

Nulato Activity Report

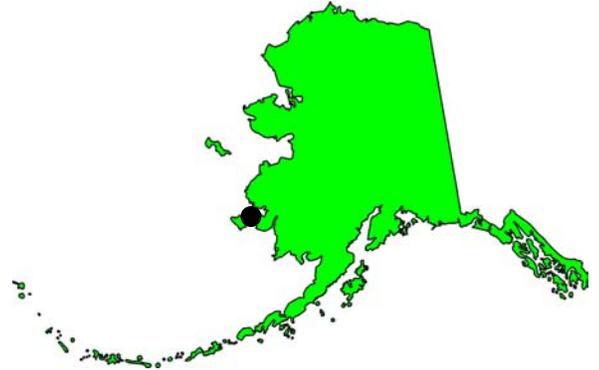
Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Irene Catalone, Fairbanks Office

2003 Population: 381

Region: Interior

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Nulato operates a piped water system in the new townsite as well as a washeteria. They operate a washeteria at the old townsite. The City Council is the policy making body for the utility.

Residents of the old townsite haul treated well water from the washeteria and use honeybuckets or pit privies. Households are not plumbed. The school and washeteria use City water, with sewage disposal into a lagoon. A Master Plan is underway, and preliminary work has begun to upgrade the old townsite to a flush/haul system. There are five households on the honeybucket haul demonstration system, which is paying for itself.

RUBA Activity This Reporting Period

RUBA staff maintained contact with Nulato City staff answering routine questions and requests for assistance on a variety of matters. Staff worked with the city administrator on the CIP application. The city clerk resigned the week of September 22nd and the position will be advertised this week. Details of other problems are related below.

Capacity Indicators

Finances

Essential Indicators

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

Sustainable Indicators

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The utility is receiving revenues (user fees or other sources) sufficient to cover operating expenses and Repair & Replacement (R&R) costs.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YTD revenues are at a level equal to or above those budgeted.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YTD expenditures are at a level equal to or below those budgeted.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A monthly manager's report is prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget amendments are completed and adopted as necessary.

Finances Comments: The utility budget does not have the Repair and Replacement category and is using other revenues for their operation. They keep up with billing and have the necessary (limited) agreements in place. There are staffing problems.

Accounting Systems

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted a collection policy and actively follows it. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility bills customers on a regular basis. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | An accounts receivable system is in place which track customers and reports past due accounts and amounts. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | An accounts payable system is in place. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The payroll system correctly calculates payroll and keeps records |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A cash receipt system is in place that records incoming money and what it was for. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Utility has a cash disbursement system that records how money was spent. |

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A chart of accounts is used that identifies categories in a reasonable, usable manner. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Monthly bank reconciliations have been completed for all utility accounts. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has a purchasing system that requires approval prior to purchase, and the approval process compares proposed purchases to budgeted amounts. |

Accounting Systems Comments: The City of Nulato utilizes the QuickBooks accounting system. They maintain a back up hand system. The City has an adequate system in place. The Fuel Department was recently added to the system. It is now completely computerized

Tax Problems

Essential Indicators

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

Tax Problems Comments: The City was late in filing and was assessed penalties for this. Due to the fact that the city clerk wasn't coming in to work the filing and payments have gotten behind. The City Administrator brought the filing and paperwork up to date there may be penalties assessed. The problem is under control.

Personnel System

Essential Indicators

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

Sustainable Indicators

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adopted and uses a Personnel Policy, which has been reviewed by an attorney, AML, or DCED for topics and language. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has adequate written job descriptions for all positions. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 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 City has all the components for the personnel system. They continue to have problems maintaining staff. The operator did not pass the OIT. Fortunately, Nulato has an experienced back-up operator and when he is at work he puts everything back in order the way it should be. The staff needs to have better enforcement of their personnel policies by the City Council. So far this has not happened. Although the components are in place the Council is not following them. This is particularly true in the case of the operator. The city administrator resigned. They are advertising and it looks like they will have an applicant. In the meanwhile, the former city clerk is volunteering some time and the former mayor is volunteering some 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained manager. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The utility has an adequately trained bookkeeper. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <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

- The utility has adopted an organizational chart that reflects the current structure.
- The policy making body meets as required.
- The utility complies with the open meeting act for all meetings.

Organizational Management Comments: The “temporary” operator is not certified. He is familiar with the testing. The Operator has completed generator training. There is an experienced certified operator whom the city calls upon when they need him. There are some blanks here that cannot be filled in until hire is made.

Operation of Utility

Essential Indicators

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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

- 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.
- The utility has a safety manual and holds safety meetings.
- Utility facilities have not suffered any major problems/outages due to management issues that are still unresolved.
- The utility is operating at the level of service that was proposed.
- The operator provides status reports to the manager on a routine basis.

- The utility has completed and distributed its Consumer Confidence Report (CCR).
- The utility is on the Significant Non-Compliance (SNC) list.
- The utility maintains an inventory control list.
- The utility maintains a critical spare parts list.

Operation of Utility Comments: The City operates a washeteria that is very old. They do an excellent job of maintaining what they have. RMW was recently in Nulato and was able to put 2 of the washers back on line and did bring a boiler back on line. They have spare parts and equipment for the plant they do have. DEC reports they are on the Significant Non-Compliance List for bacteria. The RMW and I both met with available council members about their maintenance and operations problems. The city has received a Notification of Violation letter stating that if they do not stay in compliance with the required testing, fines will be assessed. The city and tribe are discussing possible joint operations.

RUBA Activities For The Coming Quarter

I provided some ESC information, met with the tribe and the city reps about some form of working together. I will work with the administrator when a new clerk is hired.