



HEAVY EQUIPMENT WATER & SEWER MAINTENANCE – SPECIAL PROJECTS



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"Help me, Lord, to give a full day's work for a full day's pay. Help me to respect the property of others, to be honest in dealing with those involved in this task, and to put forth effort with personal interest. Give me the spirit of charity that I may contribute to the happiness of all those with whom I work, and when the job is done, grant us all a peaceful rest." ~Author Unknown~

INTRODUCTION

As of today, there are a total of nineteen (19) employees based out of the Kyle Yard. Our building is located one mile south of Kyle on BIA 4. The supervisor of the Heavy Equipment, Water & Sewer and Maintenance – Special Projects departments is Robin Condon. Mr. Condon started with O.S.L.H. in June of 1998. His assistant is Tonia Young, who started with O.S.L.H. in October of 2008. With Mr. Condon's hard work, dedication and perseverance, he earned the supervisor's promotion. He brought with him a wealth of knowledge and experience in the fields of plumbing, concrete work and carpentry.

Therefore, all departments were developed with the intention of making O.S.L.H more self-sufficient and self-reliant. Also, we work on an emergency basis with flexibility in mind. Our service area consists of all districts within the boundaries of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. We are not designed to serve one particular district. Our crew has the skill set to building a house from the foundation to the roof and everything in between. They also have the knowledge and experience to install the infrastructure of residential homes.

Thus, allowing us to assist in maintaining units that have depreciated over time, assist with building homeownerships and partial renovations on low rents owned by O.S.L.H.



Brown's Site: Arlen Ferguson in bobcat,
Lowry Black Bear and Colyn Condon.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The Heavy Equipment department consists of: Colyn Condon, Archie Red Owl, Arlen Ferguson, Antonio "Tony" Hernandez, Owen Ferguson and Raymond Bush.

With productivity in mind and teamwork to hold us up. We were able to complete a number of different projects throughout the reservation.

One job in particular, was during the catastrophic blizzard that hit the town of Wanblee (Eagle Nest District) back in November of 2008. Our department played a major role in getting roads opened up, people dug out of their snow drifted homes to seek temporary relief, due to a lack of food, water and electricity. These families were able to seek adequate shelter at a nearby school. The town was out of electricity and water for nearly two weeks. We were able to use our machinery and equipment to assist in the cleanup of the blizzard's aftermath. But, our job did not stop there. We have done concrete work, such as installing, excavating and backfilling on basements that needed to be repaired or built, due to aging, improper maintenance of homes or new development.

Furthermore, we are in the process of crossing training employees in the Heavy Equipment and Water & Sewer departments. This allows us to be more efficient and effective when we are working with a limited time schedule and man power.

However, this leads to the next subject of, “How to Properly Backfill a Basement”. When backfilling a basement, make sure that the basement walls are braced up. The soil needs to cure for approximately ten (10) days before you start to apply the foundation coating. The foundation coating needs to cure for at least 24 hours after application. Then, start soil backfilling with a 16” lift. Spread soil and pack with wackers. Repeat process two times. Add another 16” lift till you reach the top of the ground grade. Pack and add an additional 4” – 6” of topsoil so there will be a slope for a runoff.



Dan & Jane Rodriguez Unit: Willie Ferguson, Tim Lone Elk and Arlen Ferguson.

It is important that basement backfilling be done properly. Negligence can lead to expensive and unnecessary repairs if not done improper the first time. Loosely backfilling basements, such as, pushing all the soil in at one time and packing on the surface causes the soil to settle quickly because of the weather elements and time. Some signs of improper backfilling are water and mud puddles near the foundation. This leads to foundation and footing damages, weakening of walls and abnormal setting.

Areas with high water tables need to have the foundations treated with waterproofing, rubber membranes and runoff tile. The runoff tile is buried at the bottom of footers, which allows water to be carried away from the foundation.

Upcoming projects include the completion of two full basements and one crawl space on the eastern part of the reservation.



Replacing a septic tank in Martin: Archie Red Owl (back) and Tony Hernandez (front).

WATER & SEWER

The Water & Sewer department consists of: Raymond Bush, Owen Ferguson, Archie Red Owl and Antonio “Tony” Hernandez. Employees from all three departments have the experience and skill set to work together on different jobs.

So far this year, we have installed and/or rebuilt eight drain fields in various districts on the reservation. We installed one septic tank in Martin and have had numerous calls for septic tanks to be pumped out.

While we are on the subject of pumping septic tanks, please take into consideration that liquids in a septic tank does not necessarily mean that it is full. Unless, the waste water is seeping out of the ground and posing health hazards. The liquids are very essential when properly pumping a septic tank. The liquids are used to remove solid when back flushing a tank. Back flushing is a process where the liquids are sucked into the pumper truck and release back into the tank with high pressure. The liquids break up the solids and are sucked back into the pumper truck. This process is repeated one to three times, depending on how full the tank is. If back flushing does not solve the sewer backup issue then there could be possible problems in the sewer lines or drain field. It is important to have your sewer lines augured with the proper ends attached to the augur machine, prior to having the septic tank pumped.

From here on out, we will be focusing on repairing 19 drain fields before the end of the year. Each district will be required to submit two unit numbers that need to have their drain fields replaced. This is made possible through the stimulus funding that housing received this year.

Laundry Detergent: Liquid vs. Powder

Liquid dissolves easier in the septic tank and drain field. **Powder** does not dissolve as easily as liquid does. It leaves a crusty residue in the septic tank and drain fields, which increases the chances of having future sewer problems.

How to Care for your Drain Fields:

- Do not allow the weeds or grass to get more than 2' tall. This decreases the natural evaporation of moisture in the drain field.
- Do not drive over or park any vehicles on drain field. This may damage the bio-chambers and the waste water will not flow properly.
- Do not plant any trees or shrubs on or near your drain field.



MAINTENANCE – SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Maintenance – Special Projects department consist of: Leonard “Willy” Ferguson, James Iron Hawk, Darrell Lister, Tim Lone Elk, Elwin Brave Heart, Lowry Black Bear, Adam Clifford, Brian “Shawn” Rowland, Arlen Ferguson and Colyn Condon.

This crew is currently responsible for doing partial renovations on move units and anything else that come up. Currently we are working on two units in the Wakpamni District: Cindy Plenty Arrows and Annie Brings Him Back. This year we completed partial renovatons on two move units belonging to Dan and Jane Rodriquez in Wakpamni and the other for Corrina Apple in Manderson. We also completed a basement for an Ellsworth Unit that belongs to Frieda Brown, which is located south of Porcupine.



Also, the crew has started on a gutter and downspout project. We will be working in all nine districts, replacing gutter and downspouts on some, not all, low rents units. Again this was made possible through the stimulus funding that O.S.L.H. received this year.



Even though it may not seem important to have gutters and downspouts on homes, it is very essential to have them. Gutters allow moisture to run away from the house, which reduces the chance of erosion and deterioration of foundations and sidewalks. Trees and shrubs need to be planted at least 20 feet from the house. They are beautiful to have around your house, but the roots can damage your basement walls, lift sidewalks and cause abnormal settling of decking and stairs.

Another project we just completed was a garden project, where we went and tilled a 60'x80' area that was picked by the tenants and fenced them off, as requested. The seeds were provided as well.



WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR NEW ASSIGNMENTS!

If you would like to contact our office; we are here Monday thru Friday, from 8:00am to 4:30pm. Our phone number is 455-2655, fax number is 455-2669 and email address is oslh.he.ws@gmail.com.