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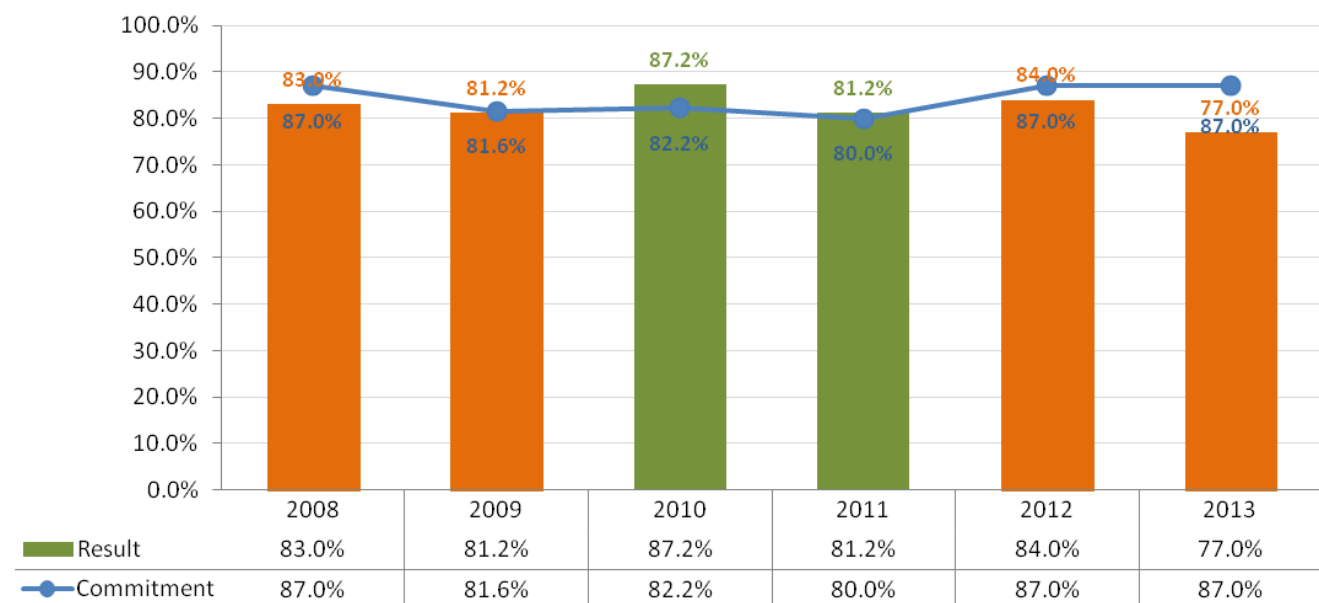
## American Indian Drinking Water and Water Quality FY 2013 Performance

### Drinking Water

An important priority for the National Water Program is to ensure that drinking water consumers in Indian Country receive public health and environmental protection through sustained PWS compliance with the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs). EPA's Office of Water has three measures for tracking the safety of drinking water for tribes: percent of population in Indian Country receiving safe drinking water (SP-3), number of American Indian Alaska Native homes provided access to safe drinking water (SDW-18), and the number CWSs undergoing sanitary surveys (SDW-1b). EPA met one of the three commitments (SDW-1b) for these measures in FY 2013.

EPA failed to achieve its national target for the percentage of the population in Indian Country served by CWSs that receive drinking water meeting all applicable health-based standards. The FY 2013 performance result was 77%, falling short of the annual performance target of 87% (SP-3) (Figure 92).

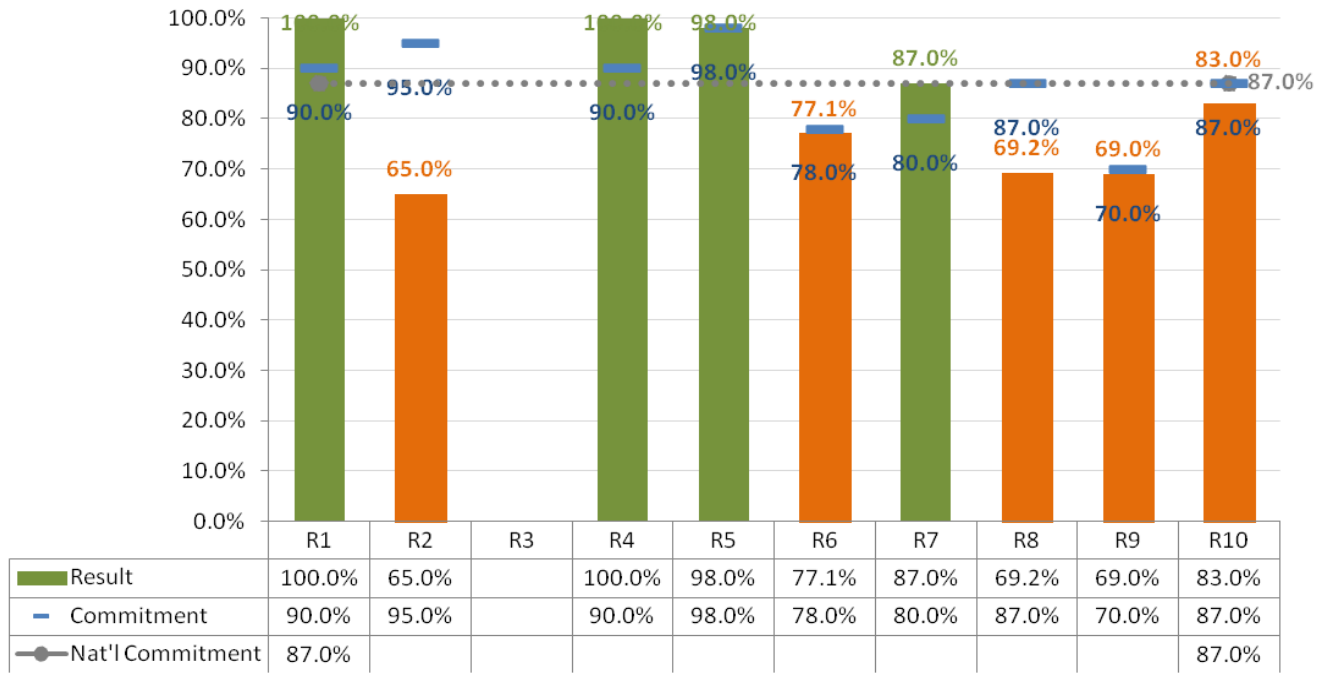
**Figure 92: Population Served by CWSs in Indian Country by Fiscal Year (SDW-SP3.N.11)**



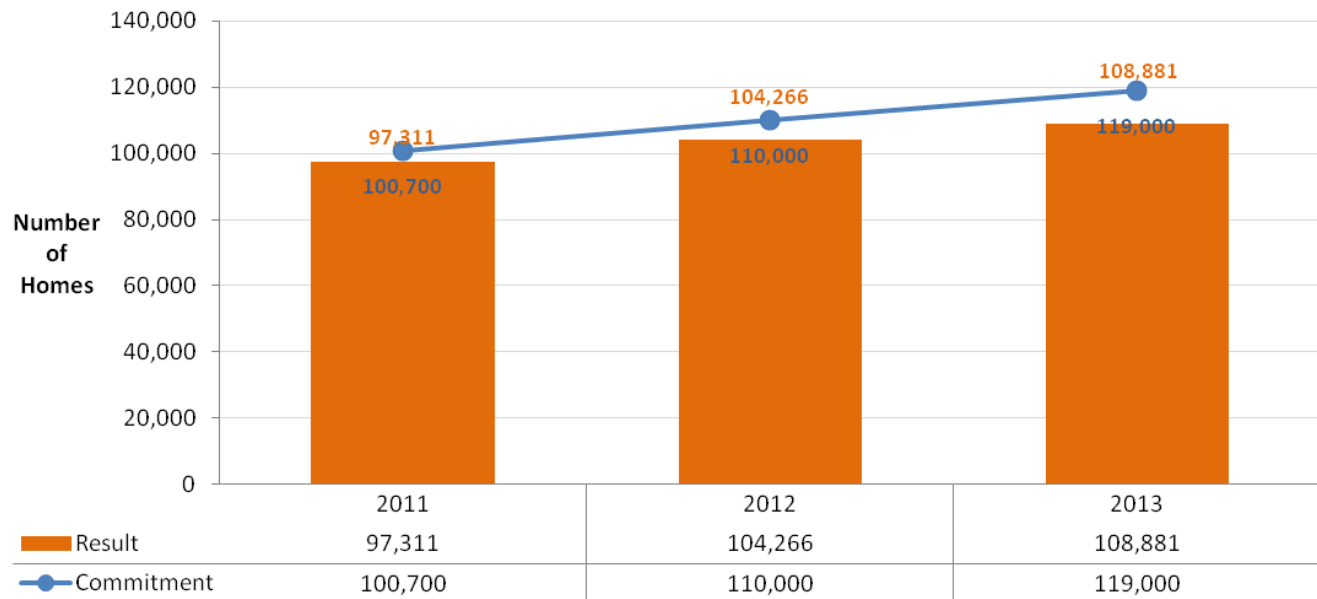
FY 2013 Universe: 1,013,222 people

Five of the nine regions with Safe Drinking Water Act direct implementation responsibility in Indian Country failed to meet annual commitments for this measure in 2013 (Figure 93). The performance of this measure has been impacted in various regions by the Total Coliform Rule, Stage 1 Disinfection By-Products Rule, and Nitrates Rule violations, as well as by data correction to address reporting problems. It should be noted that there can be a great deal of fluctuation in results for this measure since tribal populations tend to be small and that a single compliance issue heavily impacts the performance results. For example, one violation at a utility that has 30% of an EPA Region's tribal population is significant. In addition, some of the most significant challenges faced by EPA and tribes, as well as all drinking water facilities, in FY 2013 include: (1) aging infrastructure; (2) lack of adequate revenue or access to financing; (3) turnover of experienced system operators and the inability to recruit new qualified/certified operators to replace them; (4) cost to operate and maintain the drinking water facilities; and (5) difficulty in understanding existing or new regulatory requirements.

**Figure 93: Population Served by CWSs in Indian Country (SDW-SP3.N11) by Region for FY 2013**



EPA, in coordination with other federal agencies, fell short of reaching its FY 2013 commitment of achieving **119,000 American Indian and Alaska Native homes** with access to safe drinking water (SDW-18) (Figure 96). The progress of the measure has not improved as much as expected; however, EPA and its partners are making progress toward increasing the number of homes that are provided access to safe drinking water. As of 2012, the cumulative total of homes provided access to safe drinking water since 2003 was 104,266. At the end of FY 2013, the Indian Health Service reported that there were 108,881 tribal homes (cumulative) provided access to safe drinking water in Indian Country. This increase has been accomplished despite decreased funding for water and wastewater infrastructure and an increase in the average unit cost to provide drinking water access to homes.

**Figure 96: Number of American Indian & Alaska Native Homes Provided Access to Safe Drinking Water by Fiscal Year (SDW-18.N11)**

Universe: 360,000 homes (2011)

For the sixth year in a row, EPA has met its annual commitment for the percent of CWSs that have undergone a sanitary survey within the past three years, as required under the Interim Enhanced and Long-Term I Surface Water Treatment Rules. **Eighty-four tribes** underwent a sanitary survey in FY 2013, which was above the commitment of 79 tribes (SDW-1b). Note, however, that the universe for this measure over the past five years only represents 12.3% of the total systems and serves just 27% of the population. The universe will increase significantly in fiscal year 2014, as ground-water-based CWSs will be added to the number of systems that will be required to have completed sanitary surveys.

## Water Quality

The National Water Program has six measures for tracking access to basic sanitation on American Indian lands and assessing the quality of tribal water quality programs. These include the number of American Indian and Alaska Native homes provided access to basic sanitation (WQ-24), the number of tribes with water quality standards (WQS) approved (WQ-2), the number of tribes submitting water quality criteria acceptable to EPA (WQ-3b), the number of tribes implementing monitoring strategies (WQ-6a), the number of tribes providing water quality data in an accessible format (WQ-6b), and the percent of current tribal NPDES permits (WQ-12b). The Office of Water met four of its commitments for all of these measures in FY 2013.

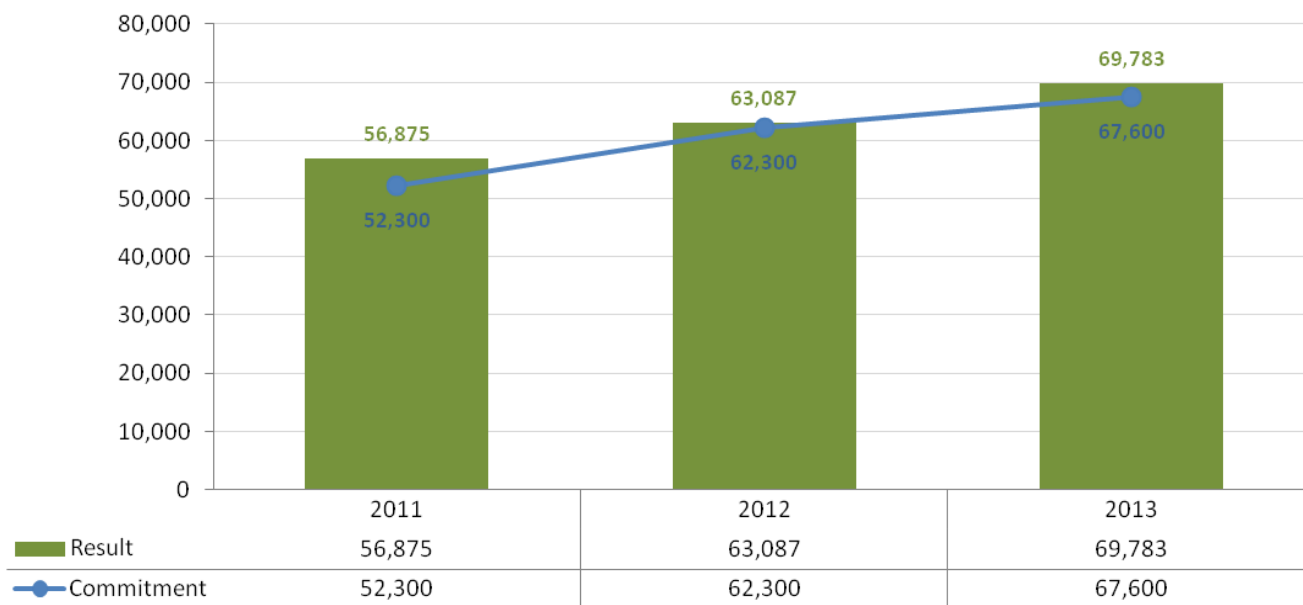
In FY 2012, EPA and tribes began reporting on a new performance measure tracking water quality improvements at baseline monitoring stations on tribal lands (WQ-14a.N11). There are 185 monitoring stations (out of a total of 1,729) that are located on waters that have a potential for improvement in one or more of seven key parameters during the FY 2012-2015 period. **Twenty stations** demonstrated improvements in one or more of seven key water quality parameters in FY 2013.<sup>1</sup> This was an increase from 15 stations reported in FY 2012. EPA also tracks the number of monitoring stations on tribal lands that are showing no degradation in water quality (meaning the waters are meeting tribal water quality objectives). This is a new

<sup>1</sup> Monitoring stations need to show improvement in one or more of seven key parameters: dissolved oxygen, pH, water temperature, total nitrogen, total phosphorous, pathogen indicators and turbidity).

indicator measure that tribes are exploring as a tool for tracking maintenance of good quality waters. In 2012, the first year for this indicator measure, the regions reported 7 stations that had more than 2 years of data showing no degradation in water quality. **Four monitoring stations** showing no degradation were reported in FY 2013 (WQ-SP14b.N11). EPA and the National Tribal Water Council are working on tools and training to more fully test this indicator measure over the next two years with the goal of including it as a formal strategic plan measure for tracking the protection of water quality on tribal lands.

EPA, in coordination with other federal agencies, exceeded its annual commitment (67,600) and provided access to basic sanitation to **69,783 American Indian and Alaskan Native homes** in FY 2013 (cumulative) (Figure 97). In FY 2013 EPA continued to lead the multi-agency Infrastructure Task Force (ITF) comprised of EPA, the Indian Health Service, USDA Rural Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of the Interior. The ITF is identifying ways to address the severe and disparate infrastructure needs in Indian Country. In 2013 the ITF partner agencies renewed their commitment to the tribal community by signing a 5-party Memorandum of Understanding. In addition, in FY 2013, the ITF is now also working on solid waste management activities for tribes.

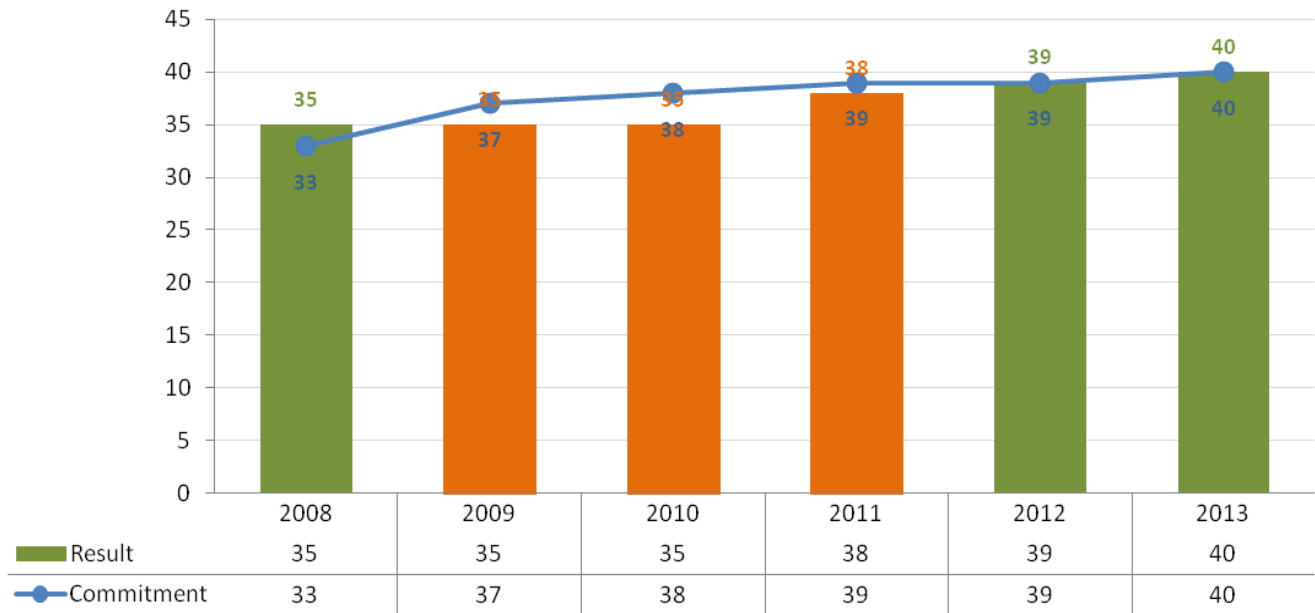
**Figure 97: Number of American Indian and Alaska Native Homes with Access to Basic Sanitation by Fiscal Year (WQ-24.N11)**



Universe: 383,674 homes (2010)

EPA is committed to assisting any tribe interested in adopting WQS under the CWA (WQ-2). Meeting the eligibility criteria and developing the detailed standards can be a challenge for tribes and often requires them to spend some time and collaborate with EPA. Not all tribes can meet the criteria or want WQS authority. For this measure, therefore, the universe reflects all federally recognized tribes that have applied for “treatment in the same manner as a state” (TAS) to administer the WQS program (as of September 2009). In FY 2013, EPA met its

**Figure 98: Tribes with Water Quality Standards Approved by Fiscal Year (WQ-02)**

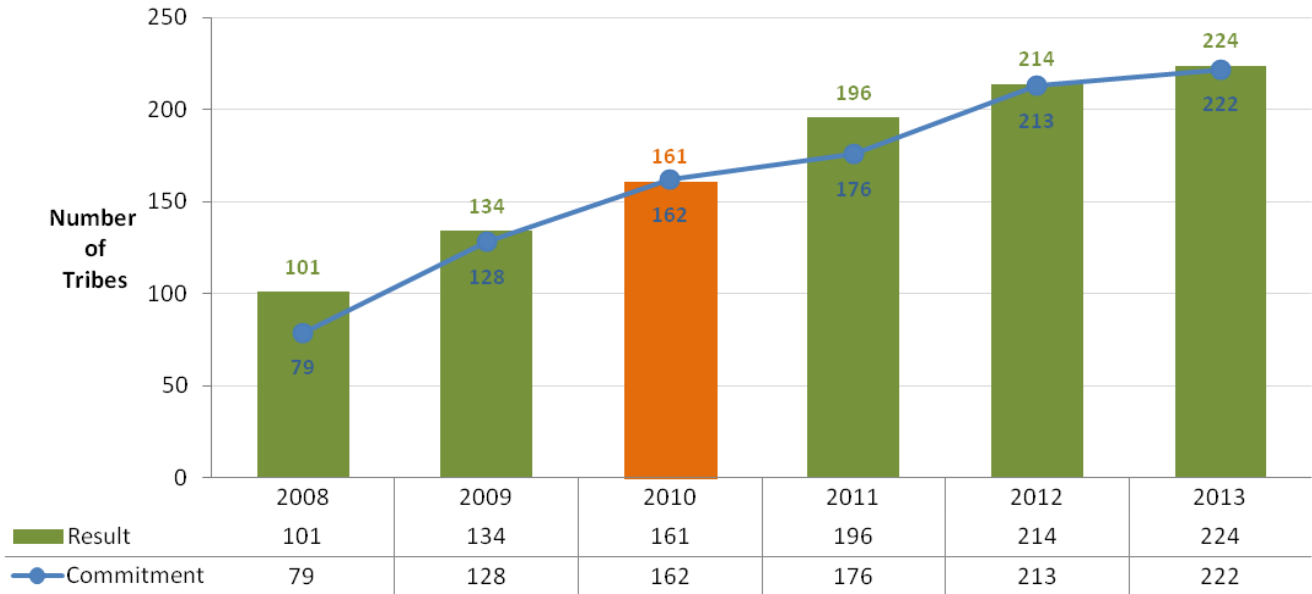


Universe: 62 tribes

Tribes continue to develop and implement their ambient water quality monitoring strategies. In FY 2013, **224 tribes** that currently receive funding under CWA Section 106 developed and began implementing monitoring strategies. This was an increase of 10 tribes over the FY 2012 results and was slightly above the FY 2012 commitment of 222 tribes (WQ-6a) (Figure 99). Meeting this measure continues to be challenging as additional tribes apply for Section 106 grants and the amount of tribal set-aside funds remains the same.

One of the most important factors contributing to the success of tribal monitoring and assessment programs is improved tools for data submission. **One hundred and ninety three (193) tribes** are providing water quality data in a format accessible for storing in EPA's data system. This is above the FY 2013 commitment of 189 tribes (WQ-6b).

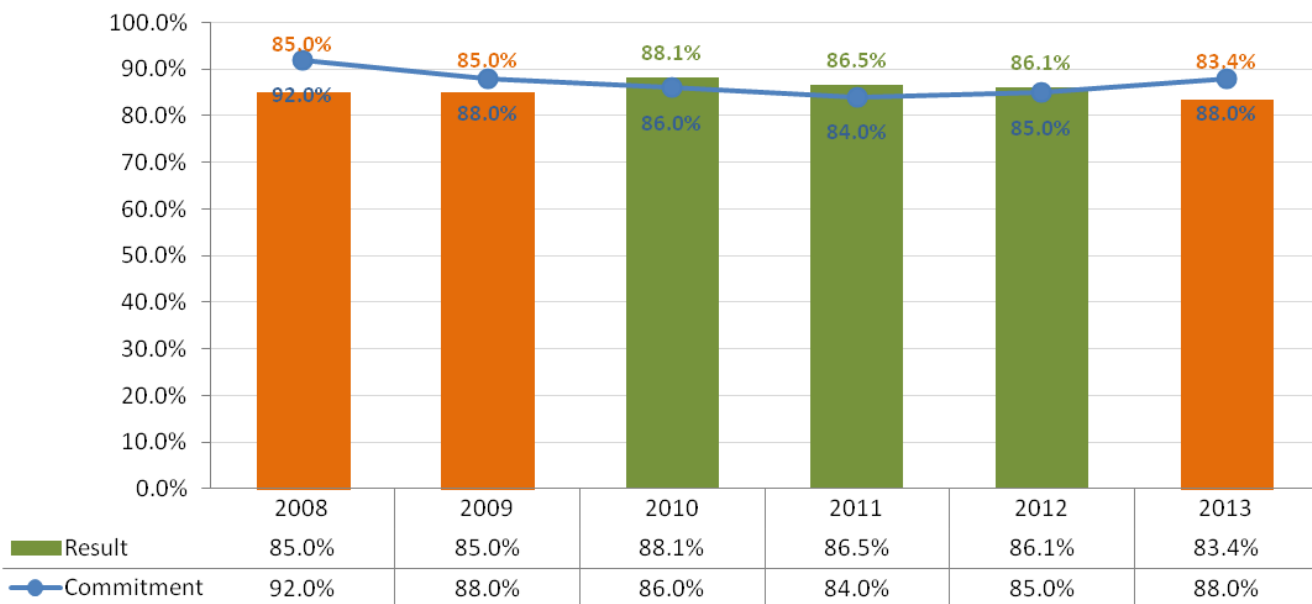
**Figure 99: Tribes That Have Implemented Monitoring Strategies by Fiscal Year (WQ-06a)**



Universe: 261 tribes

For the first time since FY 2009, EPA failed to meet its commitment for the percent of tribal facilities covered by NPDES permits that are considered current. In FY 2013, permits for **83.4% of tribal facilities** were considered current, which was slightly well below the national goal of 88% (WQ-12b) (Figure 100).

**Figure 100: Tribal NPDES Permits Considered Current by Fiscal Year (WQ-12b)**



Universe: 412 tribal facilities

Three EPA regional offices failed to meet their annual commitment for this measure. The measure has a very small universe, so missing just a few permits greatly affects the percentage results for a region. Regions 5, 7, and 8 did not meet their commitments, with R5 and R7 missing it by just one permit each. Region 8 is dealing with the backlog of the Wind River Oil and Gas permits. (Figure 101)

**Figure 101: Tribal NPDES Permits Considered Current by Region for FY 2013 (WQ-12b)**

