

## Important Information



## For Water Operators and Owners

### Northern Flows

## DW/WW Program Directory

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# Northern Flows



Alaska's Drinking Water & Wastewater Program Newsletter

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## Message from the Manager

The Drinking Water and Wastewater (DW/ WW) Program is constantly evolving with new regulations, opportunities, program initiatives, and information, and we want you to know what's been going on.

The US Environmental Protection Agency approved Alaska's Drinking Water Protection Program (DWPP) in April 2000. We will soon be assessing Alaska's 1700 Class A and B public drinking water sources for vulnerability to contamination, and establishing "drinking water protection areas" as a minimum basis for protection efforts. DWPP staff have compiled longitude/latitude information to facilitate mapping Alaska's Class A

and B public water systems (PWS). Demonstration project assessments of the PWS will be prioritized based on historical use and monitoring data on regulated contaminants, the area of development near the source of drinking water, natural susceptibility of the source, and the availability of alternative sources of drinking water. Assessments for Girdwood, Palmer, Skagway, Valdez, and the Anchorage Bowl area are scheduled for completion by November 2000.

DW/WW Program engineering staff have teamed up with the Alaska Training/Technical Assistance Center (ATTAC) in Sitka, to provide a Sanitary Survey Training Course for individuals wanting approval to

perform sanitary surveys. These classes are currently scheduled in Fairbanks, August 22 - 25; Juneau, August 29 - Sept. 1, and Anchorage, October 2000. Contact Keven Kleweno at 269-7696, or visit our website for more information.

We are also in the process of establishing a statewide Drinking Water Advisory Council to help us keep in touch with our constituents. It is planned that the council will consist of representatives from AWWMA, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, the Alaska Municipal League, and other interested parties. If you're interested in participating, contact me at 269-7647, or send me an E-mail.

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Lead and Copper Rule  
Minor Revisions By EPA  
Insert

Waterborne Disease  
and BWNs  
Insert

Taking a Total Coliform  
Bacteria Sample Properly  
Insert

**Please put your PWS  
ID # on laboratory  
reporting forms,  
operator reports,  
and correspondence  
with ADEC**

## Source Water Assessment

The goal of the new Drinking Water Protection Program (DWPP), administered by ADEC, is to provide public water system (PWS) owners and operators, local governments, community groups, and the general public with information that can be used to preserve the quality of Alaska's public drinking water sources for years to come. Approved in April, the program also meets statutory requirements for the State to develop and implement a statewide Source Water Assessment and Wellhead Protection Program under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

From the present to December 2002, DWPP staff and ADEC contractors will be assessing the vulnerability of Alaska's 1700+

Class A and B sources of public drinking water to contamination. Then DWPP staff will establish

“DWPP staff and ADEC contractors will be assessing the vulnerability of Alaska's 1700+ Class A and Class B sources of public drinking water to contamination and establishing ‘drinking water protection areas’”

“drinking water protection areas” as a basis for local protection efforts. Assessments will be completed for systems in basins with the highest vulnerability first. The order of PWS assessments has been determined using information about past water quality, potential contaminant activities around the source of drinking water, natural susceptibility, and the availability of alternative sources of drinking water in the area of an individual water system.

The order of PWS assessments,

an overview of the assessment process, the role of public water system owners and operators in completing assessments, and the linkage to possible monitoring and treatment relief for PWS will be published on ADEC's DWPP web page in July 2000, and in the next issue of *Northern Flows*.

Guidance manuals describing the assessment methodology for Class A and B drinking water sources and source water protection options will be available in January 2001. As assessments for individual water systems are completed, the basis and findings of assessments will be summarized and made available to water system owners, operators, and local governments, and posted in local libraries, and on the DWPP web page in the form of “assessment reports.”

## Regulations by Adoption - What it Means

The Safe Drinking Water Act rule, Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), will be “adopted by reference” this fall. Water system operators and owners received notification of this adoption process

in May 2000. While adopting by reference

isn't new to the Drinking Water Program, (for example, EPA's laboratory guidelines were adopted by reference in the past), this is the first time we have proposed to adopt an entire rule by reference.

The proposed adoption by reference of EPA's CCR will allow ADEC to retain primary responsibility to administer the

Safe Drinking Water Program in Alaska.

Each State must have regulations as stringent as the federal rule. Adopting by reference is one way to do that. Here are

“The proposed adoption by reference of EPA's CCR will allow ADEC to retain primary responsibility to administer the Safe Drinking Water Program in Alaska”

some of the advantages of this method of adoption:

- ◆ Reduces staff time that would normally be spent rewriting federal regulations into state regulatory language;
- ◆ Avoids repetition of large documents, such as safety codes, that would be rewritten with each revision;

- ◆ Frees time for staff to modify EPA's guidance booklets to be user-friendly for Alaska's water systems; and

- ◆ Ensures there are no inadvertent additions to the minimum federal requirements because no language is added to the rule.

To help you

with the new CCR, and any other federal rules adopted by reference, the Drinking Water Program will distribute “plain-English” fact sheets, and adapt federal guidance for Alaskan situations.

During the CCR comment period May 10 - June 23, 2000, fourteen comment were received, and eight individuals attended public meetings.

Ever wish government regulations were different? Public comment is your chance to be heard, especially when you have objections. Although some areas may already be set in law (for example, Alaska's regulations must implement the federal Safe Drinking Water Act), your input can make the regulations better.

**Written Comments:** Use any written format you like. The document must be sent to the contact person listed in the Public Notice. You

“Public comment is your chance to be heard, especially when you have objections.”

don't need to type them, as long as they are legible. Comments may be mailed, faxed, E-mailed, or hand-delivered as long as they arrive before the comment period ends. You can find the comment period dates in the Public Notice.

- ◆ **Be Brief.** You want the reviewer to focus on your point. Brevity assures that it won't be overshadowed.
- ◆ **Be Specific.** Don't be shy about stating what you want. It is more effective to say, “I am concerned about how this will affect small public water systems because...,” than to say, “Don't do this,” with no explanation.
- ◆ **Know your subject.** When commenting on a document, do read it all to be sure your comments are understandable and accurate. Give the relevant section numbers in the proposal, preferably in the order they appear.
- ◆ **Be Honest and Realistic.** Distortion of facts or misstatements may undermine the effect of other statements. Requests that are not legal or feasible also reduce the impact of your comments.
- ◆ **Be Polite.** Reviewers are human, too. Even though you may be upset about a proposal, try to state your opinion objectively. Extending the courtesies to agencies that you expect from them improves communication.

The Certified Installer training season is winding down. This year, approximately 90 installers attended workshops held in Kenai, Wasilla Anchorage, and Fairbanks. Some additional "makeup" workshops are now being scheduled for mid to late June.

“We currently have 140 individuals who are certified to install onsite wastewater systems in Alaska.”

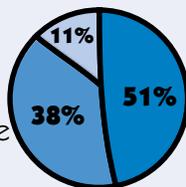
This is the first year that class evaluation forms were used to evaluate how students feel about the instruction. One common comment is that the instruction time is too short, even though this year we shortened the test to allow for more instructional time. Some evaluators suggested that the class be separated into two groups, an abbreviated class for experienced installers and a longer class for less experienced or new installers. We will evaluate this suggestion for next year's training.

We currently have 140 individuals who are certified to install onsite wastewater systems in Alaska. If you have Internet access, you can get the list at: 

Some installers have listed their E-mail address or web site so that you can access it directly just by clicking on it. If you want your E-mail address or web site listed on our certified installer's web page, please call 262-5210, ext. 223, and talk with Margaret French.

## CCR Progress

- 1998 done
- 1998 and 1999 done
- Neither done



Half of Alaskan community water systems (serving 25 or more year-round residents) haven't distributed a 1998 CCR. These systems are subject to enforcement action by EPA.

### 1999 reports are due to consumers and the state by 7/1/00.

Fifty community water systems have already distributed their CCR for calendar year 1999.

Steve Shreiber of the National Rural Water Association will help any Alaska public water system write their CCR for free. You can call him at 694-6792.