



NAVAJO TRIBAL UTILITY AUTHORITY

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About the NTUA

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) has continuously served the Navajo people for more than 55 years. The NTUA was established on January 22, 1959, to address the absence of utilities on the Navajo Nation, and NTUA has grown into a thriving tribally-owned enterprise delivering a portfolio of services. The NTUA is organized for the operation, maintenance and expansion of electric, communications, natural gas, water, wastewater and generation, including photovoltaic (solar) services for the Navajo people at a low and reasonable cost. Other objectives of the NTUA are:

- To promote employment opportunities on the Navajo Nation, and
- To improve the health and welfare of the residents of the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Nation has approximately 186,500 people and covers a land area of over 27,000 square miles (larger than West Virginia), extending into 13 counties in the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. While NTUA's service territory is extremely isolated and remote, it contains significant natural resources, including surface water and groundwater, range lands, forests, irrigated farmlands, lakes, fish and wildlife, as well as substantial reserves of coal, oil and natural gas, wind and outstanding solar resources. Often referred to as "Navajoland," the area contains world-known attractions, including Monument Valley in Utah, Canyon de Chelly in Arizona and the Chaco Canyon Cultural Center in New Mexico.

Historically, Navajo people have a traditional economy based upon farming, hunting and grazing of livestock. This practice has continued into modern times, especially among the elders. A consequence of this practice is that Navajo people often live on large parcels of land, creating significant distances between neighboring homes, producing the lowest number of customers per mile in the U.S. and a high cost of providing service. As a result, it is often cost-prohibitive to provide utility services to individual homes on much of the Navajo Nation. There are regional communities which primarily consist of housing developments built around schools, hospitals and governmental centers.

An estimated 25% of homes on the Navajo Nation are traditional Navajo dwellings called hogans. Most housing is comprised of mobile homes, modular buildings, and standard homes. It is estimated that 31% of all homes lack complete plumbing, 28% lack kitchen facilities, 38% lack water services, 32% lack electricity, 86% lack natural gas services, and 60% lack landline telephone services. The Navajo Nation also lacks a modern 911 emergency system.

The Navajo people also combat the pangs of poverty that place the Navajo Nation among the lowest echelons of socio-economic indicators for any geographic region in the United States. The latest statistics indicate the Navajo Nation has an unemployment rate of approximately 52%—nearly seven times the current U.S. average—and 43% of the Navajo people live below the poverty line. The average per capita income on the Navajo Nation is \$10,695, as compared to the U.S. average per capita income of \$47,915.

For additional information about the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, please contact:

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Celebrating 50 Years of Service to the Navajo Nation in 2009