

# Housing

**Housing.** The total housing stock in the Reservation in the year 2000 was 4,992, up 382 units from 1990 (U.S. Census Bureau). Approximately 33% of the total housing stock at that time was for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. Of the remaining housing units (3,342), 77.4% were owner occupied and 22.6% were renter occupied. Vacancy rates in the year 2000 for owner and renter occupied housing units was 1.1% and 7% respectively. According to the White Earth Housing Authority, in June 2001 there were 289 low-rent housing units, 112 Mutual Help homes and 25 Section 8 Vouchers being utilized. The waiting list for low-rent housing units, Mutual Help homes and Section 8 Vouchers was reported to be 183, 47 and 42 respectively.

**Public Water and Sewer.** The incorporated cities of Mahnommen, Callaway, Bejou and Waubun are served by public water and sewer systems. The Chippewa Ranch and the unincorporated villages of White Earth, Elbow Lake, Rice Lake, Pine Point, Naytahwaush are also served by Tribal water and sewer systems.

**Waste Management.** Waste management carriers currently serve the entire Reservation, with the Tribe owning and operating its own system for Tribal members. Recycling centers and sheds are also located throughout the Reservation and are open one day per week as advertised. Household hazardous waste is accepted by Becker County Environmental Services year-round, and by Mahnommen and Clearwater County on scheduled dates.

**Emergency Services.** There are service areas for ambulance services and for fire services. The Reservation is served by a network of volunteer fire and ambulance services. The White Earth Reservation operates a 24-hour a day ambulance service. Dispatchers rotate shifts to cover the telephone and radio and to contact Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

**Energy.** There are ample sources of energy to serve the Reservation. There are four providers of electric power on the Reservation: Ottertail Power Company, Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Clearwater Polk Electric Cooperative and Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electric Association. The abundant low sulfur coal in North Dakota is a major fuel used by large companies to produce electrical power. There appears to be enough electrical power available for both current needs and future growth until the year 2015. Additionally, wind energy appears to be a potential source of renewable energy. At the current time, studies are being conducted and an experimental wind turbine is being constructed to gather critical data on the economic feasibility of wind energy production.

**Telecommunications.** With respect to electronic connectivity, portions of the Reservation are accessible by fiber-optic cable, and portions via DSL or ADSL technology. Those areas not covered by these services can typically be connected via a purchased dial-up account. As technology in the satellite and wireless communications market continues to emerge and grow, it is expected that the competitive advantage that metropolitan areas have over rural areas will be negated.

Connectivity via telephone is available in most areas of the Reservation. However, the high cost of service installation is a significant barrier for many low-income families on the Reservation. While the nationwide penetration rate for those with incomes below \$5,000 in rural areas was 76.7% in

1999, the comparable rate for Native American persons on tribal land was 46.6%. Cellular and digital communications on the Reservation are less-than-adequate, with some areas being within "shadow" zones due to the lack of cellular towers, thus making continued mobile connectivity difficult.

### ***SERVICES OFFERED***

**Head Start:** The White Earth Head Start Program is based on the premise that all children, particularly those from low-income households, can benefit by receiving a comprehensive developmental program to meet their education needs.

There are six Head Start Centers and classrooms serving the White Earth Reservation. They are located at White Earth, Waubun, Rice Lake, Pine Point, Mahnomen, Elbow Lake and Naytahwaush. The program is funded for children three, four, and five years in age that come from low-income families. Ten percent of the children enrolled in Head Start may be from families above the federal income guidelines. Priority is given to handicapped and special needs children; Head Start offers services for the handicapped with ten percent of federal resources designated for these children.

**Law Enforcement.** The White Earth Reservation Tribal Law Enforcement Department works with the Minnesota State Patrol and county sheriff departments to provide law enforcement throughout the Reservation.

The top four serious offenses (Type I) committed on the Reservation in 1997 were larceny, burglary, motor vehicle theft and aggravated assault. Less serious crimes (Type II) affecting the Reservation were vandalism, fraud, driving under the influence and other assaults (Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension).

**Health Care Facilities.** Multiple health services are available to the residents of the Reservation. Although some of the services are offered exclusively to persons of Indian descent, others are available to the public at-large.

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, the major health issues effecting Reservation residents in 1999 were as follows: heart disease, cancer, (malignant neoplasm) stroke and chronic lower respiratory disease.

Health issues facing persons of Native American descent were noted by the White Earth Health Department to include heart disease, diabetes, cancer and drug and alcohol abuse.

**Inpatient Care Services:** Residents of the White Earth Reservation are served by several local and regional care providers: St. Mary's Hospital in Detroit Lakes, Clearwater County Memorial Hospital in Bagley, Fosston Municipal Hospital in Fosston, Mahnomen County and Village Hospital in Mahnomen, and St. Joseph's Hospital in Park Rapids. Other inpatient services can be procured at Bemidji, Minneapolis, Rochester and Fargo, North Dakota. Some individuals find it necessary to travel hundreds of miles to obtain specialty inpatient services.

**Outpatient Care Services:** Clinic services are offered through both the Mahnomen Health Center and the Indian Health Service Center in White Earth and at its satellite centers in Naytahwaush and Pine Point.

**Extended Care Services:** Extended care services are available on the Reservation at Mahnomen. Other nursing homes routinely utilized by residents are located in Detroit Lakes, Park Rapids and Twin Valley.

**Ambulatory Patient Care Service:** On-reservation ambulatory care is centered in Mahnomen, Naytahwaush and White Earth. Off-reservation care providers that service the needs of the Reservation are found in Bagley and Osage.

**Community Health Services:** Home based health services are provided to extend health care activities through community based operations. The prevention-oriented services offered provide a true public health dimension to the White Earth Service Unit Program. As such, they serve to support clinical services through identification, referral, tracking, follow-up and the development of special resources and home care programs. Additionally, Multi-County Nursing Services serves as the County Public Health Agency in Mahnomen and Becker counties, providing community health services to residents and communities of the Reservation. In addition to the Indian Health Service and other community care providers, the Tribal Council operates health services through its health and human services programs. Health services offered include: Tribal Health Service Administration, Community Health Nursing, Social Service/Mental Health Service, Health Education Services, Home Health Agency, Tribal Emergency Medical Service, Chemical Dependency Program, Community Health Representatives and Community Health Representatives.

With an aging population, the residents of the Reservation will place greater pressures on health care and senior care facilities over the next ten to twenty years.

#### **Human Service Centers and Services Offered.**

Human services are offered to Reservation residents through centers in Mahnomen, Detroit Lakes and Bagley. Additional services are offered to Tribal members through offices located in Naytahwaush and White Earth.

**Tribal human services offered include:** Adoption Services, Child Care, Employment and Training, Food Distribution, Geriatric Services, Indian Child Welfare, Victim Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Direct Employment and Constituent Services. County services include: Adoption, Case Management, Child Support Services, Counseling, Congregate and Home Delivered Meals, Day Care, Developmental Achievement Center, Detoxification, Emergency Placement, Extended Employment, Family Based Services, Food Benefits, Foster Care, General Assistance, Home School Interventions, Homemaking Services, Information and Referral, Juvenile Court Services, Legal Services, Money Management, Parenting Education, Protection Services, Residential Treatment, Respite, Screening and Transportation Services.