

Kwethluk Activity Report

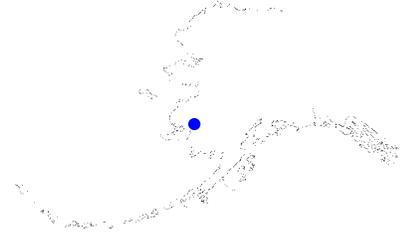
Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Johnny Evan, Bethel Office

2001 Population: 713

Region: Lower Kuskokwim

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Kwethluk operates the central watering point where residents can come and haul their own water. The City also maintains multiple watering points in the City. They also provide a honeybucket haul service to the sewage lagoon. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

The washeteria and water treatment plant was recently rehabilitated. The school and teachers' housing have individual systems. Honeybuckets are hauled to a sewage lagoon. Very few homes have running water or plumbing for showers, but many residents have steambaths. Planning and engineering of a piped water and sewer system is underway.



General Information

Contributions to the Kwethluk Utilities Commission by the City and the Tribe still are not frequent, which put the sanitation services in financial jeopardy. The commission is struggling financially due to uncommitted contributions and low collection rate due mainly to customers not paying for services. The commission hosts quarterly fiddle dances to raise funds for operation and maintenance. The utility organization instituted a water user rate and a modest user rate, but still that is enough to cover the wastewater treatment expenses. This will be concurrent until the residential customers start paying for sanitation services. The water plant has a new operator who is slated to attend the small wastewater training on October 2001.

Observations and Recommendations

Finances — The commission holds quarterly fiddle dances to raise funds for operations and maintenance that help in much needed funds. The two local government monthly contribution's are still not frequent, therefore, resulting in financial jeopardy. The user fees are not sufficient to cover the operation and maintenance of the sanitation services due to low customer collection rate.

Accounting Systems — The utility commission is separate and is operating its own manual accounting functions. They do not yet have a fully functioning system.

Tax Problems – The utility commission got behind on their 941's, they were completed and filed with IRS without payment.

Personnel System — The new operator attended the small water wastewater training in October 2001.

Organizational Management — The commission is fairly well organized despite the low operating funds. Despite the financial discrepancies, the utility board continues actively in pursuance of the piped sewer system. The City drafted and adopted an ordinance dealing with user rates for the sanitation services. The commission now has new utility rates in effect, to include water rates.

Operation of Utility — The new operator completed the small water wastewater training on October 2001. The utility now has a certified water operator. The utility continues to operate as proposed even with the shortage of funds.

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

- Coordinate with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium for a new community work plan.
- Establish a tax liability spreadsheet with the utility manager.
- Set-up a community education meeting for the utility services.
- Set-up a joint meeting with the two local governments on the financial situation of the utility organization.