

## Hydaburg Activity Report

Gina Shirey, LGS/RUBA, Southeast Regional Office

### General Information:

There was a lot of RUBA activity in Hydaburg this quarter. Mayor Doug Mathena began shutting off past due customers beginning July 13<sup>th</sup>. He got two customers shut-off before the resigned as mayor. He cited lack of support from the council as the reason for quitting. Water shut-offs were then halted.

On August 7, 2000, Jon Menough, VSW engineer, sent a letter to Hydaburg stating that the landfill project would be put on hold until they improve their collection rate and increase their user fees. There was no action taken on Mr. Menough's letter until about mid-September when Steve Dilts was appointed acting mayor. He responded to the letter by contacting the Commissioner of DEC. In addition, he contacted the city's attorney who sent VSW a letter dated October 5<sup>th</sup> stating that the city has not violated the agreement, that VSW is creating new grant requirements, and that shutting down the landfill is a disproportionate response to perceived grant infractions.

On September 11, 2000, City Clerk Marvell Bowker faxed me a copy of the City's budget that they had recently passed. (The budget should have been in place by July 1<sup>st</sup>.)

On October 3, 2000, the City held its municipal election. Wes Morrison was elected mayor.

On October 4-6, 2000, Gina Shirey and Jon Menough traveled to Hydaburg to audit their water, sewer, and garbage accounts to determine if the City was meeting the grant requirements of 80%. The snapshot taken on October 5<sup>th</sup> showed a collection rate of 66%. This collection rate included active accounts only. No closed accounts with outstanding balances were included.

### Observations and Recommendations:

Finances — The City is in terrible financial shape. The budget was finally passed in early September. When Gina Shirey visited the City in October, the checking account balance was around \$38,000.

Accounting Systems — Gina Shirey only reviewed the water, sewer, and garbage accounts. Almost all of the account information on the computerized accounting system matched the ledger cards. Gina and Marvell took care of the accounts that didn't match up when Gina was in Hydaburg.

Tax Problems — There are no reports of payroll tax problems.

Personnel System — The City hired Marvell Bowker as temporary city clerk while the permanent clerk is on family leave. The administrator and office assistant positions are still vacant.

Organizational Management — The city is not organized well. The City has a new clerk and a new mayor.

Leadership/Governance — The City is experiencing high turnover in leadership positions. The elected mayor resigned. The council appointed a temporary mayor until the October election. A new mayor was elected in October.

Operation of Utility — There appears to be no problem with the operation of the utility other than occasional positive tests for lead.

**Ranking**

1 = Inadequate

4 = Adequate to meet minimum requirements

7 = Exceeds requirements

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