

# Partnerships for Success

*Government partnerships with positive outcomes for Indigenous people, businesses and communities*

## First Nations Operator Training Program

SaskWater

SaskWater's First Nations Operator Training Program has a long history of providing hands-on training and support to Indigenous water and wastewater operators in Saskatchewan. On behalf of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), SaskWater trained 73 local operators in 29 First Nations communities in 2018-19.

The program began in 1978, when the Department of Northern Saskatchewan set out to assist northern residents in the operation and maintenance of treatment plants in their communities. In 1984, the northern training program came under the direction of the newly formed Saskatchewan Water Corporation. Within the same year, a contract agreement with ISC shifted the program's focus and SaskWater's First Nations Operator Training Program was established.

The program has a hands-on, practical approach that is designed to equip operators with the skills and experience they need to operate and maintain their treatment systems. Circuit rider trainers are available by phone and are in the plants regularly to help operators trouble-shoot specific issues. In addition, they are involved in creating emergency response plans and preventative maintenance plans.

SaskWater's contract with ISC has grown from its original intent to serve two communities in 1984, to 29 communities today. Through the years, SaskWater has taken on more work for ISC, including an ongoing contract for water consumption records collection.

A few communities involved in the First Nations Operator Training Program include:

- Keeseekoose First Nation;
- Chitek Lake First Nation;
- Kawacatoose First Nation;
- Fishing Lake First Nation
- Red Pheasant First Nation
- Sweetgrass First Nation

SaskWater's First Nations Operator Training Program has been successful in training local Indigenous treatment operators with best-practice results. Along the way, the training manual and program approach became a template for similar programs adopted in Alaska, Manitoba and Alberta. The provincial programs eventually evolved into the ISC Circuit Rider Training Program, which is used across Canada to train water and wastewater treatment operators.

For more information, visit [www.saskwater.com](http://www.saskwater.com).

**Produced by:** Ministry of Government Relations

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[saskatchewan.ca](http://saskatchewan.ca)

**Saskatchewan!**

### Outcomes

First Nations Operator Training Program:

1. Builds the skills to provide a safe supply of potable water in First Nations communities.
2. Ensures uninterrupted service during training activities.
3. Allows operators to gain hands-on experience and develop their careers.

# Partnerships for Success

SaskWater's First Nations Operator Training Program

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**FIRST NATIONS**

SERVED IN 1984

29

**FIRST NATIONS**

SERVED IN 2018-19

73

WATER & WASTEWATER

**OPERATORS TRAINED**

IN 2018-19



Helps provide  
**SAFE, POTABLE WATER**  
to Indigenous communities



Ensures  
**UNINTERRUPTED SERVICE**  
through on-the-job training



Allows trainees to  
**DEVELOP THEIR CAREERS**  
through hands-on education

Source: SaskWater

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Saskatchewan!