

# Deering Activity Report

## Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Margaret Hansen, Kotzebue Office

2003 Population: 131

Region: Northwest Arctic

Local Governments: Second Class City, Tribal Council



The City of Deering operates the piped water & sewer system, central watering point and water delivery haul system. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Water is derived from the Inmachuk River; is treated and pumped to a 400,000-gallon insulated storage tank. Water is delivered to home tanks or hauled from the watering point. Major improvements are under construction for a water haul and vacuum sewer system. A new washeteria and water treatment plant is nearing completion. Archaeological remains were discovered while excavating for the new system. The City would like to purchase an incinerator with waste heat recovery to reduce the volume of refuse.

## RUBA Activity This Quarter

RUBA provided on site training and assistance to the Mayor and City Clerk on financial management. They still have not received any qualified applicants for the City Administrator position. We were able to complete the year end tax reports, grant reports, and started on their CCR.

I provided assistance via telephone and fax requesting the legislature reappropriate three of the capital matching grants. One was due to lapse this year and the other two are projects they need additional funds for. During their meeting, we discussed the current needs and priorities. They decided the best use of these funds since State funds are diminishing, is to use these three grants to upgrade the buildings they own by making them more energy efficient.

I am currently working with the clerk and Mayor to complete their community confidence report.

## Capacity Indicators

### Finances

#### Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>All revenue and expenses for the utility are listed in the utility budget.</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>The utility has adopted a balanced realistic budget.</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Monthly financial reports are prepared and submitted to the policy making body.</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses.</b>

**Sustainable Indicators**

- The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses and Repair & Replacement (R&R) costs.
- YTD revenues are at a level equal to or above those budgeted.
- YTD expenditures are at a level equal to or below those budgeted.
- X A monthly manager’s report is prepared.
- Budget amendments are completed and adopted as necessary.

**Finances Comments:** The clerk supervises the operators. On the monthly meeting agenda, the clerk and operators give a report to the council.

**Accounting Systems**

**Essential Indicators**

- The utility meets all essential indicators.**

**Sustainable Indicators**

- The utility meets all sustainable indicators.

**Accounting Comments:** No problems.

**Tax Problems**

**Essential Indicators**

- | Yes                                 | No                       | NA                                  |   |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | <b>The utility has a system to accurately calculate, track, and report payroll tax liabilities.</b>             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | <b>The utility is current on filing tax reports.</b>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | <b>The utility is current on making tax deposits.</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>If there are any past tax liabilities, a repayment agreement has been signed and repayments are current.</b> |

**Tax Problems Comments:** No tax problems.

**Personnel System**

**Essential Indicators**

- | Yes                                 | No                       |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>The utility has a posted workers compensation insurance policy in effect.</b> |

**Sustainable Indicators**

- The utility has adopted and uses a Personnel Policy, which has been reviewed by an attorney, AML, or DCED for topics and language.
- The utility has adequate written job descriptions for all positions.
- The utility has adopted and follows a written personnel evaluation process that ties the job description to the evaluation.
- The utility has an adequate written hiring process.
- The utility has personnel folders on every employee that contain at least: I-9, Job Application and Letter of Acceptance.
- The utility has a probationary period for new hires that includes orientation, job-training/oversight, and evaluations.
- The utility provides training opportunities to staff as needed and available.

**Personnel System Comments:** The Mayor called AML who provided assistance in writing a letter to terminate the Water Plant Operator. The council found that several water tests were not being completed on time.

## Organizational Management

### Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The entity that owns the utility is known and the entity that will operate the utility is set.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy making body is active in policy making of the utility.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy making body enforces utility policy.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has an adequately trained manager.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has an adequately trained bookkeeper.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The utility has an adequately trained operator(s).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has adopted the necessary ordinances (or rules and regulations) necessary to give it the authority to operate.

### Sustainable Indicators

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The utility has adopted an organizational chart that reflects the current structure.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy making body meets as required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility complies with the open meeting act for all meetings.

**Organizational Management Comments:** Discussed with the council in January their options for their city looking at the possibility to have a strong Mayor form of government. The City Manager or the City Clerk is both possible candidates for the job. I need to follow up on this next quarter.

## Operation of Utility

### Essential Indicators

Yes	No	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility operator(s) are actively working towards necessary certification.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility has a preventative maintenance plan developed for the existing sanitation facilities.

### Sustainable Indicators

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The manager receives a monthly O&M report from the utility operator and routinely “spot checks” the facilities to see that the maintenance items are being completed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The utility has a safety manual and holds safety meetings.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Utility facilities have not suffered any major problems/outages due to management issues that are still unresolved.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility is operating at the level of service that was proposed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The operator provides status reports to the manager on a routine basis.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The utility has completed and distributed its <u>Community Confidence Report</u> (CCR).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The utility is not on the <u>Significant Non-Compliance</u> (SNC) list.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility maintains an inventory control list.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The utility maintains a critical spare parts list.

**Operation of Utility Comments:** The City has hired a new water plant operator and two alternates who attend every training Maniilaq offers. The main operator went to Nome for training recently, we are hopeful that he passed the test and will become certified.

#### **RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter**

The Kotzebue RUBA staff finally was able to get to Deering this last quarter. Although the council reviewed and updated their organizational chart, they still need to have more discussion as to what to do about the vacant City Administrator position for the last three years. We had to review their finances, amend the budget, and discuss their capital project priority list to save a \$25,000 grant which they may use for their water/sewer if need be.