

California Area  
Indian Health Service

**Office of Environmental Health  
and Engineering**

**Profile of Services**



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

# Office of Environmental Health and Engineering Services



The California Area Indian Health Service offers a wide range of direct services through the Office of Environmental Health & Engineering (OEH&E). The OEH&E 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 the California Area OEH&E are categorized into four individual components: Environmental Health Services (EHS), Health Facilities Engineering (HFE), Injury Prevention Program (IPP), and Sanitation Facilities Construction (SFC). Traditionally, each component offers specific health services. In California, the OEH&E is structured so that each component and staff work together to ensure comprehensive, high quality service to Indian people.



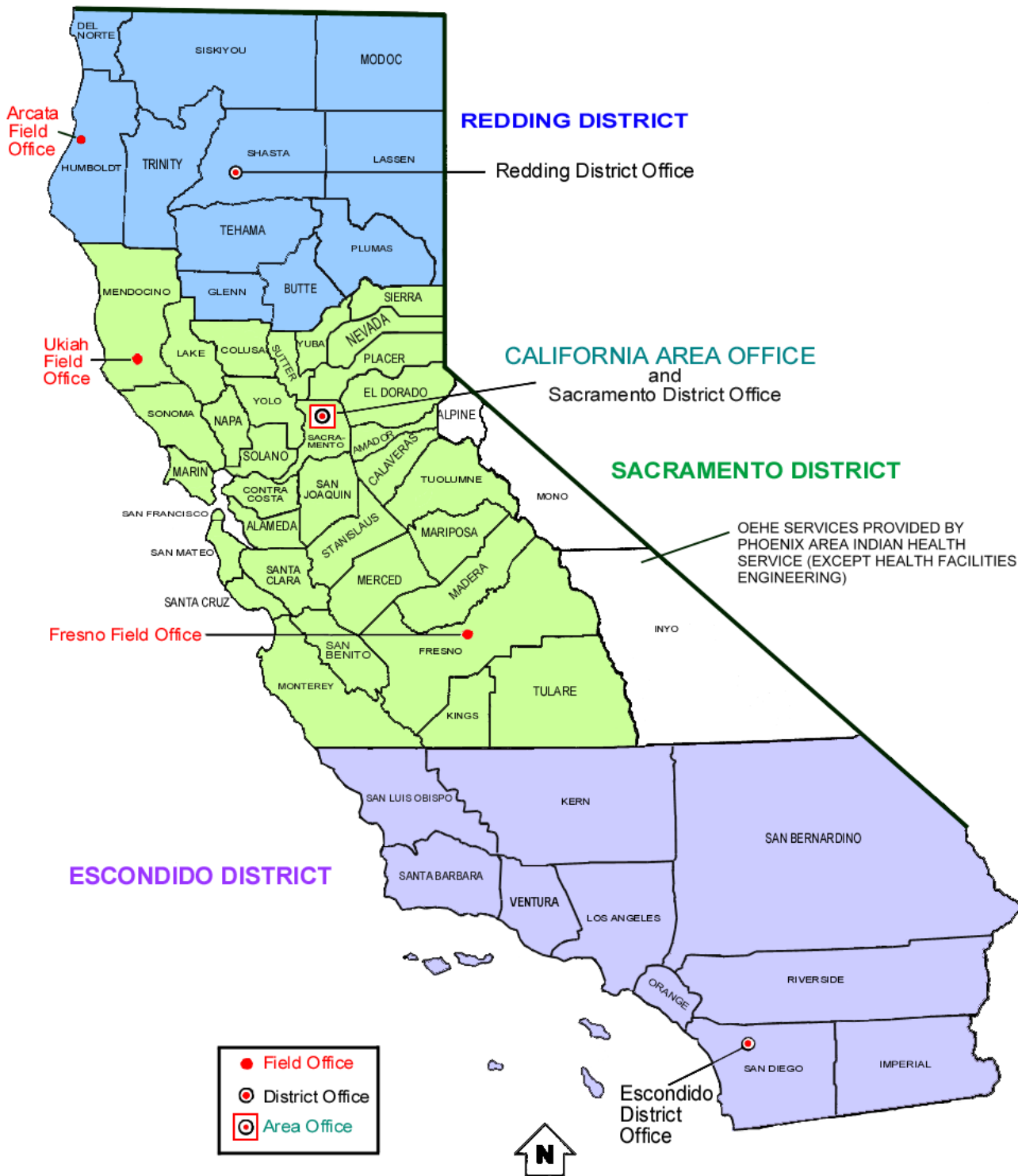
*Ed Fluette*  
*OEH&E Associate Director*

The purpose of this “OEH&E - Profile of Services” is two-fold:

- ◆ To increase awareness of OEH&E services provided to Indians in California
- ◆ To provide a directory of OEH&E Area, district, and field offices and individual contacts for each component, to assist clients with convenient access to services.



# OEH&E Office Locations



# Environmental Health Services



## Types of Services Available

**Investigations:** The Environmental Health Services (EHS) staff has extensive experience in investigating food borne illness, water system problems, waste disposal problems, and disease outbreaks.

**Surveys:** Assists California Indian Health Programs in obtaining health program accreditation. The EHS staff attends the most current training and maintains updated sample policies and procedures to provide health programs with the latest information and technical assistance when conducting “Mock” accreditation surveys. Other surveys include food establishment, head start, day care, x-ray diagnostic, community sanitation facilities, and solid waste assessments. Many EHS surveys have been used to obtain grants.

*EHS provides on-the-job training in tribal communities and formal classroom-type courses*

**Technical Assistance:** Provides technical assistance in areas of public utility operation, public health ordinances, emergency preparedness, OSHA compliance, hazardous materials handling, head start and health facility design, and infection control.

**Training:** Responsible for developing, coordinating, and funding workshops. Water and waste water courses are designed and conducted to assist tribal operators with obtaining State certification. Other workshop topics include solid waste and health program accreditation. EHS has a comprehensive environmental health video lending library available.

**Sampling and Testing:** Maintains an inventory of specialized monitoring equipment which can test for mercury, nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, fluoride in water, radon gas and other air and water contaminants.

## Utility Assistance

The significant challenges and special situations that tribes face in operating small rural water and wastewater systems warrant a field-based utility assistance program.

In response, the CAIHS, EHS has developed a program which provides on-site training, certification courses, and technical assistance to meet tribal utility needs.



*Participants in one of the most popular IHS hands-on courses: “Pumps and Controls”*



## Indian Gaming

With the huge increase in gaming facilities, the EHS program is working with the State of California and tribes to identify new and maximize existing resources to meet the expanding work load. The EHS staff have well-established traditional partnerships with virtually all agencies involved in the environmental health for Indian gaming operations. The IHS EHS staff frequently serve as liaisons in tribal relations with State and County agencies. In partnering with Tribes and other agencies, the IHS identifies practical methods for dealing with unique environmental health issues in Indian Country.

## Solid Waste

California Tribes have made significant progress in addressing solid waste issues which had previously plagued California Indians for decades. There have been many significant accomplishments including: remediation of over 25 major illegal dump sites; adoption of solid waste ordinances; development of solid waste management plans for most California tribes; and assistance in obtaining grants to address solid waste issues. The EHS staff work closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the California Integrated Waste Management Board, and the US Environmental Protection Agency to get projects funded and completed for California tribes.

## Institutional Program

Institutional Environmental Health (IEH) pertains to institutional type facilities such as health centers, head starts, day cares, schools, youth facilities and substance abuse centers. IEH involves the disciplines of occupational safety and health, industrial hygiene, toxicology, indoor air quality, radiological health, workers' compensation, OSHA compliance, health program accreditation, infection control, and ergonomics. The EHS staff frequently assists health programs in completing the necessary steps for independent accreditation by national health care excellence organizations.



*An IHS Environmental Health Specialist works with a food service worker to develop proper temperature controls*

### For More Information Contact:

Paul Young, MPH  
Environmental Health Services Director  
650 Capitol Mall, 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-930-3981, Ext. 336  
Fax: 916-930-3954  
[paul.young@ihs.gov](mailto:paul.young@ihs.gov)



# Health Facilities Engineering



## Types of Services Available

**Representation:** Provide advocacy and support Tribes and tribal health programs at the national, state, and local levels. Maintain multiple facility databases, formulate and distribute annual budgets, formulate projects, conduct program reviews, and participate on various national facilities related committees and workgroups. Serve as liaison between Tribes and other agencies in satisfying compliance requirements while assisting Tribes in maintaining their sovereignty as independent governments. Assist tribal health programs in seeking alternative funding resources.

**Facilities Planning:** Provide information and guidance during all aspects of planning necessary for the proper design, construction, renovation or expansion of health care facilities.

**Facilities Design and Construction:** Provide guidance and review of all designs for the construction, renovation, modernization, or expansion of health facilities. This includes the preparation of requests and justifications for IHS and other funding for new or replacement facilities.

**Facilities Engineering:** Provide guidance on the operation and maintenance of health care facilities to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and local laws, codes, and standards. Provide periodic facility inspections. Assist in developing programs for preventive maintenance, energy conservation, training, and accreditation. Formulate and distribute the Maintenance and Improvement (M&I) funds.

**Clinical Engineering:** Provide guidance for the operation and maintenance of clinical equipment. Formulate and distribute replacement clinical equipment funds. Provide guidance for compliance with all federal laws, codes, and standards. Assist in developing programs for accreditation. Provide a conduit for the acquisition of excess government property.

**Real Property:** Provide guidance and notification for activities related to federal leases, tribal leases, and acquisition of excess federal properties.



*The Feather River Indian Health Program achieved AAA Accreditation in 2003.*

### For More Information Contact:

Richard Wermers, PE  
Director, Health Facilities Engineering  
650 Capitol Mall, 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-930-3981, Ext. 341  
Fax: 916-930-3954  
[richard.wermers@ihs.gov](mailto:richard.wermers@ihs.gov)



*A few of the facilities renovated or constructed with assistance from the Health Facilities Engineering staff*



**Top to Bottom:**

- UIHS Potawot Village
- Hoopa Dental Building
- San Ysabel Clinic
- Sonoma Indian Health Program Clinic
- Toiyabe Camp Antelope Clinic
- Karuk Yreka Clinic

# Injury Prevention



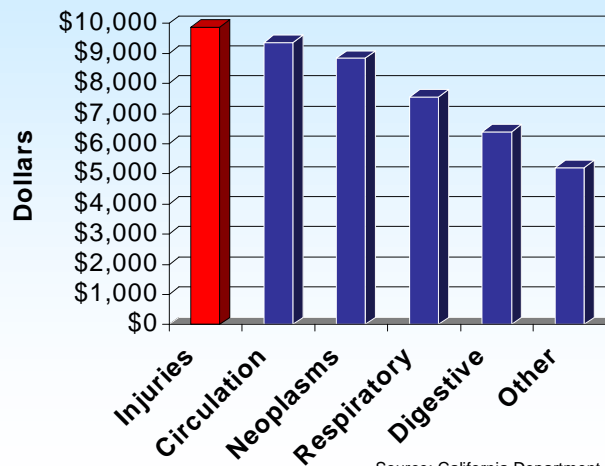
*Injuries are the leading cause of death for California Indians Ages 1 to 44. The staggering treatment costs associated with injuries expends a large proportion of Indian health program dollars.*

## Injury Prevention Training Courses Recently Updated

Many California Indian health care providers have attended IHS injury prevention training over the last two decades. During the last three years, the IHS has contracted with the University of North Carolina (UNC) to improve the IHS injury prevention training program. New courses have been met with great approval and exceptionally high evaluations from the first graduating students.

UNC evaluated tribal needs and identified seven core topics as key to injury prevention practitioners. These core topics are explored in a progressive manner throughout the three newly developed/revised injury prevention courses. The presentation of the subject matter allows students to build on information and skills obtained at each course. The closely intertwined curriculum incorporates the latest practical information and approaches that have been proven to reduce injuries in Indian Country.

### Average Cost per Hospitalization California, 1996-1997



Source: California Department of Health Services

The highly-acclaimed IHS Injury Prevention Fellowship training program has also been modified. There are now two tracts: (1) Program Development and (2) Epidemiology. These fellowship programs take the scope of IP training further to provide advanced information from leading experts at national injury prevention research centers. The IHS Injury Prevention Fellowship is recognized as one of the top injury prevention training programs in the world. The IHS provides funding for tribal/health program staff to attend these training opportunities.

#### For More Information Contact:

Robert Newsad, MPH  
Injury Prevention Specialist  
650 Capitol Mall, 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-930-3981, Ext. 337  
Fax: 916-930-3954  
[robert.newsad@ihs.gov](mailto:robert.newsad@ihs.gov)



## Building Health Program Capacity

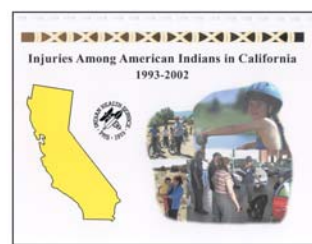
The California Area IHS, Injury Prevention Program sponsors National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Child Passenger Protection certification courses. More than 35 Indian health providers have been certified as technicians over the last three years at IHS-sponsored trainings.



*Avis Punkin (center) of Central Valley Indian Health and Myla Jensen (right) from the California Rural Indian Health Board participate in a child seat certification training.*

## Comprehensive Injury Data

Many health programs have requested assistance in identifying and analyzing data to document and address injury problems. In response, an epidemiologist was hired to examine the data available from the State, for injuries to California Indians. The raw data from the State of California Morbidity and Mortality Collection System was compiled and analyzed yielding a comprehensive “Injury Atlas” specific for California Indians.



## Injury Prevention Programs for Head Starts

The American Indian Head Start Programs Branch, Indian Health Service, National Highway and Traffic Administration (NHTSA) and the United States Fire Administration are collaborating on efforts to implement special initiatives to reduce deaths and injuries from fires and motor vehicle crashes. Two separate programs have been developed to address these injury problems through head start programs.

### *Sleep Safe*

The Sleep Safe program provides a fire safety curriculum, fire safety training for head start staff, and a smoke detector for each student. The US Fire Administration and the Indian Health Service have produced a fire safety video entitled, “Practicing Home Fire Safety.” This 9 minute video features American Indians in the cast. ***Please contact Robert Newsad if you would like a copy of this video.***



### *Ride Safe*

Ride Safe is designed to reduce motor vehicle related injuries to children enrolled in tribal head start programs. The Ride Safe program provides funding and support for at least one head start staff member to complete a NHTSA Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technician training. The program also provides a two-day CPS training for all head start staff who participate in Ride Safe activities. Each head start student receives a new child passenger safety seat.



# Sanitation Facilities Construction



## Mission Statement

The goal of the Sanitation Facilities Construction (SFC) program is to provide safe drinking water, adequate waste water disposal, and solid waste disposal facilities to California Indian homes and communities.

## Introduction

Public Law 86-121 authorizes the SFC program to provide essential water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal facilities for American Indian homes and communities.

Safe and adequate drinking water supplies and waste disposal facilities are essential elements for prevention of disease and preservation of public health. The SFC program is a major component of the Indian Health Service's disease prevention effort.

The SFC program works together with tribal governments and organizations to provide technical and financial assistance to California Indians for essential sanitation facilities. While one percent of the U.S. General Population lacks safe water and sanitation:

- 7.5% of Indian homes lack safe water and sanitation
- In some parts of Indian country, 35% of homes lack sanitation facilities
- 384 California Indian homes lack safe water and/or adequate sewage disposal systems

### For More Information Contact:

Don Brafford, PE, Director  
Sanitation Facilities Construction  
650 Capitol Mall, 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-930-3981, Ext. 339  
Fax: 916-930-3954  
[donald.brafford@ihs.gov](mailto:donald.brafford@ihs.gov)

## SFC Program Services

1. Develops and maintains an inventory of sanitation deficiencies of Indian homes and communities.
2. Provides professional engineering services for the design and construction of water and waste disposal facilities.
3. Develops, through coordinated efforts with tribes and other agencies, multi-agency funded sanitation projects for Indian homes and communities.
4. Provides funding for water supply and waste disposal facilities.
5. Provides technical consultation and training on the operation and maintenance of tribally owned water supply and waste disposal systems.
6. Advocates for tribes during the development of national policies, regulations, and programs.
7. Assists tribes with sanitation facility emergencies.

## Accomplishments

Today, as it has for the past 42 years, the SFC program continues to assist California Indians in eliminating sanitation facilities deficiencies in Indian homes and communities. From 1962 through 2003, approximately \$95 million has been appropriated for construction of sanitation facilities for California Indians. IHS appropriations, plus contributions from other sources, funded more than 685 sanitation facilities construction projects that served over 8200 California Indian homes.



*Installation of a liner at the Round Valley Reservation Wastewater Treatment Lagoon*

## Types of Projects

Construction projects undertaken by the SFC program fall into several funding categories. Projects may be constructed using federal procurement, Public Law 93-638, or through a Memorandum of Agreement. Project types include:

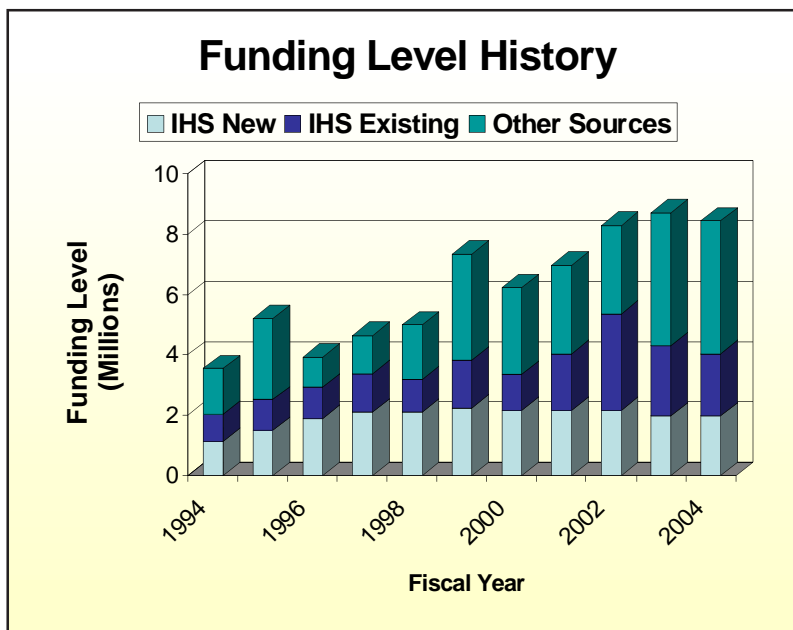
**Regular Projects** provide sanitation facilities for existing Indian homes and communities. Funding of these projects is based on the Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS), which is updated annually by IHS personnel with tribal input.

**Housing Projects** 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.

### Projects Funded by Other

**Sources** provide sanitation facilities for existing and new homes. These projects are funded by EPA, DHUD-Community Development Block Grants, Rural Development and others. The IHS generally becomes involved with only projects that correct deficiencies to existing sanitation facilities (SDS projects).

**Emergency Projects** provide sanitation facilities to correct imminent threats to health caused by natural disasters and other occurrences when no other source of funding is available. The average project funding level is \$20,000 to \$50,000.





# Contact Information

**Arcata Field Office**  
1125 - 16th St., Suite 100  
Arcata, CA 95521  
(707) 822-1688  
Fax: (707) 822-1692

**Redding District Office**  
1900 Churn Creek Rd.  
Suite 210  
Redding, CA 96002  
(530) 246-5339  
Fax: (530) 246-5210

**Ukiah Field Office**  
609 South State St.  
Suite A  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
(707) 462-5314  
Fax: (707) 462-6907

**California Area Office**  
650 Capital Mall, Suite 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-930-3945  
Fax: (916)-930-3954  
  
Edwin J. Fluette, Associate Director  
[edwin.fluette@ihs.gov](mailto:edwin.fluette@ihs.gov)

**Sacramento District Office**  
650 Capital Mall, Suite 7-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 930-3960  
Fax: (916) 930-3954

**Fresno Field Office**  
1551 Shaw, Suite 117B  
Fresno, CA 93710  
(209) 487-5609  
Fax: (209) 487-5913

**Escondido District Office**  
1320 West Valley Parkway  
Suite 309  
Escondido, CA 92029  
(760) 735-6880  
Fax: (760) 735-6893

