

# Kobuk Activity Report

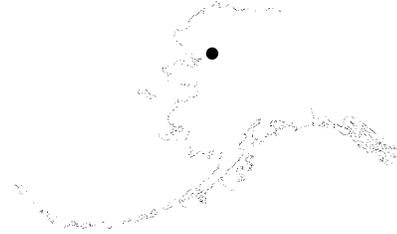
## Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Margaret Hansen, Kotzebue Office

2000 Census Population: 109

Region: Northwest Arctic

Local Governments: Second Class City



Sanitation utilities in Kobuk are operated and managed by the City. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Major improvements are under construction to provide a piped water and sewer system, including household plumbing. A 30-foot well provides water, which is treated and currently hauled by residents from the washeteria. Honeybuckets and privies are currently used by most residences, but plumbing is under construction. The washeteria has its own septic tank. Waste is disposed of at Dall Creek. A new landfill was recently completed. Kobuk Valley Electric Co-op purchases power from AVEC over the Kobuk-Shungnak intertie.



## General Information

In April, The Kotzebue office provided on site assistance to the Mayor since the administrator is on sick leave again. The Council has not had reports for the last three months. The Mayor asked for help to hire a new clerk and water plant operators along with assisting in completing the reports and bank reconciliation's to see where they are financially. They hired three operators whom they sent the following week to Operator In Training (OIT) training in hopes that at least two of them complete the course. The Mayor and Margaret sat down with them to review their job description, daily, weekly, and monthly task lists. We also relayed to them how important their job is for the well being of their residents, the need to take care of their new water/sewer system to keep down costs to the residents and plan for future growth.

In May, the Kotzebue LGS provided phone and fax assistance to the administrator on grants, clinic grant assistance and operator problems. Told her to meet with her operators, find out what tests need to be complete and work with the new utility manager on billing, fuel log along with KVEC reporting.

In June, the Kotzebue office provided on site training and assistance to the new administrator, utility manager and clerk on their FY 02 budget, balancing journals and bank reconciliation's. Margaret also worked with the utility manager on his financial management, water testing and the need for him to also take the next OIT training class. We then called the RMW to coordinate a trip out to Kobuk to do a walk through training for him and the operators, take late tests samples and discuss future training needs.

## **Observations and Recommendations**

Finances — The new administrator was the utility manager who quit two years ago. She picked up on everything very quickly once again. They are current on monthly reports, bank reconciliation's but still need to do their grant reports timely.

Accounting Systems — They are using the manual Northwest Arctic Borough accounting system but this administrator would like to utilize QuickBooks Pro for everything, Margaret recommended start with payroll first since the clerk has not worked with computers before including her new utility manager.

Tax Problems — No tax problems.

Personnel System — The water plant operators job description has been revised and the operators trained on their job requirements. They are fully staffed right now.

Organizational Management — The new utility manager seems to be taking the lead in supervising staff, we hope this will improve the general operation of the utility.

Leadership/Governance — The Mayor and Council seem to be working well. We have completed the open meeting act training. They would like some personnel management training. We identified this in their work plan for my next trip.

Operation of Utility — None of the operators passed their OIT at this time. They just hired two alternates who took their first test last month.

**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 Activity**

During the next on-site visit Margaret plans to provide more training to the utility manager and clerk. The Council will receive some personnel management training including review of updated personnel policies.

