



NTUA connects 541 families to grid *Navajo Nation CARES Act legislation credited*

By Vida Volkert

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WINDOW ROCK, Arizona – Navajo Tribal Utility Authority recently announced it has connected 541 families to the electric grid using CARES Act funds. NTUA spokesperson Deenise Becenti on Monday said the authority has surpassed the original goal of 510 families.

“This is a huge achievement for NTUA electric line crews – to extend electricity to over 510 homes in a little over three months,” Becenti said in a prepared statement. “Once the NN CARES Act legislation was passed and approved, teams went to work to build powerlines. Each week, including weekends and holidays, the NTUA crews concentrated on extending electricity to as many homes as possible -- with 510 homes being the primary goal. As of this update, the total connections by NTUA was 541 families.”

According to Becenti, an additional 22 families have been connected to the grid through a partnership with Continental Divide Electric Cooperative, and 16 more through Jemez Mountain Cooperative, bringing the total of families assisted with CARES Act funds to 579. She said NTUA crews will continue to work 10-hour days, including weekends, to connect as many families as possible before the Dec. 28 deadline set up by Congress to spend the CARES Act funds.

“They will take a pause on Friday to be with their families and will return back to the construction sites the following day,” Becenti said. “They understand our commitment to remain completely focused on CARES Act for the benefit of regional families.”

The Navajo Nation received more than \$700 million in CARES Act funds earlier this year. Navajo authorities allocated \$13.8 million to power line projects, \$24.7 million to increase overall electric grid capacity, \$20.9 million for cisterns systems, \$18.6 million for wastewater systems, and \$32.8 million for wireless and broadband expansion for NTUA.

Tribal authorities estimate more than 15,000 homes lack electricity on the Navajo Nation.