

Chefornak Activity Report

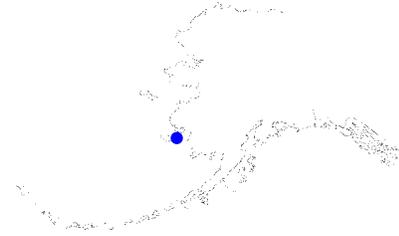
Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Paul Chimiugak, Bethel Office

2000 Census Population: 394

Region: Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta

Local Governments: Second Class City, Village Council



The Village Council operates the multiple watering points and manages the honeybucket haul system. The Village Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Twelve wells provide potable water for Chefornak; residents haul from watering points. Some residents melt ice in the winter or use rain catchment systems in the summer. Some residents use river water. The infrastructure to develop a flush/haul system was started in 1998. 50 residences use honeybuckets; 24 homes use tank haul. The school well is inadequate; the water is too salty. The community wants a piped system.

General Information

The Utility operation has gone through changes this quarter. They relocated to the Tribal office building in hopes of reducing operating costs through cost sharing it did not work out as expected. The Utility ended up paying more for electricity and heating fuel. Another change that took an affect of the utility operation was an unexpected physical accident of the manager. The bookkeeper ended up taking on the managerial duties on top of her own, which resulted in not keeping current with the bookkeeping. The bank reconciliation and check register had not been kept current causing inconsistency with the account balance. Although the manager returned on a part-time basis, the affects of what had happened were not easy to correct. The bookkeeper has taken an extended leave of absence starting mid-June. This took place before the bookkeeping system has been brought up to date. The manager has hired a temporary person to cover this position, however, this employee is still in high school and has no experience in bookkeeping.

Observations and Recommendations

Finances — The operations finances are very low. The expenses exceed their revenue. According to the chairman, they are a couple payrolls behind.

Accounting Systems — The system in place has not been kept current. Bank reconciliation has not been done for several months. Paul has assisted the bookkeeper in trying to catch up with their reconciliation, however, the books are not balancing.

Tax Problems — They received a tax notice for first quarter of 2001, the tax liabilities for this quarter had not been paid on time. They have since paid the liabilities, but not the \$10. in penalties.

Personnel System — Currently the operation is staffed by the Manager, temporary bookkeeper, one sewage haul & one water operator, along with one trash collector. The full time bookkeeper has taken leave of absence starting mid June. There has been no set date of when she will or whether she will return. In speaking with her, she was very overwhelmed and needed this leave. The manager hired a temporary in her place. This person is still in high school and has no bookkeeping skills. Training is needed once again.

Organizational Management — The manager would like to see a re-organization within the board. He had informed them verbally that he was planning to resign this spring. He is currently not happy with the leadership and accountability of those in lead.

The VSW engineer and CE2 engineering are talking about possibly changing the organization structure and revisiting the schedule to complete a business plan. RUBA is assisting in this process.

Leadership/Governance — The Utility board has had some personal issues that they have been working on within the board. The manager has brought his concerns and suggestions to the board regarding the leadership and they have had a couple meetings amongst themselves regarding this.

Operation of Utility — The utility continues to operate fully.

Ranking 1 = Inadequate
 4 = Adequate to meet minimum requirements
 7 = Exceeds requirements

Category	1	4	7
Finances		X	
Accounting Systems		X	
Tax Problems			X
Personnel System			X
Organizational Management			X
Leadership/Governance			X
Operation of Utility			X

Anticipated Activities

- On the job record keeping training for the temporary clerk and manager.
- Monitor the record keeping systems accuracy.
- Follow up on the monthly bank reconciliation and check register balance. Ensure that the old account is closed and a new account opened to start off with a correct balance.
- Follow up on the plan for the Utility to move from the Tribal building to the City building.
- Work with VSW engineer on business plan for this Utility.
- Continue to request for monthly financial reports.
- Continue technical assistance to the administrative staff.
- Present business plan to the utility board and VSW.

