



The First Nations Water Management Strategy

Environment Canada's Contribution

The First Nations Water Management Strategy (FNWMS) was launched by the Government of Canada in 2003 to improve water and wastewater services on reserves. The Strategy recognizes that water is one element of the ecosystem, and that an integrated, sustainable approach must be taken to its protection from source to tap.

Environment Canada was asked by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to assist in the delivery of the Strategy, and is providing expertise in three key areas:

- source water protection
- sustainable water use
- wastewater management

In cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Health Canada, and First Nations, Environment Canada is carrying out the following activities under the FNWMS between 2003 and 2008:

Developing guidance materials for First Nations, including

- a protocol and accompanying technical manuals on how to conduct a source water assessment and develop a source water protection plan,
- a source water monitoring protocol,
- training materials on source water protection, and
- a community-level water use audit manual.

Collaborating to help train First Nations communities in the use of technical guidance materials through regional workshops.

Helping First Nations to take action on source water protection and sustainable water use by:

- working together to develop a few source water protection plans which could serve as models for other First Nations communities, and
- undertaking a limited number of water use audits.

Providing information on:

- federal requirements that apply to the release of wastewater effluents, and
- environmental reviews of infrastructure projects.

In addition, Environment Canada is sharing information and engaging in dialogue with First Nations leaders and organizations on Environment Canada's wastewater regulatory development activities.

For more information on:

- Environment Canada's involvement in the Strategy, or water in general, call the Inquiry Centre at 1 800 668-6767 or visit www.ec.gc.ca/water
- The First Nations Water Management Strategy, visit www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/H2O

Environment Canada's objectives under the Strategy are to:

- provide information on wastewater management;
- help First Nations to conduct their own source water assessments, monitor source water, and develop and implement source water protection plans; and
- encourage sustainable water management by helping First Nations to estimate water use and loss, and identify ways to improve efficiency.