

Improving Access to Safe Drinking Water in Indian Country



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Region 9

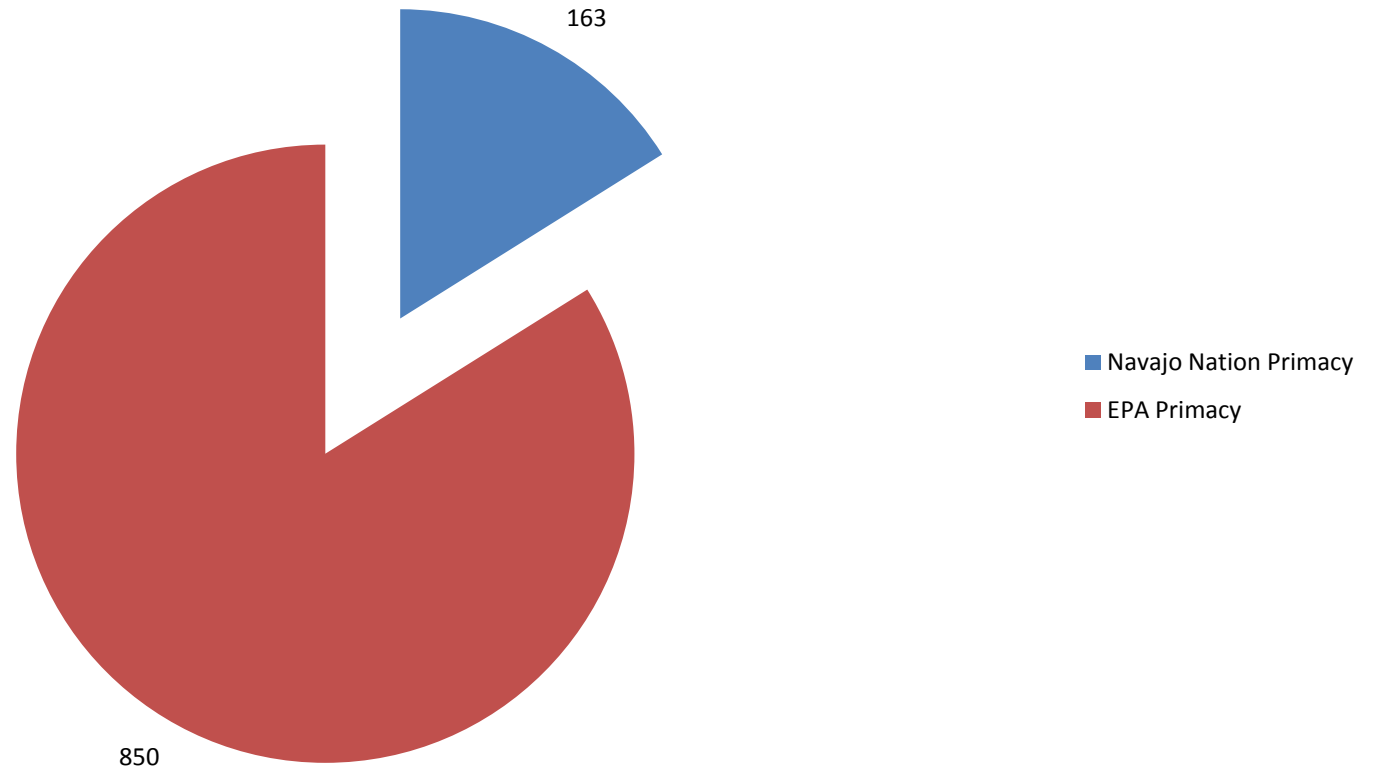
Regional Tribal Operations Committee Meeting

November 26, 2012

Presentation Goals

- Increase understanding of Tribal and EPA's roles in regulating, operating, and funding drinking water systems
- Increase understanding of the current state of compliance at drinking water systems in Indian country
- Continue our consultation with Tribal leaders on improving access to safe drinking water in Indian country

Public Water Systems in Indian Country



Consequences of Poor Operation and Maintenance



Providing Access to Safe Drinking Water in Indian Country

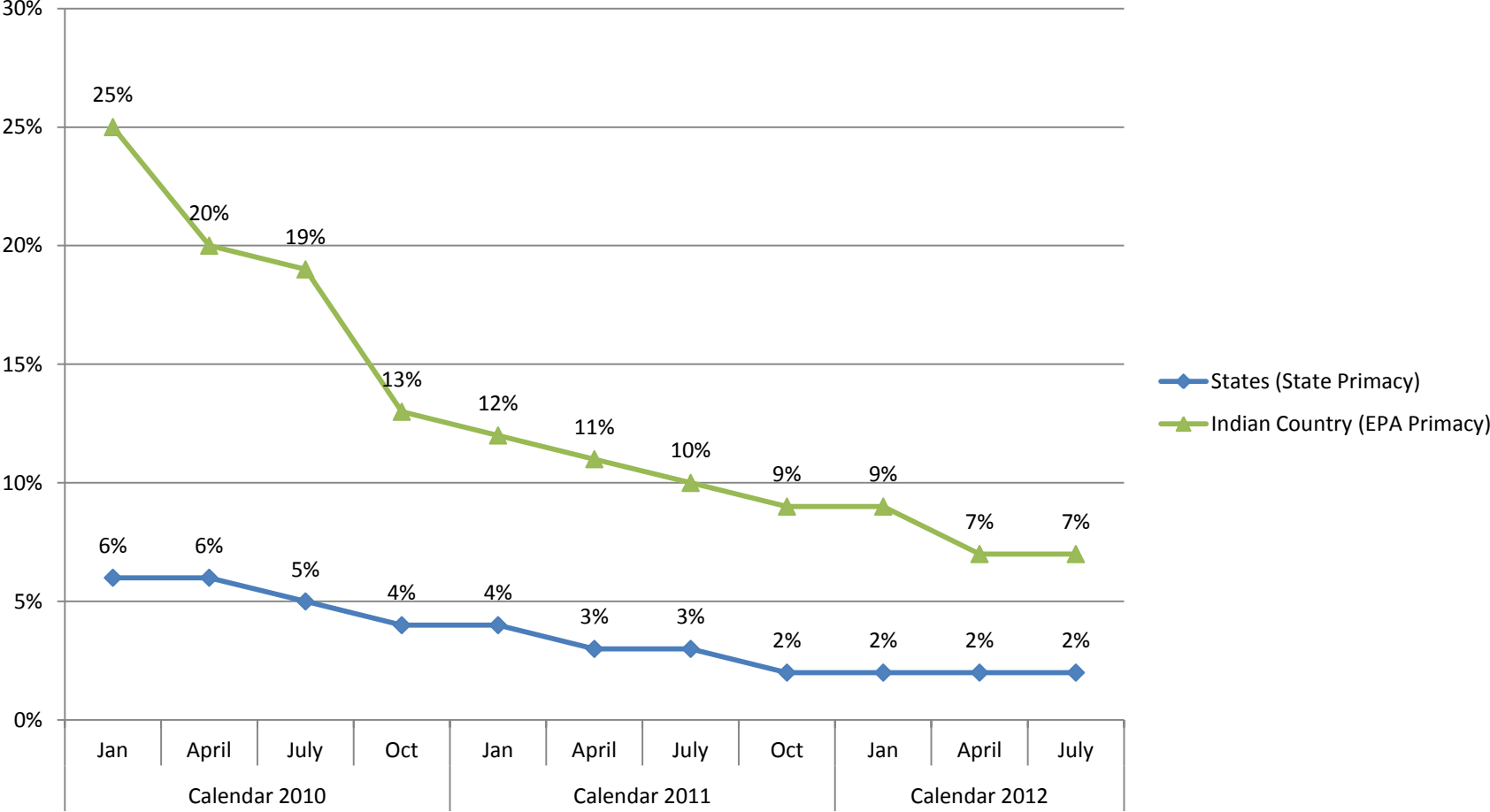
Roles and Responsibilities

| Environmental Protection Agency | Tribal Governments |
|--|---|
| Establishes and enforces health protection standards for drinking water produced by public water systems in the U.S., including those in Indian country. | As owner of public water system, provides drinking water that is required to be in compliance with drinking water regulations. |
| Provides grant funding for infrastructure to ensure compliance with drinking water regulations to public water systems that serve Tribes. | Establishes a utility governance structure to develop and oversee the utility operational policies, including: budgeting, planning, personnel management and revenue collections. |
| Provides technical assistance to improve Tribal utility's technical, operational and management capacity. (No direct O&M funding.) | Oversees the utility director (or utility board) to ensure compliance with utility policies and drinking water regulations. |
| Coordinates with Tribes and other federal agencies on the delivery of technical assistance and drinking water infrastructure funding. | Coordinates with federal infrastructure funding programs. |

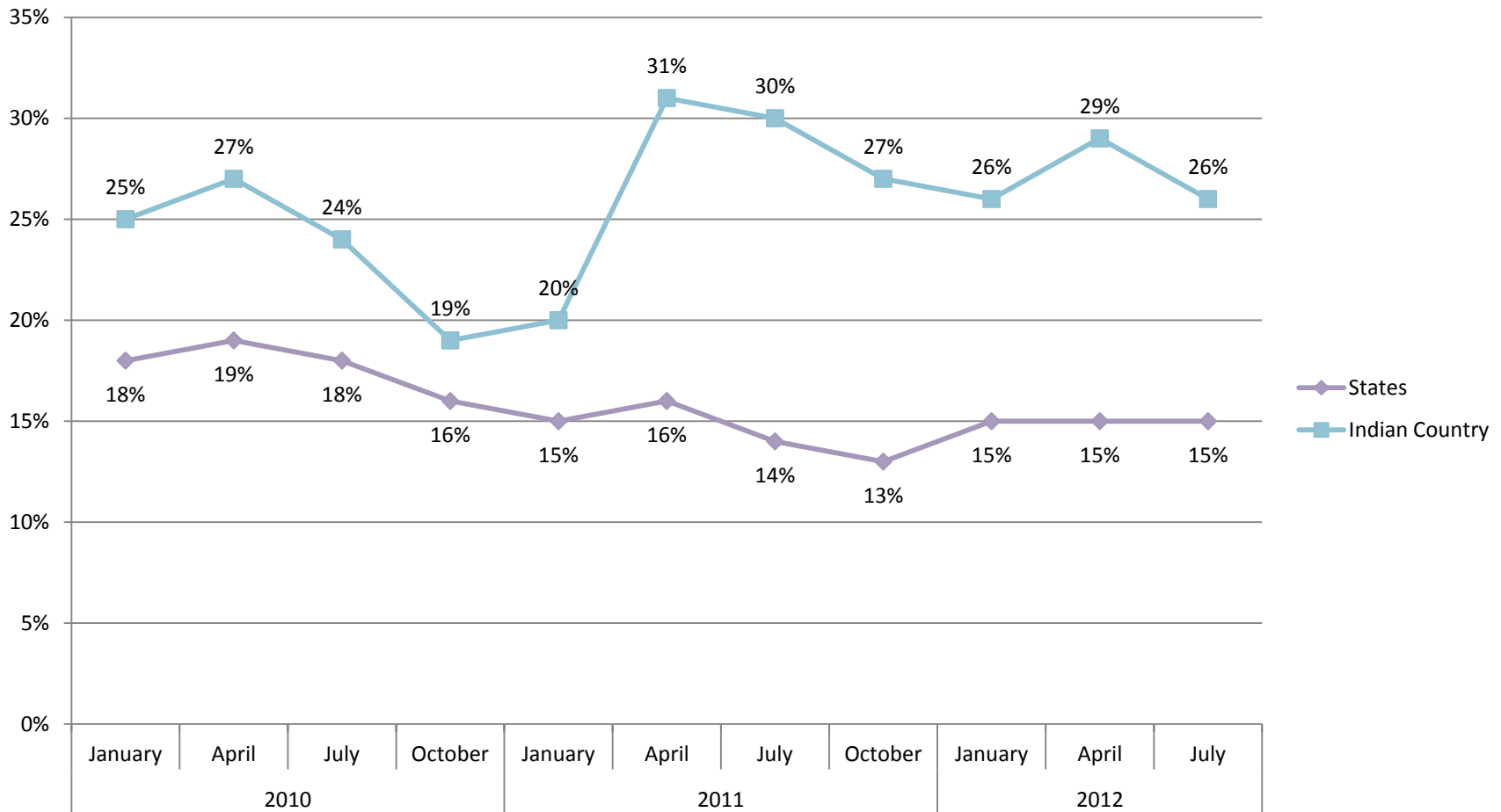
Financial and Technical Resources

- Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants (EPA)
- Public Water System Supervision Program (EPA)
- Tribal Drinking Water Cooperative Agreement for Training and Technical Assistance (EPA)
- Sanitation Facilities Construction Program (IHS)
- Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loans and Grants (USDA)
- Indian Housing and Community Block Grants (HUD)

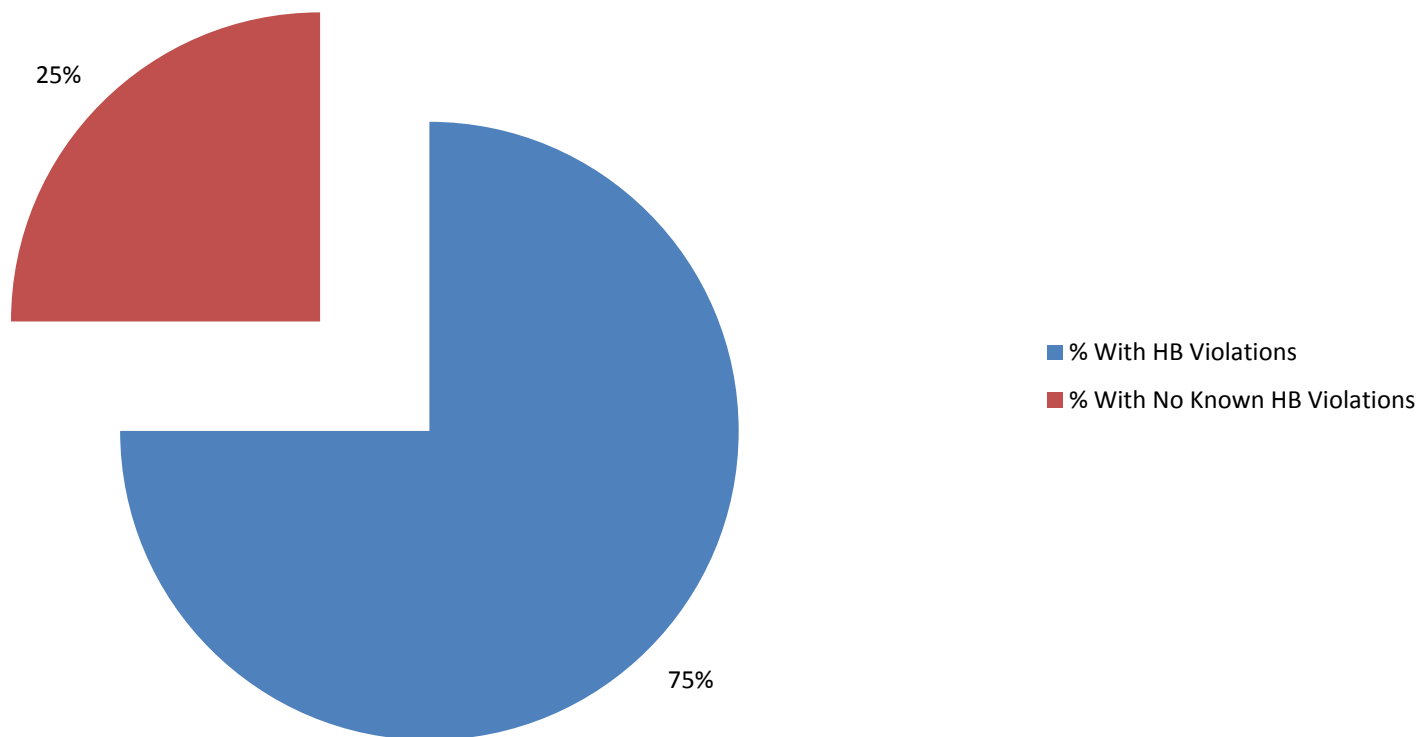
Percentage of PWS in “Enforcement Priority” Status SDWIS January 2010 – July 2012



Percentage of PWS with Unresolved Violations Emerging Priorities Unless Addressed



Public Water Systems in Enforcement Priority Status Health Based Violations



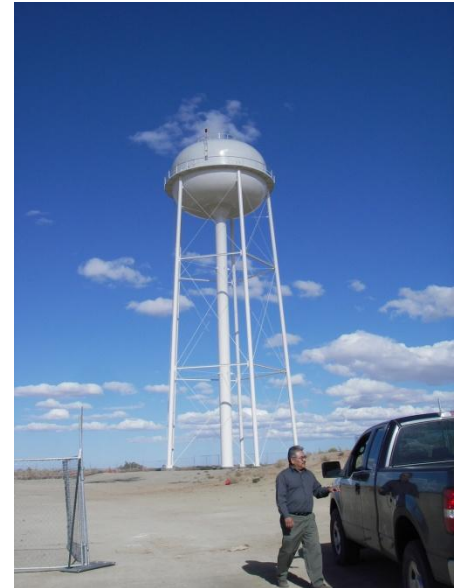
Source: SDWIS Data

Addressing Violations

- EPA identifies and scores all public water systems in the United States with violations
- “Enforcement Priority” violating systems
 - Offer to consult with Tribal government
 - Work with Tribal utility
 - Initiate formal enforcement (often on consent) if not returned to compliance in six months
- “Non-Enforcement Priority” violating systems
 - Initiate consultation
 - Work with Tribal utility to bring the system back into compliance before it becomes an enforcement priority

Consultation Discussion Questions

1. How should EPA engage Tribal governments about the current state of compliance on their reservation?
2. How should EPA engage Tribal government about addressing enforcement priority systems and emerging priority violating systems?
3. What additional technical assistance do Tribal governments and/or utilities require to support provision of safe drinking water?



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