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Rural water, wastewater programs awarded \$1.93 million

Grants will fund 13 remote maintenance workers in seven regional programs across the state

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA – The Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Remote Maintenance Work (RMW) program has awarded \$1.9 million for fiscal year 2011 to the Aleutian & Pribilof Islands Association, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation to help provide safe drinking water and hygienic wastewater disposal for rural Alaskans.

RMWs help protect public health by ensuring that rural Alaskans have a consistent supply of safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal services. They provide training and over-the-shoulder assistance to village water and sewerage system operators. The RMWs also maintain an equipment inventory and respond to water and wastewater utility emergencies as necessary. All these RMW actions help protect the State's investment in these vital systems.

“Alaska's climate is tough on water and wastewater systems,” said Lynn Kent, Director of DEC's Water Division. “The remote maintenance workers are a critical link between DEC and the community to provide clean drinking water and proper wastewater treatment.”

The RMW program began in 1983 with one remote maintenance worker serving 10 communities. The program now provides operations and maintenance support services to more than 180 remote communities throughout the state.

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