

Upper Kalskag Activity Report

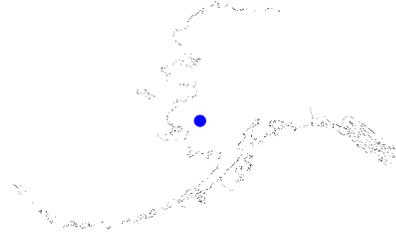
Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Leroy Seppilu, Anchorage Office

2000 Census Population: 230

Region: Lower Kuskokwim

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Upper Kalskag operates the piped sewer system. The City Council is the policy making board for the utility.

As of November 1997, nearly all homes, the school and the store have individual wells with potable water and indoor plumbing. A new piped gravity sewage system with lift stations, force main and lagoon now serves over 60 households and facilities. The school has requested funds for a new septic tank and leachfield, or connection to the community sewer system. The landfill is located between Upper and Lower Kalskag.



General Information

Basically things are going well for the City and the Utility.

Observations and Recommendations

Finances — Kalskag Sanitation Utility (KSU) has quickly bounced back from their previous financial mess. At the beginning of October 2000, the utility was operating at a loss due to increases in expenses and lack of efforts to collect sewer bills. The utility clerk started making efforts to go to small claims court to collect past due sewer accounts and has continued those efforts to the benefit of the Utility.

Accounting Systems — Kalskag Sanitation Utility finally got back to using Quicken for financial record keeping. The Utility Clerk had been having problems learning how to use it. Leroy set up chart of accounts for the Clerk to use and this has helped.

Tax Problems — The city and the utility were a bit late in submitting first quarter 941 and ESC reports. The Utility Clerk’s figures were off and plans on doing a correction soon. The Utility Clerk obtained assistance from a former Lower Kalskag City Clerk.

Personnel System — The Utility Clerk works part time as City Clerk and this has worked well for both departments. The Clerk is able to use her new skills, such as employee record keeping and doing taxes at the same time and, therefore keeping them both out of trouble.

Organizational Management — The former Mayor and now a current council member, thinks that the utility should lower its rates even though a study was done during his term that found that the rates should be kept the same in order for the utility to function normally. He wholeheartedly agreed with the study and along with the other council members kept the rates the same.

Leadership/Governance — This current Mayor, Betty Turner, has been the most effective Mayor in a long time. She has been very deliberate in dealing with the utility customers and also shows compassion.

Operation of Utility — The Mayor has shut off customers that have not kept up with payment for sewer utility services. Already some of them have come to the utility office to set up payment plans or pay their past due bills.

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

Leroy Seppilu will be transferring to the Nome Office effective September 1,2001, and become responsible for the communities in that region. The next RUBA staff assigned to this

City should keep a close eye on them as they sometimes go to the brink of getting financially messy since one of the council members tends to try to do things his own way without consultation of the mayor and other council members. The Utility Clerk will also need training with the small claims process.

