SALISH KOOTENAI HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION

IHS SANITATION FACILITIES PROGRAM

Water & Sewer Service for Individual Homes

Applicant Information Sheet | Please keep this for your records

INFORMATION FOR THE APPLICANT

Public Law 86-121 allows the Indian Health Service to assist members of Federally Recognized Tribes in obtaining a potable drinking water supply and a safe means of disposing of wastewater for their home use, provided that funds are available and that the homes meet basic standards of living requirements (well insulated, have electricity, indoor plumbing, etc.).

The SKHA Water/Sewer Department administers this program on and around the Flathead Reservation. Please keep this sheet and refer back to it as your project moves forward.

SERVICES WE CAN PROVIDE

- New individual water wells
- New septic systems (on-site wastewater treatment); the property must be at least 1.25 acres
- Connection to a community water system and/or community sewer system
- Replacement of a failed well or septic system, when the failure is verified in writing by a third party

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

- **Tribal enrollment:** enrolled CSKT members, CSKT descendants, and enrolled members of other Federally Recognized Tribes.
- **Location:** the home is in the IHS service area (counties within and surrounding the Flathead Reservation).
- **Primary residence:** you live in the home at least 6 months per year.
- **Land control:** only the landowner and homeowner may apply. You must own the property (deed) or hold a Tribal homesite lease (minimum 5-year lease), and own the home. No rentals.
- **One-time service:** you have not received IHS water or sewer services before.

YOUR HOME MUST HAVE

- A sound structure with doors, windows, roof, and insulation that keep out weather and pests
- A complete bathroom (toilet, tub or shower, and sink), at least 35 sq. feet and 5 ft. clear width
- A kitchen sink, a water heater, and a heating system that runs 24 hours
- Plumbing stubbed out at least 5 feet from the foundation or skirting
- Electricity on site and connected, or a written commitment from the power company
- For wells: an insulated space for the pressure tank in the home, or an insulated pump house you build before well drilling is finished

MANUFACTURED HOMES

Must be on an approved foundation, or blocked, anchored, and skirted with the wheels removed. Interior plumbing must be leak-free with a working water heater, and the home must be structurally sound and livable.

NOT ELIGIBLE

- Campers, RVs and travel trailers
- Homes in poor structural condition
- Rented homes and rented properties
- Second homes, vacation homes and seasonal residences
- Water for irrigating crops or livestock
- Repeat service after homeowner neglect or damage
- Routine maintenance, such as septic pumping, well pumps, and pressure tanks

RETURN YOUR APPLICATION TO

Rebecca Phillips
Water/Sewer Operations Supervisor
Phone: (406) 675-4491 ext. 1547
Email: rphillips@skha.org
Fax: (406) 675-4495
Mail: PO Box 38, Pablo, MT 59855

QUESTIONS? WE ARE HAPPY TO HELP

Phone: (406) 675-4491
Teeka Matt, Water/Sewer Admin Assistant: ext. 1532
Rocki Davis, Water/Sewer Operations Manager: ext. 1508

Office: 56243 US Hwy 93, Ronan, MT
Hours: Monday to Thursday, 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM
www.SKHA.org

HOW PROJECTS ARE SCHEDULED

Projects are approved based on eligibility and available funding. If funding is not available, we cannot provide services, even if you are eligible and approved.

If funding runs out for the year, an approved project may be moved to the next funding year.

There is no numbered waiting list. Approved projects are scheduled based on readiness, not the order in which applications are received.

All applications are valid for 1 year. If your project is not completed within 1 year, including a project moved to the next funding year, submit an updated application to keep it active.

MY APPLICATION TRACKER

Date submitted _____

Date approved _____

Renew application by _____

Engineering review _____

Environmental review _____

Well permit # _____

Sanitary permit # _____

Pre-con meeting _____

Construction start _____

Final inspection _____

Warranty ends _____

WHAT TO EXPECT From application to finished system

APPLY BEFORE YOU START BUILDING

Your land determines where you can install your well and septic system. Soil type, groundwater depth, slopes, and required setbacks from your home, property lines, and water sources all limit where you can place them. This can also affect where your home should be built. **That is why our engineer must review your property before you decide where to build.** Design and permits take months. Applying after your home is built can mean a difficult site, extra cost, and long delays. **Apply before construction begins. Installation begins once your home is 90% complete.**

YOUR PROJECT, STEP BY STEP

1 — You apply
Return the completed application and all required documents. Incomplete applications are not processed.

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2 — Eligibility review
We review your application and contact you if anything is missing. The Policy Compliance Committee approves or denies it, and you are notified by mail.

▼

3 — Engineering and site review
Our engineer reviews your site. It must also pass environmental review and cultural clearance.

▼

4 — Permits
FRWMB well permit and County sewer permit (you pay). Permits take time.

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5 — Pre-construction meeting
You meet our Sanitation Construction Inspector to review your home, site layout, and where services will go.

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6 — Scheduling
Your project is scheduled once your home and site are ready (see checklist).

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7 — Construction
Wells are bid to licensed drillers. Septic work is done by our crew or a contractor. Water is tested before the job is done.

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8 — Final inspection
We do a walk-through of the system with you, show you how to care for it, and your 1-year warranty begins.

AFTER CONSTRUCTION

- **1-year warranty.** After that, repairs are yours. Homeowner damage voids it.
- **Water treatment:** SKHA treats for primary contaminants like arsenic; continued maintenance is the homeowner's responsibility. Other filters and upkeep are yours.
- **Cleanup:** We rough grade but do not landscape.
- **Septic care:** pump your tank regularly.

YOUR CHECKLIST: READY TO SCHEDULE

Your project can be scheduled when all of these are done:

- ☐ Electricity is on at the site
- ☐ Property corners and boundaries are clearly marked
- ☐ A site-built home is 90% complete, or a manufactured home is on its foundation
- ☐ All required permits are approved
- ☐ You have met with our Sanitation Construction Inspector
- ☐ The site is accessible for equipment and cleared of debris and weeds
- ☐ Water and sewer stub-outs are staked and visible (at least 5 ft from the house)
- ☐ For wells: pressure tank space or a finished, insulated pump house. We do not install pressure tanks in crawlspaces.

If our crew arrives and stub-outs are not marked, they may move on to the next home and reschedule you.

DOCUMENTS TO GATHER

- Proof of Tribal enrollment or CSKT descent
- Deed (front page), redacted Title Status Report (TSR), or copy of homesite lease, plus the title or bill of sale for the home
- Street address, a map, and a drawing showing where the home sits
- Other Tribes: proof you have not received service from your Tribe
- Replacements: Replacement Verification Form signed by a licensed pumper or well driller
- Own another home: proof it is sold or listed for sale
- Fee land: County sanitary permit application, Certificate of Subdivision approval, or approved lot layout

GOOD TO KNOW

- **No funds are committed** until your site passes environmental review.
- A site may be turned down for poor soils, no access, flood hazard, no available water, steep slope, cost above the IHS cap, or environmental findings.
- If a community system is nearby, you may be connected to it. Connection fees and monthly rates apply.
- You may qualify as an applicant even if your site does not. Site eligibility is decided by the site review.
- IHS has a cost cap per homesite. Timelines depend on funding, permits, weather, and contractors.
- We install service lines to within 5 feet of your home. Plumbing inside the home is yours.
- We cannot provide temporary water or power while your home is being built.
- Permit fees are the responsibility of the applicant.