

DigDeep's 'Suitcase Home Water System' Named a Finalist in Fast Company's 2021 Innovation by Design Awards

The 'Suitcase' Home Water System, created by the Navajo field staff of human rights nonprofit DigDeep, delivers life-saving water during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, September 22, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 'Suitcase' Home Water System, created by the Navajo field staff of human rights nonprofit [DigDeep](#), has been honored in Fast Company's 2021 Innovation by Design Awards as a Finalist in the Social Good category.

Water and Solar Technicians from DigDeep's [Navajo Water Project](#) invented the '[Suitcase System](#)' during the COVID-19 pandemic, to deliver life-saving clean water to residents across the Navajo Nation. Over 30% of people there live without running water at home, which contributed to the rapid spread of COVID-19. DigDeep's team had been working on the ground since 2015 to install running water in remote homes using their solar-powered, off-grid 'Home Water System' – but had to halt in-home installations during the pandemic to safeguard the health of their team members and clients.

"After halting in-home installations, we lost our coworker and friend, Ernest, to the virus," says Cindy Howe, Navajo Water Project Manager. "When he got sick, he told us to keep going. Our neighbors still need water, now more than ever. Inspired by Ernest, we got creative about how to redesign our Home Water Systems to find a way to install fresh water supplies without entering the home itself. Water is life."

The Suitcase System is engineered for zero contact installation and to withstand the desert extremes: high temperature days and sub-zero nights. Like DigDeep's traditional Home Water System, the Suitcase connects to a 1200-gallon underground water tank buried outside the home, which is refilled with fresh water from DigDeep's network of water trucks. The pump, filter, and solar components are protected inside the 'Suitcase' box, which dispenses water from a spigot. Instead of traveling miles by car or on foot to collect drinking water, residents now have access to running water just steps from their door.

As soon as it's safe to resume in-home construction, these 100 units will be moved inside and attached to sinks and water heaters, effectively transforming the temporary 'Suitcase System' into a full, solar-powered Home Water System.

“Design is not just a beauty contest,” said Stephanie Mehta, editor-in-chief of Fast Company. “It’s something that can change the world and create solutions in a time when we face pressing global issues such as systemic racism, climate change, and a global pandemic.”

The 10th anniversary of the awards recognize people, teams, and companies that transform society through design. One of the most sought-after design awards in the industry, Innovation by Design is the only competition to honor creative work at the intersection of design, business, and innovation. Entries were judged on the key ingredients of innovation: functionality, originality, beauty, sustainability, user insight, cultural impact, and business impact.

Winners, finalists, and honorable mentions are featured online and in the October 2021 issue of Fast Company magazine, on newsstands September 28, 2021.

To see DigDeep’s Suitcase Home Water System and the complete list, go to: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90667095/social-good-innovation-by-design-2021>. To watch a short video on the design and impact of DigDeep’s Suitcase Home Water System, visit: navajowaterproject.org/suitcase.

ABOUT DIGDEEP:

DigDeep is a human rights nonprofit working to ensure that every American has access to clean, running water. DigDeep is the winner of the 2018 US Water Prize for its Navajo Water Project, which has installed water systems inside the homes of hundreds of Indigenous families across New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. In July 2020, DigDeep launched the Appalachia Water Project, addressing the water crisis there beginning with McDowell County, West Virginia. DigDeep is also the co-author of the ‘Closing the Water Access Gap in the United States’ Report, a national study released in November 2019 that revealed that over 2.2 million Americans are currently living without a tap or toilet at home. For more information, please visit digdeep.org or navajowaterproject.org or appalachiawaterproject.org, and follow on Twitter (@DigDeepH2O), Facebook and Instagram (@DigDeepWater).

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ABOUT FAST COMPANY

Fast Company is the only media brand fully dedicated to the vital intersection of business, innovation, and design, engaging the most influential leaders, companies, and thinkers on the future of business. The editor-in-chief is Stephanie Mehta. Headquartered in New York City, Fast Company is published by Mansueto Ventures LLC, along with sister publication, Inc., and can be found online at fastcompany.com.

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