



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Environmental
Conservation**

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

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February 18, 2022

The Honorable Click Bishop
The Honorable Bert Stedman
Co-Chairs, Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol Room 516
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senators Bishop and Stedman:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information about the Department of Environmental Conservation's Village Safe Water program on February 8th. Questions arose during this meeting that required additional information, which I have responded to below.

Provide a map of where the unserved communities are.

Please find attached a map depicting the unserved (yellow), underserved (red), and partially served (green) communities. The increasing size of the dot equates to increasing cost of facility/service.

Where did the 55% come from in regards to the definition of unserved communities?

This number was established by Village Safe Water and federal funding partners many years ago as a means of establishing a common definition of a served community in order to facilitate more accurate sharing of information pertaining to rural sanitation. The number is only used as a benchmark; reaching this benchmark does not mean efforts to provide additional service improvements are reduced.

Provide a list of the projects that are funded with priority ranking and population of each community.

Attached is the current Multi-Year Priority List with community populations. These projects are listed by community and in alphabetical order as the Department do not have a priority ranking for projects.

How many trips were made out to Togiak by DEC? What type of assistance was offered to Togiak?

Since 2019, the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) has provided onsite assistance to Togiak twice. In October of 2019, the RMW traveled to the community and spent two days assisting the operator with collecting water samples and ensuring equipment was ready for winter. On June 15, 2021, the RMW traveled to the community to provide a two-day operator training and assisted in resolving a failed lift station pump issue. Togiak has not reported any challenges or emergencies for the past two years during the winter operation of their systems.

Under the guidance of the Department of Environmental Conservation, and since the spring scoring cycle in 2019, Togiak has maintained and improved their Best Practices score under the Technical

Capacity section (operator certification, preventative maintenance, and compliance). During the same time period, their Best Practices scores under the Financial Capacity and Managerial Capacity sections have not been high enough to achieve funding eligibility (specifically in the budget, revenue, and payroll tax liability). The Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs through the Rural Business Advisory program, is the agency that provides support to the communities on these sections (Financial and Managerial). That agency can best speak to the number of trips they made to Togiak, and what assistance was provided to gain capacity and achieve funding eligibility.

Provide the funding chart going back to FY2015.

Please find attached the Rural Water and Sewer Improvements funding chart reflecting FY2015-FY2022.

If you would like more information or have additional questions, I am happy to assist.

Sincerely,



Ruth Kostik
Administrative Services Director

Attachments:

- Map of Unserved Communities
- 2021 Multi-Year Priority List with Population
- Rural Water and Sewer Improvements Funding FY2015-FY2022

Cc: Michael Partlow, Legislative Finance Division
Josie Stern, Office of Management and Budget
Cody Grussendorf, Staff to Senator Bishop
Pete Ecklund, Staff to Senator Stedman