

Akiachak Activity Report

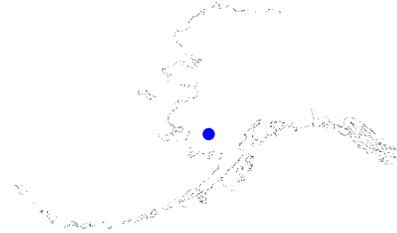
Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Johnny Evan, Bethel Office

2001 Population: 585

Region: Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta

Local Governments: Village Council



The Village Council operates the washeteria, watering points and water haul system as well as the honeybucket haul. The Village Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Construction of a piped water and gravity sewer system is underway. A new well, water tank, water treatment plant and a road to the new lagoon have been completed. Construction is scheduled to continue through 2005 to plumb and connect 62 homes on the west side.

Currently 12 facilities, the school and teacher's housing are served by a piped system; most residents haul water from the washeteria. 25 households have

honeybuckets hauled by the City; the others haul their own honeybuckets or use septic tanks. The village would like to purchase an incinerator and use the waste heat for public buildings.



General Information

The Akiachak Native Community (ANC) continues to struggle with improving its ability to take on the responsibilities of running a water and sewer utility service within the community. ANC hired a CPA firm to analyze the utility's financial system and recommend actions to improve their financial record keeping and management systems. Due to unresponsive behavior by the ANC organizational staff, the consultants terminated their contract. This stopped the project and seriously jeopardizes future project funding.

The Council and the CEO will need to make changes that are likely to be unpopular with some of the residents and with current employees. New sanitation rates were recommended to the Tribal Council for consideration, but still have not been presented to the general public

for consensus. A new RUBA Work Plan was created, but still has to be adopted and implemented by the ANC organization.

The community lagoon is 60% complete, and the intent is to complete the construction before it goes astray.

Due to uncooperative behavior from the ANC administration, the future funding and construction is ceased until the community can work towards the corrective action plans from the consultants.

Observations and Recommendations

Finances — The ANC accounting office has had staff changes that are considered improvements. Past financial practices seriously threaten the ability of ANC to continue operations without major reductions in services provided. New utility rates need to be developed, adopted, presented to the community residents, and implemented. The organization need to conduct an educational community meeting to have the residential customers understand why they need to pay for services. New minimum rates were recommended to the community, but they were not seen as useful to the operation and maintenance for the utility services.

Accounting Systems — The community utilizes a computerized accounting system that can only store data up to twelve months. This, as the financial consultants describe, is a very old and outdated accounting software that needs to be upgraded. ANC is planning to upgrade to the latest financial software that will meet their accounting requirements. The organization still needs to complete reconciling their financial records in accordance with the financial management improvement plan.

Tax Problems — Past tax liabilities were corrected and they are now current.

Personnel System — The primary focus for improvement has been the financial record keeping system. The organization hired a Chief Accountant to oversee the maintenance of the accounting functions. The consultants were cross training the entire staff, including the Tribal Administrator.

Organizational Management — The organizational chart needs to be updated and posted. Currently the ANC staff does not understand the hierarchy of the organization.

Operation of Utility — The new water plant stands idle because the management and finance issues have not been addressed. Other services continue to operate but not at an optimal level.

Category	Inadequate	Meets Minimum Requirements	Exceeds Minimum Requirements
Finances	X		
Accounting Systems	X		
Payroll Taxes		X	
Personnel System	X		
Organizational Management	X		
Operation of Utility	X		

Anticipated Activity

- Work with the Tribal organization to set-up a working relationship with outside agencies.
- The Akiachak Native Community will need to continue implementing the improvement plan recommended by the CPA.
- Have the RUBA Work Plan adopted and implemented.