



# Office *of* Environmental Health and Engineering

## Profile *of* Services

# OEH&E Office Locations

## REDDING DISTRICT

### *Arcata Field Office*

1125 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste. 100  
Arcata, CA 95521-5585

**P** (707) 822-1688

**F** (707) 822-1692

### *Redding District Office*

1900 Churn Creek Road, Ste. 210  
Redding, CA 96002-0292

**P** (530) 246-5339

**F** (530) 246-5210

## SACRAMENTO DISTRICT

### *California Area Office and Sacramento District Office*

650 Capitol Mall, Ste. 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814-4706

**P** (916) 930-3927

**F** (916) 930-3954

Served by  
DHFE only.

### *Ukiah Field Office*

1252 Airport Park  
Boulevard, Ste. B5  
Ukiah, CA 95482-5979

**P** (707) 462-5314

**F** (707) 462-6907

### *Clovis Field Office*

613 Harvard Avenue, Ste. 101  
Clovis, CA 93612-1868

**P** (559) 322-7488

**F** (559) 322-7445

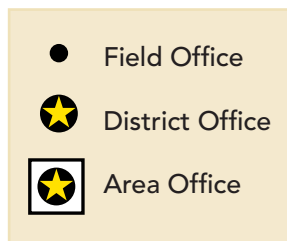
## ESCONDIDO DISTRICT

### *Escondido District Office*

1320 West Valley Parkway, Ste. 309  
Escondido, CA 92029-2129

**P** (760) 735-6880

**F** (760) 735-6893







# Office of Environmental Health and Engineering

The Indian Health Service/California Area Office (IHS/CAO) offers a wide range of direct services through the Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEHE). The OEHE is dedicated to improving the health of California Indians through the provision of quality environmental health and engineering services. Area, District and Field offices are strategically located throughout California to ensure quick and convenient access to Indian homes, communities and health programs.



The services provided by IHS/CAO OEHE are categorized into three divisions:

- ▶ Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS);
- ▶ Division of Health Facilities Engineering (DHFE);
- ▶ Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC).

Traditionally, each division offers specific health services. In California, the OEHE is structured so that each division and staff work together to ensure comprehensive, high-quality service to Indian people.

The purpose of this Profile of Services is two-fold:

- ▶ To increase awareness of the OEHE services available to California Indians and other stakeholders; and,
- ▶ To provide a directory of OEHE Area, District and Field offices and individual contacts for each division so clients have convenient access to services.

*OEHE staff at the annual workshop in Redding, CA.*



## *More Information:*

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# Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS)

## MISSION

*To enhance the health and quality of life of all American Indians and Alaska Natives, through shared decision making and sound public health measures, to the highest level by eliminating environmentally related disease and injury.*

## Surveys

Environmental health facility surveys are conducted to identify environmental hazards in community facilities and recommend control measures to prevent adverse health effects. Survey locations include health-care facilities, food service establishments, Indian gaming facilities, head starts, day cares, senior centers, community water and wastewater systems, solid waste sites, and other public facilities.

## Investigations

Environmental health investigations are performed to identify, monitor, and



DEHS staff

remove critical public health risks, threats, and harms from the community environment. The process includes researching and investigating suspected cases of food borne illness, water system problems, waste disposal problems and disease outbreaks.

## Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is provided in many environmental health areas including public health ordinances, emergency preparedness, occupational safety, hazardous materials handling, plan review/facility design, infection control, and other areas.

## Training

Environmental health capacity in communities is built through funding and coordinating environmental health-related trainings. These courses are intended to increase the tribe's ability to address community environmental health issues.



Swimming pool survey



## Sampling /Testing

Specialized sampling and testing services are available for airborne and waterborne contaminants. Sampling and testing is available, upon request, for mercury, nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, fluoride in water, radon gas, and other air and water contaminants.

## Indian Gaming

With the huge increase in gaming facilities, the DEHS works closely with tribes to address environmental health issues while respecting tribal sovereignty. The DEHS utilizes a practical public health approach to address the ever expanding environmental health workload in gaming facilities. The services provided to Indian gaming facilities include surveys, training and technical assistance related to: solid waste/recycling, swimming pools and spas, vector control, food sanitation, water and wastewater, and general health and safety.

## Solid Waste

Through enhanced partnerships, the DEHS offers assistance with the unique issues that are created by solid waste problems in Indian country. The services provided to tribes related to solid waste include solid waste assessments, solid waste management

plans, proposal/project development, recycling project development, remediation health and safety plans, site sampling, and code and ordinance development.

## Institutional Environmental Health

Institutional environmental health refers to health and safety in healthcare and community facilities such as head starts, day cares, schools, and substance abuse centers. The services provided to these facilities include accreditation support, training, safety program development, radiation protection, risk assessments, industrial hygiene, policy development and review, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration compliance.

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### *More Information:*

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*Injury prevention  
training for tribal  
community members.*

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## INJURY PREVENTION

Injuries are the leading cause of death for Native Americans in California, ages 1 to 44. The IHS/CAO Injury Prevention program provides technical support in the development, implementation, and evaluation of injury prevention projects or programs. Additional services include collecting and analyzing injury data; assisting with grant proposal writing; and, identifying external funding sources.

Our staff is available to assist your community health and outreach program with:

- collecting & analyzing injury data
- grant proposal writing
- identifying external funding sources
- building partnerships with local, state and national partners

### Mini-Grant Program

This program is available to IHS Tribal Health Programs in the California Area. This program provides funding for child passenger seats, bicycle helmets, smoke detectors and special injury prevention projects. The application is sent out every year in October and is due in December.

### Training

#### Introduction to Injury Prevention (Level 1) and Intermediate Injury Prevention (Level 2)

These courses introduce participants to injuries as a public health problem in tribal communities and address the principles of effective injury prevention through a combination of presentations, case histories, and group exercises.

#### IHS Epidemiology and Program Development – Injury Prevention Fellowship

The IHS Injury Prevention Fellowship is an advanced learning experience for individuals promoting injury prevention in tribal communities. Each fellow designs and reports on a one-year injury prevention project involving a topic of importance to the communities they serve.

#### Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program

Since 1997, IHS has provided funding for tribes to develop infrastructure for injury prevention. The cooperative agreement develops injury prevention programs in tribal communities based on effective strategies or best practices.



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*DEHS implements Safe Ride Grants to promote car seats for children.*  
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## ► DEHS Focus SPECIAL NITROUS OXIDE PROJECT

*Nitrous oxide can pose a significant health risk in the health care environment. Improperly maintained equipment, poor work practices, and inferior room design are a few factors that can contribute to excessive exposure to nitrous oxide in dental health care workers and patients. For this reason, the DEHS established an initiative to evaluate nitrous oxide use in dental departments at tribal health care programs.*

*Activities under this project include conducting nitrous oxide evaluations in participating tribal dental health programs and providing general awareness and safety training. Other activities include technical assistance to providers with developing staff training programs, implementing best practice engineering controls (including personal protective equipment, effective scavenging systems and appropriate workplace monitoring programs), and reviewing standard operating policies and procedures as they relate to safe nitrous oxide delivery processes.*

*DEHS staff conduct a nitrous oxide evaluation.*



# Division of Health Facilities Engineering (DHFE)

## MISSION

*To support the delivery of health care and preventive services to American Indians and Alaska Natives and to safeguard interests in property.*

## Representation

DHFE advocates and supports tribes and tribal health programs at the national, state, and local levels regarding health facilities engineering. DHFE maintains a tribal health facilities database, formulates and distributes annual budgets, develops projects, and participates on various national facilities related committees and workgroups. DHFE serves as the liaison between tribal health programs and other agencies, to satisfy compliance requirements. DHFE also assists tribal health programs with seeking alternative funding sources.

## Facilities Planning

DHFE assists with tribal planning efforts for site selection and develops facility criteria



*Above: Desert Sage Youth Wellness Center, Under Construction, Hemet, CA*

*Below: DHFE employees perform construction inspection.*

related to services provided, staffing levels, and facility space requirements for new or expanded tribal healthcare facilities.

## Facilities Design and Construction

DHFE supports tribes with developing scopes of work, selecting consultants and construction firms, and reviewing designs and construction progress for healthcare facilities engineering projects. This includes assistance with preparing requests and justifications for

## ► DHFE Focus

### SITE EVALUATIONS

*The DHFE staff provides services such as site evaluations for tribal and IHS benefit. These services include: development of scopes of work for consultants to complete environmental assessments; ensuring jurisdictional authorities are well informed about the projects; identifying appropriate land use; and, ensuring neighborhood concurrence. DHFE planning activities include determining building size to meet the needs of the health program user population.*





*Right top to bottom: Desert Sage Youth Wellness Center; Potawot Health Village; Feather River Tribal Health Center; Lake County Tribal Health Clinic.*

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IHS and other funding sources for new or replacement facilities.

## Facilities Engineering

DHFE provides guidance to tribes on the operation and maintenance of healthcare facilities to ensure compliance with applicable laws, codes, and standards, and conducts periodic facility inspections to maintain compliance. DHFE also assists with developing programs for preventive maintenance, energy conservation, training, and accreditation and manages the Maintenance and Improvement funds appropriation for the tribal health programs.

## Clinical Engineering

DHFE distributes replacement clinical equipment funds to the tribal health programs and provides a mechanism for acquiring excess government property. DHFE provides guidance for compliance with all federal laws, codes, and standards and assists with developing accreditation programs. DHFE also administers the tribal facilities general equipment program for new space constructed by the tribal health programs.

## Real Property

DHFE provides guidance and support for activities related to federal leases, tribal leases, and acquisition of excess federal properties.

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### *More Information:*

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# Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC)

## MISSION

*To provide safe drinking water, adequate wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal facilities to California Indian homes and communities.*

## Project Funding

The DSFC annually funds a wide variety of community and individual housing projects. Projects may be managed by the IHS directly or they may be managed by a tribe that has elected to use Title I or Title V authorization under P.L. 93-638. In recent years, project types have included:

- **Housing:** provide sanitation facilities for new homes and homes in “like new” condition. These projects typically serve Indian homes being constructed or rehabilitated by funding provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Home Improvement Program or Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) block grants;
- **Regular:** provide sanitation facilities for existing Indian homes and communities;
- **Special:** Operation and Maintenance studies, training, or other needs related to sanitation facilities construction; and,
- **Emergency:** provide sanitation facilities to correct imminent health threats caused by natural disasters and other occurrences when no other source of funding is available. The range of project funding is \$5,000 to \$50,000.

The Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act funding is based on the IHS SDS and funded projects can be managed by the IHS under an Inter-Agency Agreement with EPA or an EPA direct grant. In addition, IHS manages and provides engineering services for sanitation

## More Information:

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## Inventory

DSFC is responsible for developing and maintaining an inventory of sanitation deficiencies of Indian homes and communities. The inventory of sanitation facilities needs is maintained in the IHS Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS). The SDS is updated annually by IHS personnel, with tribal input, and is available on-line under the Sanitation Tracking and Reporting System at <https://wstars.ihs.gov>.



facilities construction projects using other types of federal funding such as US Department of Agriculture/Rural Development, and others.

### Project Engineering

A staff of DSFC engineers and engineering technicians provides engineering services for the design and construction of water and wastewater facilities. These staff also provide technical consultation and training on the operation and maintenance of tribally-owned water supply and wastewater disposal systems.

### Advocacy

DSFC advocates for tribes during the development of national policies, regulations and programs.

### Operation and Maintenance

The DSFC has developed an Operation and Maintenance initiative to assist tribal water and wastewater disposal system operators with achieving greater sustainability. The initiative has both short and long term goals and objectives.

#### SHORT TERM:

- Operator certification and technical training;
- **Small Asset Inventory:** DSFC will develop small asset inventories for community systems which include information such as system components, design life, condition, and importance. This inventory will be used to develop full lifecycle costs of existing assets and, based on this information, funding for repair/replacement will be secured prior to component failure. In addition, a shared cost methodology has been developed to detail the responsibilities of the tribe and IHS. These objectives will reduce facility down time and lead to improved system performance and community health; and,
- A technical, managerial, and financial survey to assess training needs and assistance.

#### LONG TERM:

- Provide technical assistance to community operators including hands-on training;
- Evaluate financial records: analyze personnel costs for competitive salaries and wages for operators and administrative staff; develop or contract financial training including book keeping and basic accounting; and, provide rate studies; and,
- Provide managerial assistance: standardize sanitation facility by-laws, ordinances, and standard operating procedures. Examples include billing operations, meter reading, mailing of bills, and processing returns.

### ➤ DSFC Focus

#### EMERGENCY PROJECTS

*The DSFC provides technical assistance and limited financial assistance in the event of a public health emergency. Typically, such an emergency involves assisting the tribe to restore and/or assure the continued safe operation of water supply and wastewater disposal after a natural disaster or other unforeseen event.*

*When necessary, the DSFC can quickly mobilize personnel to address an emergency situation and provide technical assistance including engineering and public health expertise; construction and contracting management; and, emergency repair of damaged infrastructure and critical facilities. The range of emergency project funding is \$5,000 to \$50,000 per project. Recent emergency projects have provided assistance to tribal systems impacted by severe storms, floods, fires, and depleted groundwater.*



*Dedicated to Improving the Health  
of California Indians through the  
Provision of Quality Environmental  
Health and Engineering Services.*



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
**Indian Health Service**  
The Federal Health Program for American Indians and Alaska Natives

