



Universal Access to Clean and Safe Water

Western States Water Council
March 25, 2021

Background

- ◆ Disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Native Americans and Alaska Natives - **3.5 times higher than in white population** (CDC report Aug. 2020)
- ◆ Incidence of COVID-19 cases on American Indian reservations attributed to lack of indoor plumbing (Lonebear, Akee 2020)
- ◆ Race is the strongest predictor of water and sanitation access (US Water Alliance 2019)



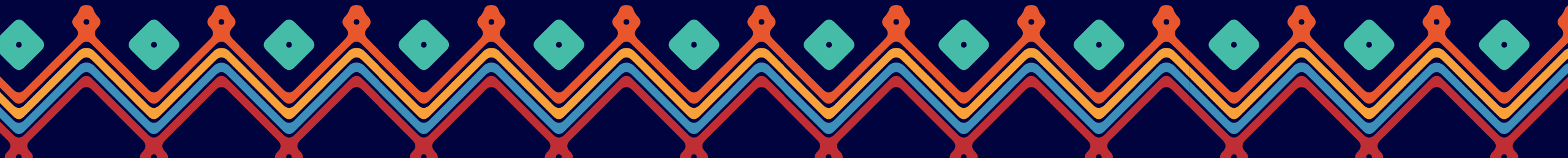
Risk for COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalization, and Death By Race/Ethnicity

Rate ratios compared to White, Non-Hispanic persons	American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic persons	Asian, Non-Hispanic persons	Black or African American, Non-Hispanic persons	Hispanic or Latino persons
Cases ¹	1.7x	0.7x	1.1x	1.3x
Hospitalization ²	3.7x	1.0x	2.9x	3.1x
Death ³	2.4x	1.0x	1.9x	2.3x

CDC, updated March 12, 2021

Lack of Access to Clean Water

- ◆ Native American households are 19 times more likely than white households to lack indoor plumbing
- ◆ Nearly 48% of tribal homes do not have access to clean drinking water or basic sanitation
- ◆ In US as a whole, less than 1% lack these facilities



Lack of Access to Water Takes Several Forms

- ◆ Piped water
- ◆ Inadequate quality
- ◆ Aging infrastructure
- ◆ Operation & maintenance



Universal Clean Water Access Initiative

- ◆ Understand the problem – research, survey
- ◆ Educate
- ◆ Engage support and partners
- ◆ Promote on-the-ground solutions
- ◆ **Now is the time!**



Solving the Problem

- ◆ Commitment to correcting this wrong
- ◆ Federal funding at the level of unmet need
- ◆ Whole of government approach

