Alaska Capacity Development Program Report for State Fiscal Year 2022

September 2022

Mike Dunleavy, Governor
Kevin Meyer, Lieutenant Governor
Jason W. Brune, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation

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Table of Contents

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Introduction

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is the designated State primacy agency for the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) implementation. Within DEC, the Capacity Development and Operator Certification (CDOC) Program is responsible for implementing capacity building efforts statewide.

The following annual capacity development implementation report describes the program's efforts during State Fiscal Year 2022 (SFY22) (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). This report contains all the required United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reporting elements.

The Alaska Capacity Development Program is funded using a portion of the Local Assistance set-aside from the annual Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Federal Capitalization Grant.

EPA Reporting Criteria

The following information addresses the status of new and existing system capacity development strategies crafted, adopted, and implemented by the State of Alaska. These strategies ensure that newly proposed water systems and existing water systems have the technical, managerial, and financial capacity to achieve and maintain compliance with federal regulations.

New Systems Program: Annual Reporting Criteria

1. ***Has the State's legal authority (statutes/regulations) to implement the New Systems Program changed within the previous reporting year? If so, please explain and identify how this has affected or impacted the implementation of the New Systems Program (additional documentation, such as an Attorney General (AG) statement or a statement from a delegated department attorney, may be required.) If not, no additional information on legal authority is necessary.***

   No.

2. ***Have there been any modifications to the State's control points? If so, describe the modifications and any impacts these modifications have had on implementation of the New Systems program. If not, no additional information on control points is necessary.***

   No.

3. ***List new systems (PWSID & Name) in the State within the past three years, and indicate whether those systems have been on any of the annual Enforcement Tracking Tool (ETT) lists (as generated annually by EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance).***

   Please see Appendix A.

Existing Systems Strategy

1. ***In referencing the State's approved existing systems strategy, which programs, tools, and/or activities were used, and how did each assist existing PWS's in acquiring and maintaining TMF capacity? Discuss the target audience these activities have been directed towards.***

The CDOC Program is responsible for enacting the State's existing systems strategy. During SFY22, the CDOC Program utilized the following tools and initiatives to assist existing public water systems (PWSs) acquire and maintain technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity.

Operations and Maintenance Best Practices Score (Best Practices)

The Operations and Maintenance Best Practices score is a tool used to assess the operations and maintenance capacity of rural water utilities. Utilities are scored biannually on technical, managerial, and financial categories comprised of nine criteria. The scoring criteria is included in Appendix B.

The Best Practices score is used to determine the priority of sanitation projects proposed for funding. For some funding sources, the Best Practices score determines eligibility. In other instances, the Best Practices score is used as part of the larger project scoring criteria.

Access to these funding sources incentivizes rural communities to acquire and maintain TMF capacity. Communities are encouraged to actively work with technical assistance providers and agency staff to improve system capacity, and by extension, their Best Practices score. A number of resources, such as sample preventative maintenance plans and financial reports, operator trainings, management and financial trainings, and assistance with QuickBooks and taxes are offered by the State to assist utilities with their Best Practices scores.

Public Outreach

CDOC works to build capacity through public outreach and formal presentations at statewide professional conferences, including the Alaska Rural Water Association (ARWA) Annual Conference and the Alaska Water Wastewater Management Association (AWWMA) Annual Conference. CDOC Program staff regularly deliver formal presentations at these conferences. The primary audience at these presentations are typically PWS owners/operators and design engineers. CDOC staff gave a virtual presentation at the ARWA Conference and an in-person presentation at the AWWMA Conference.

In SFY20, CDOC worked with the Juneau School District's Career and Technical Education Coordinator on an initiative to introduce high school students to potential careers in the water and wastewater industries. While program staff had planned to present to students, due to COVID-19, this initiative was postponed. CDOC anticipates renewing this outreach effort during SFY23.

Community Calendars

To support rural communities and utilities, the CDOC Program, in coordination with the Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program, created a 2022 Monthly Calendar as a resource. The calendar contains important reminders each month for the water plant, clerk, and bookkeeper staff, such as deadlines for sampling, preventative maintenance reports, taxes, etc. During SFY22, two copies of

the calendar were mailed out to each rural community, as well as to partnering agencies and technical assistance providers.

Welcome Packets for New Rural Utility Operators and Managers

Water systems in rural communities suffer from frequent turnover in utility management and operators. Due to this frequent turnover, the utility staff and operators may not be aware of the technical, managerial, and financial resources available to them. The CDOC Program created a "welcome packet" for new utility operators and managers that provides a summary of the services available from the various state agencies and regional health corporations and their contact information (see Appendix D). Each welcome packet will be specific to the community that is receiving it. The welcome packets will be distributed starting for the first time in SFY23.

Small Untreated and Small Treated Water Systems Training Courses

Small untreated (SU) and small treated (ST) water systems are community or non-transient non-community water systems that serve fewer than 500 people, contain fewer than 100 service connections, and either add no chemicals or one chemical for treatment, respectively. To be eligible for certification, an operator must pass the certification exam and either meet the experience requirement for certification or complete a department-approved course. The department-approved courses that are currently administered as correspondence courses use manuals developed in 2002. From 2004 to 2019, online versions of the course were available and were most recently hosted by the water/wastewater program at the University of Alaska, Southeast (UAS) in Sitka; however, the UAS program was eliminated, and along with it, the SU and ST online courses.

In the spring of 2020, OpCert solicited proposals for the development of a small untreated and small treated online training course, study modules, and consolidation of the small untreated manual and the small treated manual into one single manual. The intent is to "refresh" the manual and make online courses available again. The contract ended in SFY22, and CDOC is in the final stages of reviewing and deploying the online training and manual.

American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water System Operations (WSO) Guidebooks

The CDOC Program purchased AWWA WSO Water Treatment Grades 1 and 2 manuals and Certification Exam Prep books in order to provide additional resources to operators statewide. Operators who have taken and failed certification exams are prioritized and provided these resources free of charge.

Water System Excellence Award Program

This Water System Excellence Award Program aims to increase the visibility of systems and operators who have demonstrated their commitment to providing safe drinking water, as community appreciation is essential to maintaining TMF capacity. By increasing visibility, CDOC hopes that the positive recognition will contribute to employee retention and community support and encourage improvements in systems that are not currently recognized.

The Water System Excellence Award (WSEA) is a joint venture between CDOC and DWP. The WSEA recognizes water systems that achieve outstanding performance in the operation of their systems. The WSEA has two tiers, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor. To earn the Ursa Major award, a water system must maintain four quarters of operator certification compliance with no open, unresolved, or incurred drinking water violations during the award year. To earn the Ursa Minor award, a water system must maintain four quarters of operator certification compliance with no more than one open, unresolved, or incurred drinking water violation during the award year, or maintain three quarters of operator certification compliance with no open, unresolved, or incurred drinking water violations during the award year. For the 2021 award year, 277 water systems were awarded Ursa Major and 92 were awarded Ursa Minor. For award examples please see Appendix C.

System-Specific Training and Certification (S^2TC) Program

The S^2TC Program involves the creation of 13 training "modules" for different treatment and distribution components of a PWS. Once completed, these modules will serve as the basis for an alternative approach to certification exams that will only be offered to operators who are effectively operating and maintaining a utility but have repeatedly failed certification exams.

Operators who are determined to be eligible for the S^2TC Program will be required to prepare and submit a facility description to determine which modules will be administered. Each module is intended to educate and test an operator on information that is specific to the technology used in his/her utility. In these limited cases, successful completion of the S^2TC Program will replace the requirement of passing the standard certification exam and certification will be specific to that system. The training modules will also be made available as study materials for all operators.

Previous reports discussed efforts to develop 13 training modules and certification exams that will be used to train and certify operators of systems that are chronically out of compliance with the operator certification requirements. As reported in the SFY22 annual report, OpCert, in collaboration with the RMW Program, finalized five modules in preparation for S^2TC Program beta testing; however, the modules are still under final review. Two communities, both of which have long-standing operators who have not passed certification exams despite repeated attempts, have been identified for beta testing during SFY23. Efforts will be made to develop additional modules for beta testing during SFY23.

Alaska continues to employ the collaborative and flexible approach to providing technical assistance discussed in the 2020 Interim Capacity Development Strategy. While the CDOC Program is responsible for implementing the existing systems strategy, other state programs also offer capacity assistance. CDOC works closely with these programs to ensure that existing PWSs acquire and maintain TMF capacity.

Drinking Water (DW) Program

The DW Program is responsible for enforcing federal health-based standards, established by the EPA as required by SDWA. The DW Program utilizes the EPA's quarterly Enforcement Targeting Tool (ETT) to focus attention on those PWSs that, based on the severity and frequency of their violations, are defined as significantly out of compliance with the SDWA requirements. During SFY22, ETT scores

were used as indicators of capacity and to prioritize compliance assistance and enforcement for PWSs statewide. Currently, the DW Program and other technical assistance providers work with communities who receive an ETT score of 11 or higher to determine what steps are needed to bring a system back into compliance.

The DW Program also conducts sanitary surveys. Sanitary survey inspections help PWSs strengthen operational and managerial processes, as well as strengthen infrastructure, by identifying barriers or obstacles that prevent systems from doing their best to provide safe drinking water to their customers; providing operator education, technical assistance and training; increasing communication between the PWS staff and DW Program; and identifying and correcting deficiencies, thereby reducing risks to public health.

To assist in the technical capacity of water systems, the DW Program conducts plan reviews of new public water systems and modifications to existing public water systems to ensure that proposed designs meet current engineering standards and will be able to operate within the requirements of the drinking water quality regulations.

State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program

The SRF Program offers low-interest loans from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) to eligible PWS owners for infrastructure improvements. These loans assist PWS owners with financing the infrastructure upgrades needed to protect public health and achieve and maintain compliance with SDWA requirements. All SRF Program borrowers for drinking water projects are required to demonstrate sufficient TMF capacity to operate the system in compliance with state and federal regulations. If a utility is non-compliant, an assessment is made to determine if the proposed SRF-financed project will bring the system into compliance, thus assisting the system in acquiring a greater capacity.

The target audience for DWSRF loans has historically included municipally owned water systems serving mid to large size communities. In order to provide funding assistance to small, rural Alaska communities, the SRF Program initiated efforts to develop a Micro Loan program in SFY19. The Micro Loan program finances projects that would otherwise be challenging to fund through traditional grant programs, or to finance aspects of larger grant-funded projects that are ineligible through a grant.

Rural municipalities may be eligible to receive a low-interest Micro Loan of up to $500,000 with a maximum of 90% principal forgiveness. The level of principal forgiveness depends on the affordability of the utility's user rates as well as the community's Operations and Maintenance Best Practices score. In addition to the direct support for technical capacity provided by infrastructure upgrades, the Micro Loans provide an incentive for PWSs to acquire and/or maintain TMF capacity. By relating the amount of principal forgiveness to the Best Practices score, an incentive is provided for community's to develop and maintain TMF capacity: the higher the Best Practices score, the higher the principal forgiveness.

In SFY22, the SRF Program issued two Micro Loans. The Micro Loan to the City of Togiak provided financial assistance to design and construct a heat recovery system for the small PWS serving a

population of 870 residents. This project transfers waste heat from the power plant to serve the water treatment plant with an intent of reducing fuel use by the water treatment plant by approximately 7,795 gallons of fuel annually. The Micro Loan to the City of Hoonah allowed the system to construct an extension to improve water circulation in the distribution system and also provided piped service to eleven residential lots that were not previously served. Three Micro Loan Projects are listed in the SFY23 Project Priority List for Unalakleet, Seldovia and Togiak. The SRF Program will be working closely with the communities to issue the loan agreements in SFY23.

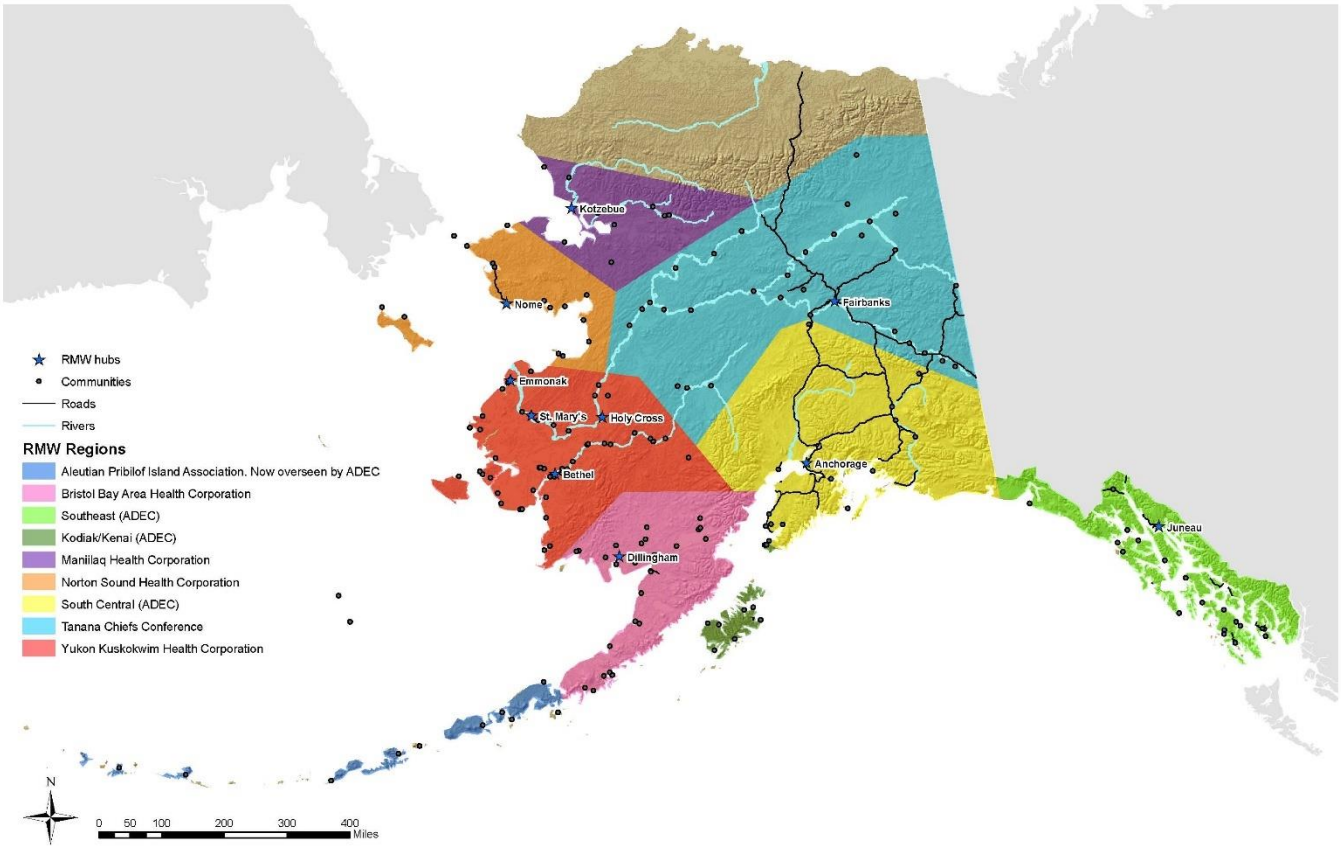
Village Safe Water (VSW) Program

The VSW Program, within the DEC Division of Water, works with rural communities to develop sustainable sanitation facilities. VSW provides TMF capacity assistance by administering approximately $70 million in grants to Alaska Native villages for water studies, design, and construction projects; grant administration to ensure appropriate and effective use of grant funds; and project oversight, monitoring, and control.

Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program

The RMW Program is a partnership between DEC and five regional health corporations to assist water systems in building and maintaining technical capacity by providing a number of services to operators in nearly 200 rural Alaskan communities. During SFY22, the RMW Program continued its work of providing capacity assistance through on-site, on-the-job training in the proper operation and maintenance of water systems and compliance with state and federal regulations.

Organization	No. of RMWs	Region Served	Number of Communities
DEC	3	Southeast Alaska Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Kodiak Island Kenai Peninsula	72
Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation	1	Bristol Bay	21
Maniilaq Association	1	Kotzebue Region	10
Norton Sound Health Corporation	2	Norton Sound	15
Tanana Chiefs Conference	3	Interior Alaska	28
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation	5	Yukon Kuskokwim Delta	51



RMWs offer targeted, system specific assistance to operators, allowing them to improve the sampling, troubleshooting, maintenance, and mechanical repair skills needed to adequately run a community's utility. RMWs work with operators to develop and revise operations and maintenance (O&M) and preventive maintenance plans, train them in accurate record keeping, and prepare the operation, maintenance, sampling, monitoring, and testing reports that are presented to the governing body concerning the status of the utility.

Further capacity building efforts include informing local government officials of RMW findings and recommendations concerning operation and maintenance requirements and costs, plant O&M issues, and operator training needs.

In addition to the one-on-one and local response, RMWs facilitate regional training workshops for operators in their region and provide classroom instruction to prepare operators for State certification exams.

Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program

The RUBA Program is part of the Division of Community and Regional Affairs in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. There are 11 Local Government Specialist in the RUBA Program who assist rural water utility providers with their financial and managerial capacity and are located in offices in Anchorage, Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kotzebue,

and Nome. During SFY22, RUBA staff worked alongside community members to identify strengths and weaknesses in their utility management and to develop plans to improve operations.

RUBA trainings are also provided in different regions across Alaska on a cost reimbursable basis. The 32-hour classes offered are: Introduction to Utility Management, Personnel Management, Financial Management, Organizational Management, Planning Management, Operations Management, Elected Officials and Utility Clerk. These courses provide utility staff with the principles and practices necessary to manage small water and wastewater facilities in rural Alaska. During SFY22, RUBA conducted six classroom and seven online management related trainings.

Additionally, RUBA staff play a key role in Best Practices implementation and scoring. Staff collect and review the documentation required for scoring and actively work with communities to improve scores upon request.

2. ***Based on the existing system strategy, how has the State continued to identify systems in need of capacity development assistance?***

The State continues to work collaboratively and to use a variety of indicators for identifying existing systems in need of capacity development assistance.

Statewide, compliance data is a strong indicator of systems in need. As discussed in the previous section, sanitary survey deficiencies and an ETT score of 11 or greater are used to identify and prioritize systems for capacity assistance. Additionally, the CDOC Program maintains a quarterly schedule of analyzing and ranking the operator certification compliance status of systems; systems that rank the highest (based on factors such as system type, population served, source water, and system classification) are targeted for capacity assistance.

For rural systems, the Best Practices score is a comprehensive measure of capacity that is updated biannually. Communities with scores below minimum funding thresholds are prioritized for technical assistance from several programs, including the RMW and RUBA programs.

Additionally, CDOC staff coordinate and facilitate annual regional meetings that bring together representatives of all regulatory programs and technical assistance providers that address rural sanitation needs. Participants include the RMW, CDOC, VSW, DW, Wastewater, Solid Waste and RUBA program staff, along with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium staff and environmental health staff from regional health corporations. At these meetings, participants review and evaluate the current capacity status of all rural communities within a region in an effort to ensure that no community is unintentionally neglected. The goal of these meetings is to coordinate effective and consistent communication between the agencies providing assistance to rural communities for their sanitation infrastructure needs, to capture community needs for funding purposes, and to establish interagency collaboration on technical assistance efforts to communities.

Finally, Financial Capacity Assessments are used to determine if a community is eligible for SRF loan funds. Different aspects, such as operating income, cash flows, debt, and affordability, are reviewed to assess the overall financial health of a community and can identify systems in need of capacity development assistance.

3. During the reporting period, if statewide PWS capacity concerns or capacity development needs (TMF) have been identified, what was the State's approach in offering and/or providing assistance?

DEC's VSW Program administers the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that funds planning, design and construction of sanitation improvements in rural Alaskan communities. Prior to construction, recipients of CIP grant funding are required to demonstrate sufficient TMF capacity to operate and maintain their sanitation system in the long term. As discussed above, Best Practices scoring criteria was implemented in 2015 as a method of evaluating capacity. For served communities, where most homes have running water and sewer service, to apply for funding or to be placed on the CIP funding priority list, a minimum total score of 60, must be achieved and maintained to receive construction funding. Underserved/underserved communities, where most homes currently do not have running water and service from either pipes or individual wells and septic systems, must demonstrate a Best Practices score of at least 35 points to be eligible for construction projects to repair or replace core facilities that have exceeded their design life, but maintain the current level of service. A minimum score of 35 points is also required to be eligible for funding for the design of non-core facilities; construction funding for non-core facilities requires a minimum score of 60 points. Eligibility requirements for a CIP application include a Multi-Agency Review Committee approved Preliminary Engineering Report (PER).

During SFY22, a list of communities with approved or ongoing PERs and their current Best Practices scores was compiled. Those communities that were anticipated to apply for CIP funding, but with Best Practices scores below the eligibility threshold, were targeted for additional technical assistance.

During SFY22, work also continued with five communities with sanitation improvement projects on the CIP funding priority list and Best Practices scores below the 60-point threshold. Each of the five communities signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DEC, RUBA and the regional health organization, in which they commit to improving the community's capacity. Under these agreements, each community identified community representatives to work proactively with the technical assistance providers to build capacity. Each MOA is effective throughout the duration of construction on the project, as long as the community participates in monthly meetings and develops an action plan to achieve and maintain the minimum Best Practices score.

Several organizations in Alaska provided technical assistance by way of trainings and conferences. During SFY22, the Alaska Rural Water Association (ARWA) conducted two classroom trainings and a conference, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) conducted four virtual trainings, the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) conducted two classroom trainings, the Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) conducted one classroom training, the Alaska Water Wastewater Management Association (AWWMA) conducted two conferences, and NTL, Alaska, Inc. conducted six classroom trainings.

4. ***If the State performed a review of implementation of the existing systems strategy during the previous year, discuss the review and how findings have been or may be addressed.***

   N/A.

5. ***Did the State make any modifications to the existing system strategy? If so, describe.***

   During SFY22, the CDOC Program submitted an updated Capacity Development Strategy to EPA Region 10 for review. The purpose of this update is to be reflective not only of agency and regulatory changes, including the addition of addressing asset management, but also of an expanded Alaska Capacity Development Program capitalizing on other existing programs that also focus on capacity building efforts. However, the Strategy was returned to CDOC for additional revisions and will be resubmitted by the December 31, 2022 deadline.

   To assist in the development of the updated Capacity Development Strategy, during SFY22 CDOC solicited a contract for the development of a survey to stakeholders to gauge their understanding of capacity development and to better understand their needs. The survey will be disseminated in early SFY23 with data analysis occurring shortly after. The survey results will be used to inform additional updates to the Capacity Development Strategy.

Reporting Period and Submittal Dates

The reporting period for this report is July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022, with a submittal date of no later than September 30, 2022.

Appendix A: New Systems for SFY20-22

PWSID	System Name	PWS Type	Active?	Source	Population	City	Startup Date	FY	ETT	Which List
AK2220488	ALPINE VIEW SUBDIVISION	C	A	GW	50	PALMER	4/10/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2226057	ARKOSE WOODS	C	A	GW	130	PALMER	7/1/2021	FY22	No	N/A
AK2121527	KETCHIKAN WATER, TRUCK 1	C	A	SWP	100	KETCHIKAN	5/11/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2220495	TRAPPER CREEK WATERING POINT	C	A	GW	500	TRAPPER CREEK	3/19/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2220485	VIEW POINTE AT THE RANCH - PHASE 1 & 2	C	A	GW	50	PALMER	10/1/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2392041	CLEAR SPACE FORCE STATION – LRDR	NTNC	A	GW	60	ANDERSON	7/1/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2249245	KENAI REFINERY MODULAR OFFICES	NTNC	A	GW	71	NIKISKI	3/9/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2220499	MSBSD BERYOZOVA SCHOOL - NEW	NTNC	A	GW	76	WASILLA	8/16/2021	FY22	No	N/A
AK2220484	MSBSD FACILITIES DEPARTMENT	NTNC	A	GW	37	WASILLA	7/1/2019	FY20	No	N/A
AK2226055	PALMER LIFEWAYS DAYCARE	NTNC	A	GW	56	PALMER	8/1/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2382101	TCC UPPER TANANA HEALTH CLINIC - TOK	NTNC	A	GW	65	TOK	9/21/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2220496	THREE BEARS CORPORATE OFFICE	NTNC	A	GW	50	WASILLA	2/26/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2330072	AFC TRAILER 25-605	NC	A	SWP	100	DEADHORSE	1/26/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2249253	ALL AMERICAN TRAINING CENTER	NC	A	GW	67	SOLDOTNA	7/1/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2330129	ASRC WATER TANKER #237-037	NC	A	SWP	25	PRUDHOE BAY	1/3/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2330130	ASRC WATER TANKER 237-038	NC	A	SWP	25	PRUDHOE BAY	1/3/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2330131	ASRC WATER TANKER 237-039	NC	A	SWP	25	PRUDHOE BAY	1/3/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2330132	ASRC WATER TANKER 237-040	NC	A	SWP	25	PRUDHOE BAY	1/3/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2220492	BAND OF BROTHERS	NC	A	GW	55	WASILLA	1/1/2020	FY20	No	N/A

PWSID	System Name	PWS Type	Active?	Source	Population	City	Startup Date	FY	ETT	Which List
AK2247694	BELUGA RIVER MAN CAMP	NC	A	GW	41	NIKISKI	4/13/2020	FY20	**Yes**	April 2022 (Nitrate / GWR) - RTC'd -no longer on ETT
AK2249250	COOPER LANDING BREWING	NC	A	GW	46	COOPER LANDING	4/29/2020	FY20	**Yes**	April 2022, (Nitrate/ RTCR) - RTC'd no longer on ETT
AK2295000	COPPER RIVER SUBWAY, INC	NC	A	GW	25	GLENNALLEN	10/22/2021	FY22	No	N/A
AK2392059	DENALI TRI-VALLEY CABINS	NC	A	GW	27	DENALI PARK	3/23/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2226355	FISHHOOK BAR & GRILL	NC	A	GW	31	WASILLA	6/1/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2392114	HEALY BEST ASIAN FOOD TO GO	NC	A	GW	42	HEALY	4/21/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2330118	ICE SERVICES TREATMENT PLANT # 2015	NC	A	SW	349	PRUDHOE BAY	4/6/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2249252	LIFT & SIP CO.	NC	A	GW	60	SOLDOTNA	7/13/2020	FY21	No	N/A
AK2220490	MSB FIRE STATION 6-2	NC	A	GW	47	WASILLA	2/5/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2249251	NIKISKI HARDWARE AND OLDE GOAT CAFE	NC	A	GW	55	NIKISKI	6/22/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2330136	NSB SA-10 TRUCK 19522	NC	A	SWP	26	PRUDHOE BAY	4/20/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2330137	NSB SA-10 TRUCK 19523	NC	A	SWP	26	PRUDHOE BAY	4/30/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2373047	RUSTIC BLENDS COFFEE	NC	A	GW	80	DELTA JUNCTION	2/24/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2247466	SCENIC VIEW RV PARK	NC	A	GW	50	NINILCHIK	5/20/2021	FY21	No	N/A
AK2249257	SEA SIREN COFFEE	NC	A	GW	104	SOLDOTNA	4/14/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2111544	SKAGWAY BORDER STATION	NC	A	GW	333	SKAGWAY	1/28/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2220491	SOUTH SHORE LLC	NC	A	GW	161	BIG LAKE	4/1/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2221800	SUSITNA BAR & GRILL	NC	A	GW	29	HOUSTON	11/12/2019	FY20	No	N/A
AK2249244	THE BREW INC	NC	A	GW	102	SOLDOTNA	11/5/2019	FY20	No	N/A
AK2244793	THREE BEARS NINILCHIK #55	NC	A	GW	108	NINILCHIK	6/18/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2382119	THREE BEARS ACE HARDWARE STORE #15	NC	A	GW	210	TOK	10/15/2021	FY22	No	N/A
AK2220489	THREE BEARS STORE BIG LAKE	NC	A	GW	420	BIG LAKE	3/9/2020	FY20	No	N/A

PWSID	System Name	PWS Type	Active?	Source	Population	City	Startup Date	FY	ETT	Which List
AK2249260	UBU LANDING SUBDIVISION LOT 1	NC	A	GW	39	SOLDOTNA	6/14/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2226056	VALLEY COUNTRY STORE #3	NC	A	GW	40	PALMER	3/2/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2220505	VALLEY COUNTRY STORE #4	NC	A	GW	40	PALMER	6/3/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2381545	VILLAGE GAS	NC	A	GW	53	TOK	3/27/2020	FY20	No	N/A
AK2218824	WENDY'S OLD SEWARD	NC	A	GW	415	ANCHORAGE	3/22/2022	FY22	No	N/A
AK2330100	WORLEY WATER TANKER #30024	NC	A	SWP	480	DEADHORSE	2/5/2020	FY20	No	N/A

Appendix B: Best Practices Scoring Criteria

	Category	Best Practice	Points	Contacts	Additional Information
Technical	*Operator Certification*	Utility has more than one operator certified to the level of the water system	10	Operator Certification Program	Regulations require that the primary operator of a water system be certified at level equal to the classification of a system. The classification of each water system can be found online at https://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/Water/OpCert/. For scoring purposes, the certification requirements considered will be for Water Treatment unless a system only requires a Water Distribution operator, in which case only Water Distribution certifications will be considered. Operators of Small Treated and Small Untreated systems who hold a Water Treatment certification at any level are considered to be certified to the level of the system. Wastewater Collection and Wastewater Treatment certifications will be considered if a community has a wastewater system but no water system. Systems that do not require a certified operator will receive full points.
		Primary operator is certified to the level of the water system and the backup operator holds some level of certification in water treatment or distribution	7		
		Primary operator is certified to the level of the water system and the backup operator holds no certification or there is no backup operator	5		
		Utility has one or more operators certified at some level in water treatment or distribution	3		
		Utility has no certified operators	0		
	Preventive Maintenance Plan	Utility has a written PM plan; PM is performed on schedule; records of completion are submitted on a quarterly basis and have been verified	25	Remote Maintenance Workers (RMWs)	A Preventive Maintenance Plan is a schedule of maintenance activities necessary for continued operation of the utility. At a minimum, the plan must include those activities required to prevent a loss of service. RMWs are available to assist in developing a PM Plans and training operators in proper maintenance. Utilities seeking 25 points must submit completed PM records to their assigned RMW on a quarterly basis. PM criteria apply to wastewater utilities if there is no public water system. Communities without a public water or wastewater system will receive full points.
		Utility has a written PM plan; performance of PM and record keeping are not consistent	15		
		Utility has no PM plan or performs no PM	0		
	Compliance	Utility had no Monitoring and Reporting violations during the past year	10	Drinking Water Program	Public water systems are required to collect water samples to demonstrate that the water meets drinking water quality standards and is safe for consumers. The Drinking Water Program provides each utility with an annual Monitoring Schedule each year. Sampling is a primary responsibility of the operator and sufficient funds for monitoring must be included in the budget. Communities without a public water system will receive full points.
		Utility had up to five Monitoring and Reporting violation during the past year	5		
		Utility had more than five Monitoring and Reporting violation during the last year	0		
		Total Technical Points	**45**		
Managerial	*Utility Management Training*	A person who holds a position of responsibility for management of the utility has completed a DCRA approved Utility Management course or other utility management training course within the last five years	5	RUBA	This person is not required to have the Utility Manager title, but must have some responsibilities pertaining to the management of the utility. This person must reside within the community and represent the utility, even in instances when the utility is managed by a third party.
	Meetings of the Governing Body	The utility owner's governing body meets routinely consistent with the local ordinance/bylaw requirements and receives a current report from the operator	5	Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA)	Meetings must be held as prescribed by ordinance or by rules and regulations of the governing body, with reasonable exceptions made for unforeseeable circumstances. A written or oral report from the operator or contracted utility manager must be recorded in the meeting minutes.
		The utility owner's governing body meets routinely consistent with the local ordinance/bylaw requirements	2		
		The utility owner's governing body does not meet	0		
		Total Managerial Points	**10**		
Financial	*Budget*	Utility owner and the Utility have each adopted a realistic budget and budget amendments are adopted as needed; Accurate monthly budget reports are prepared and submitted to the governing body	15	RUBA	If the utility is managed or operated by a third party, the utility owner and the contractor must demonstrate appropriate budgeting and financial reporting practices. The utility owner must demonstrate appropriate budgeting for any utility subsidies and for the contracted services. The contracted manager must also demonstrate a realistic budget for the utility. When the utility is managed by a third party, monthly financial reports must be submitted to, and reflected in the meeting minutes of, the utility owner's governing body. Utilities not under contracted management must have a distinct budget for the utility operations in order to achieve the maximum score.
		Either the Utility or the Utility owner has adopted and implemented a budget, the other has not	13		
		Either the Utility or the Utility owner has adopted a budget, but it is not being implemented	10		
		Utility owner and the Utility have not adopted a budget	0		
	Revenue	Utility is collecting revenue sufficient to cover the Utility's operating expenses and to contribute to a repair and replacement account	20	RUBA	To receive full points, the reports must show that sufficient revenues - whether from user fees, explicitly identified subsidies, or a combination of both- are being collected to meet all the utility's associated expenses, and that the utility is budgeting for repair and replacement expenses and/or already has sufficient funds saved to cover foreseeable repair and replacement costs. 'Collection policy' means a set of procedures designed to ensure bills are paid on time and in full, and to collect on past-due payments. Sending customers a bill/statement each month showing the amount owed is not a collection policy. The collection policy must include a statement of action that will be taken if past-due amounts are not received.
		Utility is collecting revenue sufficient to cover expenses	15		
		Utility has a fee schedule and a collection policy that is followed	5		
		Utility has no fee structure or collection policy	0		
	Worker's Compensation Insurance	Utility has had a workers' compensation policy for all employees for the past two years and has a current policy in place	5	RUBA	All employees of the entity which owns the utility must be covered by workers' compensation insurance. In addition, all employees of a third party managing the utility must be covered, if applicable.
		Utility has a current workers' compensation policy in place for all employees	2		
		Utility has no workers' compensation policy	0		
	Payroll Liability Compliance	Utility has no past due tax liabilities and is current with all tax obligations	5	RUBA	This criteria applies to the utility owner, as well as to a third party managing the utility, if applicable. Taxes considered include both Federal and State taxes. A utility representative must sign an IRS tax authorization form for this information to be verified for scoring purposes.
		Utility owes back taxes, but has a signed payment agreement, is current on that agreement, and is up-to-date with all other tax obligations	2		
		Utility is not current with its tax obligations and/or does not have a signed repayment agreement for back taxes owed	0		
		Total Financial Points	**45**		
		Total Points Possible	**100**		

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Appendix C: Water System Excellence Awards

Ursa Major

Water System Excellence Award

The Department of Environmental Conservation recognizes

Eaglecrest Ski Area

for achieving and maintaining stellar compliance with the
Operator Certification Program
&
Drinking Water Program
in
2019

Cindy Christian
Drinking Water Program Manager

Martin Suzuki
Operator Certification Program Manager

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Ursa Minor

Water System Excellence Award

The Department of Environmental Conservation recognizes

Skagway

for achieving and maintaining compliance with the
Operator Certification Program
&
Drinking Water Program
in
2019

Cindy Christian
Drinking Water Program Manager

Martin Suzuki
Operator Certification Program Manager

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Appendix D: Welcome Packet Examples

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Quick Reference Guide for Rural Community Sanitation Utilities

Congratulations on your new position for the City of XXXXX!

As a community leader, you are at the forefront of the effort to protect your community's public health. Managing and operating community water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities is challenging. Utilities must meet the many regulatory requirements that ensure public safety while providing consistent and affordable service to their communities. Thankfully, there are technical assistance providers that are available to assist utility managers and operators!

This guide is intended to provide an overview of the programs and technical assistance providers you can contact for assistance, as well as the responsibilities of your new position. Included is a contact list of your current technical assistance providers, descriptions of how their programs can help you, and important documents from each program. As you read the information about each program you are strongly encouraged to reach out to the contact person listed at the bottom of each page. To begin, read the information sheet about the Department of Environmental Conservation's Drinking Water Program. **Communicating with your DW Program Specialist is critical to providing safe drinking water to your community.** Please read the information about the DW Program and contact your assigned program specialist to ensure that your drinking water system is currently up to date with sampling in compliance.

The most important message of this guide is: reach out for assistance. Technical assistance staff wants to help you be successful!

For questions about this guide please contact:

- Dan DeSloover, Capacity Development and Operator Certification Program
- Phone: 907-465-5145
- Email: dan.desloover@alaska.gov

Contact Information for Technical Assistance Providers

The contacts listed below are assigned to your community and are resources for any questions you may have about your sanitation utilities, from water sampling to financial reporting.
Please see the other side of this page for brief descriptions of how each of these programs can assist you and your community. Contact your technical assistance providers to check in and let them know about your new role with your community's utilities.

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation *dec.alaska.gov*	
Drinking Water Program EPS Name	907-XXX-XXXX Email
Remote Maintenance Worker Program RMW Name	Phone: 907-XXX-XXXX Cell: 907-XXX-XXXX Email
Operator Certification Program EPS Name	907-XXX-XXXX Email
Wastewater Compliance Program EPS Name	907-XXX-XXXX Email
Solid Waste Program EPS Name	907-XXX-XXXX Email
Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development *www.commerce.alaska.gov*	
Rural Utilities Business Advisor Program LGS Name	907-XXX-XXXX Email

Occasionally there are changes to the technical assistance providers assigned to your community. You can always find the most updated list of providers on DEC's website here:
https://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/Water/OpCert/community-water-sewer-improvement-contact-list.xlsx
Or you can scan this QR code to go to the updated contact list:

Brief Descriptions of Technical Assistance Programs

Drinking Water Program
http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/dw.aspx *1-866-959-7656*

How they can help:
- Provide monitoring, compliance, and enforcement information on public drinking water systems.
- Respond to complaints of contamination in public drinking water sources. Also respond to waterborne disease outbreaks.
- Approve new public water systems and modifications to existing systems.

Note: Always contact your Drinking Water contact person BEFORE making any modifications to your water system.

Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program
http://dec.alaska.gov/water/remote-maintenance/

How they can help:
- Provide on-site and remote training and technical assistance to local water and wastewater operators in rural communities.
- Provide immediate response to emergency situations that threaten or impact community water and wastewater facilities.
- Provide regional classroom training for utility operators in the region.
- Maintain an inventory of emergency repair equipment available to loan to communities.

Operator Certification Program
http://dec.alaska.gov/water/operator-certification *907-465-1139*

How they can help:
- Provide information about water and wastewater system classifications, operator certification requirements, certificate renewals, and continuing education.
- Notify operators about opportunities for training and certification exams and assist with resources to improve test scores.
- Connect communities to additional resources and appropriate contacts.

Wastewater Compliance Program
http://dec.alaska.gov/water/wastewater/

How they can help:
- Answer questions about a community's wastewater discharge permits and authorizations.
- Provide guidance on the required sampling and reporting for wastewater discharge.
- Provide technical and compliance assistance to operators when there has been a violation of a wastewater discharge permit or authorization.

Solid Waste Program
https://dec.alaska.gov/eh/solid-waste *907-269-7802*

How they can help:
- Assist with planning and permitting for current and future solid waste facilities.
- Provide training and technical assistance for solid waste operators.
- Produce tracking tools and guidance documents to help communities manage their solid waste.

Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/RuralUtilityBusinessAdvisorProgramRUBA.aspx

How they can help:
- Provide managerial and financial training and communities with utility business planning.
- Provide on-site training and assistance on utility management and finances.
- Provide regional-based utility management courses.
- Develop new management tools to assist water and wastewater utilities.

ADEC Drinking Water (DW) Program

What is the DW Program?

The Drinking Water Program is a part of the Department of Environmental Conservation's Environmental Health Division. The program responsible for ensuring that public water utilities supply safe drinking water that meets federal health standards. DW Program staff also provides guidance to water utility owners and operators on the design, installation, operation, and maintenance of drinking water facilities.

How does the DW Program assist your community?

- By requiring that public water utility owners and operators regularly sample drinking water for regulated contaminants.
- By reviewing sample test results and specifying corrective measures when contamination has occurred.
- By reviewing and approving the design of new public water systems and modifications to existing systems.
- By responding to complaints of contamination and to waterborne disease outbreaks.
- By implementing strategies to assist utilities in providing cost-effective safe drinking water.

What are your next steps for learning about the DW Program?

The DW Program produces a yearly **monitoring summary** that describes all of the sampling, inspection, and reporting requirements for your system. It is very important that utility managers and operators are familiar with the monitoring summary and the timeframes for sampling. **Proper sampling is required by federal and state law and ensures that your drinking water is safe for your community to use.** Please review the attached copy of your system's current monitoring summary and make sure all utility staff understand what is required. If you have any questions at all about the monitoring summary, please contact your DW Program specialist.

When should you contact the DW Program?

- When your utility has a new administrator or operator, they should contact the DW Program to introduce themselves and receive guidance on sampling and compliance.
- Your operators should follow your utility's **monitoring summary** to regularly sample and send the results to the DW Program.
- **Before making any modifications to your drinking water system, no matter how minor.**
- If there has been a failure or suspected contamination of your drinking water system.

How to contact the DW Program:

The DW Specialist assigned to your community is XXXXX.

- Phone: 907-XXX
- Email: XXXXX

Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program

What is the RMW Program?

The RMW Program is a partnership between the Department of Environmental Conservation and five regional health corporations to provide onsite training and technical assistance to operators in rural communities. Your assigned Remote Maintenance Worker will provide assistance to your water and sewer operators, with the aim of building up their skills and preventing failures of utility systems.

How can the RMW Program assist your community?

- By providing on-site and remote training and assistance to your water and sewer operators.
- By providing immediate response to emergency situations that threaten community water and sewer facilities.
- By assisting your operators in creating and following a Preventive Maintenance (PM) Plan, which is an important tool for tracking system maintenance.
- By providing regional classroom training for area utility operators.
- By maintaining an inventory of emergency repair equipment for loan to communities.

What are your next steps for learning about the RMW Program?

If your utility doesn't have one already, your assigned RMW will help you create a **Preventive Maintenance (PM) Plan**. A PM Plan is a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual operational checklist that will help your operators keep track of the maintenance requirements for your systems. Please see the attached example PM Plan and contact your RMW to discuss creating a PM Plan for your utility. Once you've created your own PM Plan you can add a copy to this packet for easy reference.

When should you contact the RMW Program?

- Any time there is a new operator or utility manger.
- Any time utility operators need advice, assistance, or training with the utility systems.
- In the event of a system emergency, system management or operators should contact the RMW immediately to determine if the RMW can provide assistance.
- At least quarterly, the operators should provide PM Plan updates to the RMW.

How to contact your RMW:

Your community is served by the XXXX.
Your RMW is XXXXX.

- Phone: 907-XXX
- Cell: 907-XXX
- Email: XXXXX

Operator Certification (OpCert) Program

What is the OpCert Program?

The Operator Certification is a part of the Department of Environmental Conservation's Water Division. The program is responsible for ensuring that water and wastewater operators are properly trained and certified. The OpCert Program classifies water and wastewater systems, administers certification exams to operators, and coordinates trainings.

How can the OpCert Program assist your community?

- By providing information about the classification levels of your water and wastewater systems.
- By providing information about trainings and training materials for your utility operators.
- By arranging certification exams for operators in your community.
- By assisting your operators in remaining current in their certifications by earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) every three years.

What are your next steps for learning about the OpCert Program?

Your water and wastewater systems are required to have operators who are certified at the correct level. Please review the attached **system classification form** for more information about how your systems are classified and the current certification level of your operators. If your operators are not certified to the correct level, contact the OpCert Program to discuss the next steps they can take towards proper certification. Regardless of their level of certification, you should also contact the OpCert Program to ensure that your operators take the necessary continuing training to keep their certifications active.

When should you contact the OpCert Program?

- When there is a new operator or utility manager.
- When an operator needs to take training.
- When an operator needs to take a certification exam or needs exam study materials.
- When an operator who holds certification needs continuing education to keep their certification current.
- When changes have been made to your treatment systems.

How to contact the OpCert Program:

The OpCert Specialist assigned to your community is XXXXX.

- Phone: 907-XXX
- Email: XXXXX

Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program

What is the RUBA Program?

The Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program is part of the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development. RUBA's goal is to support rural communities in their efforts to build and maintain managerial and financial capacity necessary to safely operate and maintain their water and wastewater utilities. The program offers capacity building assistance to the governing bodies and staff of rural utilities throughout the state. The RUBA Program is staffed by Local Government Specialists (LGS), and each community is assigned to an LGS.

How can the RUBA Program assist your community?

- By providing onsite and remote managerial and financial training and technical assistance to utility managers and staff, including training with bookkeeping and budgeting.
- By providing a series of eight management trainings to utility managers and staff, including trainings for clerks, elected officials, and bookkeepers.
- By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of your current utility management plan and offering guidance on making improvements.
- By providing expert QuickBooks onsite assistance, training, and access to a help line.
- By partnering with the Department of Environmental Conservation on the Operations and Maintenance Best Practices to assess the capacity of rural water and wastewater utilities.

What are your next steps for learning about RUBA?

RUBA can assist you with your financial and organizational reporting. Please review the attached **sample financial report and sample meeting minutes** to see the type of documentation that is important to keep for your utility. Your LGS will identify areas that need improvement and help you develop strategies to improve your managerial and financial capacity. Please contact them to make sure your community is up to date with your documentation and has sustainable management and financial plans.

When should you contact the RUBA Program?

- Any time there is a new utility manger, clerk, board member, or bookkeeper.
- When your utility needs assistance with financial or managerial issues, including bookkeeping, budgeting, utility board policies, personnel management, or elections.
- To improve your Best Practices score, utility managers should send monthly financial reports to RUBA staff.

How to contact RUBA:

Your Local Government Specialist is XXXXX.

- Phone: 907-XXX
- Email: XXXXX

ADEC Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs

What are the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs?

The Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs are part of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Water Division. They issue and enforce the regulation of discharge of treated wastewater from permitted wastewater facilities to ensure that public health and the environment are protected.

How can the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs assist your community?

- By answering questions about a community's wastewater discharge permits and authorizations.
- By providing guidance on the required sampling and reporting for wastewater discharge.
- By providing technical and compliance assistance to operators when there has been a violation of a wastewater discharge permit or authorization.

What are your next steps for learning about the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs?

Please review the attached **wastewater discharge authorization** for your community. Your authorization includes sampling and reporting requirements to ensure that the conditions of your permit are met. Contact the Division of Water if you have any questions about the requirements for your wastewater facility.

When should you contact the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs?

- New utility managers and operators should contact the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs to introduce themselves and receive guidance on sampling and reporting requirements.
- Your utility operators should follow the requirements of your **wastewater discharge authorization** to submit regular reports and sample results.
- In the event of an unauthorized discharge or a failure of the wastewater treatment process that leads to the discharged wastewater being outside of permit requirements. Permit violations of any kind have to be reported as described in the permit. Assistance is available here: https://dec.alaska.gov/water/compliance/permittee/

How to contact the Wastewater Permitting and Compliance Programs:

For any questions about your wastewater discharge permit and authorization, contact Earl Crapps in Wastewater Permitting:

Phone: 907-269-7681
Email: earl.crapps@alaska.gov

ADEC Solid Waste Program

What is the Solid Waste Program?

The Solid Waste Program is part of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Environmental Health Division. They regulate health and compliance at solid waste (landfill) facilities through a combination of design review, permits, inspections, monitoring, and compliance assistance.

How can the Solid Waste Program assist your community?

- By providing guidance on permit applications, landfill planning, operation, & management, assisting with grant applications for solid waste projects, helping draft ordinances and solid waste fee structures, and developing public outreach materials.
- By developing and providing tools and guidance for solid waste operators and managers.
- By assisting communities with planning for future solid waste needs.

What are your next steps for learning about the Solid Waste Program?

Please review the attached **landfill permit** for your community. Your permit includes important conditions about separating, securing, and burning different types of solid waste. Make sure that the utility managers and operators understand all of the terms of the permit. Contact your assigned Solid Waste Program specialist if you have any questions about the requirements for your solid waste facility.

When should you contact the Solid Waste Program?

- New solid waste utility managers and operators should contact the Solid Waste Program to introduce themselves and receive guidance on permit requirements and landfill best practices.
- Your utility operators should follow the requirements of your **landfill permit** and can use the attached **monthly visual monitoring template** to regularly assess the operation of your landfill.
- If your solid waste operators need training, contact your Solid Waste program specialist to learn about opportunities near you.
- If your landfill is approaching capacity or if you are expecting a construction or renovation project to produce a large amount of waste, contact the Solid Waste Program to discuss your options.

How to contact the Solid Waste Program:

The Solid Waste specialist assigned to your community is XXXXXXX.

Phone: 907-XXX-XXXX
Email:

Operations & Maintenance Best Practices

What is Best Practices?

Operations & Maintenance Best Practices is a set of criteria used to assess the capacity of rural water and wastewater utilities. Communities are evaluated against each criteria and assigned a numerical score. **Best Practices scores are used to determine a utility's eligibility and priority for receiving certain state and federal funds for water and sewer projects.** The scoring criteria were developed by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Village Safe Water (VSW) and Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Programs, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development, Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program, and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC).

What are the Best Practices scoring criteria?

Best Practices scores are meant to evaluate a utility's capacity to provide sustainable service. Best Practices scoring is based on three overall categories: Technical, Managerial, and Financial. Included in these categories are a total of nine criteria. Please see the attached Best Practices scoring criteria document for more details about the criteria. The criteria are scored by staff in several state programs:

- Capacity Development and Operator Certification (CDOC) Program staff are responsible for scoring the Operator Certification criteria.
- Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program staff are responsible for scoring the Preventative Maintenance Plan (PMP) criteria.
- Drinking Water (DW) Program staff are responsible for scoring the Compliance criteria.
- Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) Program staff are responsible for scoring the Utility Management Training, Meetings of the Governing Body, Budget, Revenue, Worker's Compensation, and Payroll/Tax Liability Compliance criteria.

How does Best Practices Scoring affect eligibility for funding?

Best Practices scores are published twice per year, in the spring and fall. Best Practice score accounts for 40% of the points possible for Capital Improvement Project (CIP) scoring. This is an important source for rural utilities to fund water and sewer projects. **The most effective way to increase your community's chance of receiving this project funding is by improving your Best Practices score. The most effective way to increase your Best Practices score is by working with your assigned staff in the programs you will read about in this quick reference guide.**

How can you get more information about Best Practices Scoring?

Your utility's current Best Practices score is attached to this document. Please review your Best Practices score and contact your assigned program staff for guidance about how to maintain and improve it.

When you improve your Best Practices score, you are also improving capacity of your utility to provide service to your community!