Alaska Rural Utility Collaborative

Do it better...Do it together

How your water system is...

Do you:

* Have frequent freeze-ups or shut-downs of your water system?
* Struggle to keep up with the required changes for your water system?
* Feel overwhelmed by the challenge of maintaining your water system?
* Know your system could operate more efficiently?
* Feel you must handle these problems alone?

Although you may feel alone in the struggle to maintain your community’s water system, there are people who understand what you are going through. Many rural communities are dealing with the same problems you are. Most have had billing or maintenance problems like yours, and some have learned how to deal with these problems. This is not an impossible battle. You don’t have to struggle alone. You can join the ARUC and have a dramatic decrease in your water system problems. ARUC membership increases the capacity and sustainability of the water system, improving your chance of obtaining grants to improve the water system.

How it could be...

ARUC operates water and sewer systems in rural Alaska communities. ARUC will continue to improve the health status of rural Alaskans by increasing the quality and reliability of drinking water in community water systems. ARUC management will result in more cost-effective operation and less regulatory non-compliance of community water systems. ARUC management will also extend the life of sanitation facilities by providing regular preventative maintenance to the system.

ARUC will provide water system operators yearly training and periodic testing to maintain and increase their water treatment certifications. ARUC will also provide better wages, benefits, and financial stability to water system operators. This has proven to decrease operator turnover, therefore improving operation of the water system. ARUC will contribute to Alaska Native staff development by hiring, training, career development, and increased retention of its employees.

ARUC contributes significantly to Community and Partner Satisfaction by improving sanitation facility sustainability in rural Alaska. One of the goals of the ARUC is to develop the standard for utility management in rural Alaska. Many of the components necessary to achieve this goal have already been developed in collaboration with ANTHC and YKH/RUC as evidenced in the attached report. Realization of this goal will increase self-determination by providing Tribal organizations the tools necessary to properly manage their infrastructure internally.

ARUC Services

* Water operator is employed with benefits and regular pay schedule
* Technical training for Operator
* ANTHC manages water system
* ANTHC collects all required water samples
* Water system technical assistance always available
* Safety Plan development and implementation
* Preventive Maintenance Plan development and implementation
* Contingency Plan development and implementation
* Coordinates efforts with other agencies
* Risk Assessments done
* Assessments of village’s utility operations
* Utility Ordinance development assistance
* Rate Analysis
* Consolidate Tasks of billing & collection
* Reduced cost parts/ supplies
* Preventative maintenance plan increases water system life
* Problem Resolution

ANTHC

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## YKHC Rural Utility Cooperative

### Comparing Non RUC communities to RUC

(The statewide ARUC is based on the RUC program in the YK Delta)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operator Satisfaction</th>
<th>Non-RUC</th>
<th>RUC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Vacation, Health, and Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better range of pay</td>
<td>$12.00 to $13.50</td>
<td>$16.00 to $26.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator turn over</td>
<td>75% in 5 years</td>
<td>11% in 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Commission of Alaska (Compliance)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100% compliance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Stability</th>
<th>Non-RUC</th>
<th>RUC</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant Non Compliance (SNC) EPA list</td>
<td>1.78 times more likely to be on the SNC list</td>
<td>3 villages on SNC List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water production</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Down 33,000 gal. or 7% reduction since RUC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical fuel cost</td>
<td>Average fuel price $ 5.25 per/gal</td>
<td>Average fuel price is $3.27; $1.98 less than non-RUC user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User collections rate</td>
<td>40% average at $43.00 per customer</td>
<td>Over 40 months 93% 20-40 months 82% 0-20 months 56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Continuity of Service</th>
<th>Non-RUC</th>
<th>RUC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Base line Matrix score shows relative utility strength (over 4 years) a score of 150</td>
<td>Down 80 points from baseline for a total score of 159</td>
<td>Up 80 points from non-RUC baseline or a total score of 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Operator turnover is high, non operator certification is common</td>
<td>Improved operator training Certified operators Two operators per system Scheduled Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records</td>
<td>Almost non existent</td>
<td>Accurate and reliable accounting records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RUC Goal:** Extending the life of the system up to and beyond design life to protect public health and sustaining the investment for future generations.