkers, Gym Coordinator and Life Skill Coach, Health Educators, Public Health Nurse, Social Marketing and Education Coordinator, Transporter, Tribal Youth Activities Director, Coordinator and Mentor, and Community Volunteers.

The overarching purpose was to bring together American Indian Alaska Native (AI/AN) community members in California and those working along with them, to provide training that would assist in advancing wellness and improving the lives of Native people, their families, and their communities.



## Resources...

### Success Story - Tuolumne Sewer Project Tuolumne Band of Mi-Wok Indians

The Tuolumne Sewer Project was the result of many years of planning and coordination between the California Area Indian Health Service (IHS) Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 and the Tuolumne Band of Mi-Wok Indians (Tribe). Before the sewer system was built, there were 84 homes on the Tuolumne Rancheria with septic systems that were prone to failure due to poor and rocky soils and high groundwater. The Tribe documented illness in children after they had been exposed to raw sewage from failed septic systems.

EPA contributed over \$3 million in funding toward the project, while IHS provided planning, design and construction oversight services. The Tribe's contract to construct the sewer system was awarded to Allen Gill Construction (an Indian-owned firm). Construction began on May 1, 2017, and was completed on November 17, 2017, ahead of schedule and under budget. This project installed a sewer collection system that includes about 6 miles of low pressure sewer force main, 84 individual pump stations, and rehabilitation of an existing community sewer lift station. The sewage is ultimately disposed at the Tuolumne City Sanitary District's wastewater treatment facility through an agreement negotiated by the Tribe. The sewer system is now fully functional and providing service to the 84 Tribal homes.

This project overcame many challenges including rock excavation for the installation of sewer mains, adverse and varying terrain, and unforeseen subsurface conditions, all while minimizing road and home access disruptions in an active community. This project has had a direct impact on improving the health of the Tribal members on the Rancheria.

Photo caption: *Three employees of Allen Gill Construction install an individual pump station for the Tuolumne Sewer Project.*



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