



Alaska House Bush Caucus

Alaska State Legislature
120 4th St. State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Bryce Edgmon, District 37
Representative CJ McCormick, District 38
Representative Neal Foster, District 39
Representative Josiah Patkotak, District 40

Commissioner Jason Brune
Department of Environmental Conservation
555 Cordova St
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Commissioner Brune,

The "Operations and Maintenance Best Practices" scoring system for the Village Safe Water Program is an ongoing concern for us.

Currently, communities applying for the Village Safe Water program must demonstrate a minimum level of capacity for operating and maintaining sanitation facilities prior to funding. Communities must meet this scoring criteria throughout the life of the project, which has prevented and in some cases suspended work on needed projects in situations where grants have already been awarded. With a massive influx of federal funds available to upgrade water and sewer infrastructure projects in rural areas of our state, we feel the state should be looking for ways to accommodate these opportunities, not turning them away. In a nutshell, community need should be the major determining factor and not capacity.

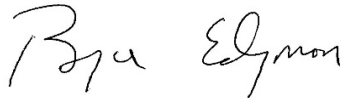
Our offices have heard from our communities that have had projects halted, and we would like to get a look at the entire scope of the program.

We would be grateful if the Department would provide us with:

- The number of Village Safe Water First Time Service and Expansion, Upgrade, and Replacement projects that have not been awarded due to insufficient Best Practices scores;
- The number of projects that have been put on hold after a grant has been awarded, for the last five fiscal years.
- The expected number of denied and paused projects for the upcoming fiscal year.
- The number of communities that currently fail to meet the minimum threshold for the current Operations and Maintenance Best Practices scoring for the Village Safe Water Program.

We look forward to working with your Department on how to continue to best serve Alaskans. Please contact our offices if you have any questions or concerns.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Bryce Edgmon in black ink.

Representative Bryce Edgmon,

Handwritten signature of C.J. McCormick in black ink.

Representative CJ McCormick

Handwritten signature of Neal Foster in blue ink.

Representative Neal Foster

Handwritten signature of Josiah Patkotak in black ink.

Representative Josiah Patkotak