

Indoor Air Quality and Housing: Ideas for Discussion

Goal: Improve information sharing and understanding amongst tribal housing and health/environmental staff to facilitate better IAQ outcomes, leading to better health outcomes.

Keep in mind: How to make IAQ easier for rural areas and/or areas with limited capacity.

FAQs on HUD funding. This may be targeted at non-housing staff that do not understand the tribal housing context.

What funding sources are available to address indoor air issues?

How are decisions made on the use of funding?

Under NAHASDA, Tribes determine how housing funds will be allocated and spent. With the passage of Native American Housing and Self Determination Act in 1996, each tribe receives Indian Housing Block Grant funds annually on the basis of a formula. Every tribe develops an Indian Housing Plan (IHP) outlining the amount of funds to be spent in a given year and on eligible activities, which are outlined in NAHASDA. The activities, such as new construction, housing rehabilitation, housing services, are determined by the tribe. Whether a tribe has a housing department or a housing authority, the tribal chair signs off on the Indian Housing plan. In cases where the tribe has a housing authority, the chair of the board of commissioners, as well as the tribal chair, sign off on the plan. The plan is sent to HUD to review for compliance.

Each tribe has their own process for determining which activities they will fund for the year. In terms of funding requirements, tribes are required to utilize some of the IHP funds to operate and maintain '37 Act units that are still under their management. These are sometimes referred to as "HUD homes", but the units that have not conveyed are owned and operated either by a tribe's housing department or the housing authority on behalf of the tribe.

IHBG has been funded between \$650-\$700 million level since NAHASDA, which means there have not been a lot of fluctuations in formula amounts over that time, while demand has increased. This makes planning and prioritization of projects even more critical.

Where do housing and IAQ intersect?

While housing departments and housing authorities may not specifically use the word "indoor air quality" or have a program called IAQ, their work impacts IAQ in a variety of ways. Three main areas of impact are:

- Rehabilitation or Maintenance/Repair
- New Housing Development (Design, Construction process)
- Tenant Education and/or inspections

How involved is HUD with funding decisions?

Housing funded by HUD is not run by HUD. HUD does not determine or approve building standards or budget decisions. As such, it is important to understand how decisions on housing are made within a particular tribe. The best way to advocate for improved air quality outcomes is at the local level.

Making connections on IAQ issues. How to facilitate connecting health/environmental staff with housing staff on IAQ issues.

- Model MOU between housing department and health/environmental department
- NTAA: Including a track/workshop on housing at each conference. Invite the host tribe's housing department to participate and provide a presentation on IAQ techniques they've been using. Invite other housing departments in the area. Also include Native architects who may have worked on these projects.
- NAIHC: Have an IAQ workshop at conferences, perhaps led by NTAA.
- Tribal environmental/health staff: Attend regional housing association meetings. Bring key housing staff to environmental meetings. Identify tribal regional bodies where indoor air quality/rehab/asthma would be viewed as key issues.
- Highlight best practices: Health and housing working together, or approaches for dealing with IAQ issues.
- HUD ONAP: Staff training on indoor air quality issues.
- NTAA Assessment: Check the results with federal agency regions and get feedback in terms of where there may be the greatest need for education and information.
- Identify key IAQ/IEQ issues that can be addressed during housing rehab, including moisture/mold, radon, lead-based paint hazards, temperature extremes, inadequate ventilation

IAQ practices. Perhaps several brief, targeted appendices and/or webinars.

- Use of local/native building materials
- Building quality
- Green techniques
- How to assess a unit/house for meth at turnover
- Heating and cooking fuel options (ex: district heating)
- Weatherization programs and healthy homes interventions
- Check out NTAA IAQ needs assessment for specific issues
 - o Main issues identified included radon, asthma and COPD
- Radon
- Information on IAQ and health

IAQ Tools. Gather from tribes and others, review NTAA IAQ for insight on what would be useful.

- Templates
- Model policies
- Best practices
- Submitting RFPs
- Tenant education materials around IAQ
- Identify funding sources that can be used for IAQ that housing may not be aware of and assist in writing grants