Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Proposed regulations for the Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Program (HIP) have been published in the Federal Register, it was announced today.

"This Bureau program," commissioner Morris Thompson said, "complements the programs of other Federal housing agencies. Thousands of Indian families are living in substandard homes or homes needing repairs. This program provides assistance when other resources are not available."

Grants up to $10,000 to finance repairs, renovation or enlargement can be made for dwellings which can economically re brought to standard condition. For dwellings which cannot re brought to standard condition, but need work to reduce safety or health hazards and improve livability, grants up to $2,000 can be made. Repairs to such non-standard housing are made only as a stop-gap measure to carry a family over until standard housing is available.

The program also helps needy Indian families meet housing needs by providing grants to make them eligible for housing loans from tribal, Federal, or other credit sources. These grants ordinarily provide required down payment funds. They are limited to the amount required to secure the loan or $5,000, whichever is less.

Under certain conditions, when there is no prospect of standard housing being financed from other sources, the program can also provide grants for financing for new housing.

Only Indians are eligible for assistance and priority is given to families based on need in relation to income, family size and the unavailability of other housing assistance. Applications for assistance must be approved by the tribe being served.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1975, approximately $10 million has been appropriated. Since the beginning of the program in 1967 about 24,000 housing units have been repaired or renovated and some 3,500 new houses constructed.