

# Northern Flows



Alaska's Drinking Water Program Newsletter

Issue 21 • Spring 2005

## Important Information



### For Water System Operators and Owners

## Northern Flows

### Drinking Water Program Directory

#### ANCHORAGE OFFICE STATEWIDE FUNCTIONS

|                   |                            |          |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| James Weise, DGS  | Program Manager            | 269-7647 |
| Vacant            | Comp Tech Svcs Coordinator | 269-xxxx |
| Vacant            | Statewide DW Engineer      | 269-xxxx |
| Kathaleen Kastens | Project Coordinator        | 269-7639 |
| Margaret Hansen   | Administrative Clerk       | 269-7656 |
| Vacant            | Administrative Clerk       | 269-xxxx |
| Vacant            | C/E Coordinator            | 269-3075 |
| Jeanine Oakland   | Environmental Spec.        | 269-2007 |
| Karen Leis        | Regulations Spec.          | 269-3082 |
| Vacant            | Regulations Spec.          | 269-7653 |
| Maria Ridgway     | Analyst Programmer         | 269-7625 |
| Daniel Rogers     | Analyst Programmer         | 269-2008 |

#### ANCHORAGE DRINKING WATER PROTECTION

|              |                     |          |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|
| Suzan Hill   | Program Coordinator | 269-7521 |
| Vacant       | DW Protection       | 269-0292 |
| Chris Miller | DW Protection       | 269-7549 |

#### ANCHORAGE FIELD OFFICE

|                       |                      |          |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Heather Newman        | Program Coordinator  | 269-7619 |
| Vanessa Blevins, P.E. | Env. Engineer        | 269-7696 |
| Sarah Rygh            | Env Engineer Assist. | 269-3076 |
| David Edmunds         | DW Compliance        | 269-7653 |
| Jamie Stazel          | DW Compliance        | 269-7624 |
| Doug Zellmer          | DW Compliance        | 269-7623 |
| Kathleen Free         | Environmental Tech.  | 269-7618 |
| Leticia Tadina        | Environmental Tech.  | 269-7517 |
| Leilua Fadely         | Administrative Clerk | 269-7594 |

#### WASILLA FIELD OFFICE

|                       |                     |          |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Lynn Lowman           | Program Coordinator | 376-1861 |
| Tee Little            | DW Compliance       | 376-1860 |
| Kellie Alvstad        | Environmental Tech. | 376-1859 |
| Allan Nakanishi, P.E. | Env. Engineer       | 376-1862 |

#### JUNEAU FIELD OFFICE

|                  |                     |          |
|------------------|---------------------|----------|
| David Khan, P.E. | Env. Engineer       | 465-5317 |
| Carrie McMullen  | DW Compliance       | 465-5333 |
| Vacant           | Environmental Tech. | 465-5325 |

#### SOLDOTNA FIELD OFFICE

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Susan Bulkow      | Program Coordinator | 262-5210 |
| David Litchfield  | DW Compliance       | x227     |
| Scott Fogue, P.E. | Env. Engineer       | x224     |
| Eric Burg         | Environmental Tech. | x243     |

#### FAIRBANKS FIELD OFFICE

|                   |                          |          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Cindy Christian   | Field Operations Manager | 451-2138 |
| Vacant            | Program Coordinator      | 451-xxxx |
| Lee Johnson, P.E. | Env. Engineer            | 451-2179 |
| Linda Grantham    | DW Compliance            | 451-2137 |
| Marci Irwin       | DW Compliance            | 451-2168 |
| Johnny Mendez     | Env. Engineer Assist.    | 451-5193 |
| Vacant            | Environmental Tech.      | 451-2170 |
| Xenia DeVito      | Administrative Clerk     | 451-2108 |

### Message from the Manager

“Spring is in the air”. How often have you heard that said? Most likely, many times, and now you are hearing it, actually reading it, again. It is my reminder to you to get yourself and your water system ready for the busy summer. By now you have received your annual compliance monitoring schedule from Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) Drinking Water (DW) Program staff. Please take the time to review the schedule and focus on your routine and/or special monitoring that needs to be done. Also, focus on any outstanding compliance issues, such as scheduling your overdue sanitary survey and collecting and organizing your monitoring data for the previous year to complete your annual Consumer Confidence Report. Don't wait for tomorrow to do what you need to do today.

Speaking of “not waiting for tomorrow” please remember; for all

## This Issue

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community water systems (CWS) and nontransient noncommunity water systems (NTNCWS), currently known as Class A systems, the new arsenic maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 0.010 mg/L (10 parts per billion (ppb)) becomes effective January 23, 2006. Alaska has adopted the Arsenic Rule by reference, and that means that Alaska CWS and NTNCWS need to be in compliance with this new MCL on January 23, 2006. If you are a public water system (PWS) owner or operator, do you know the current level of arsenic in the treated water being served to your customers? Are you going to be in compliance on January 23, 2006? If not, or if you don't know, you need to complete initial monitoring soon so that you can make informed decisions on how best to achieve and maintain long term compliance. There are some compliance options for you, specifically, a variance or an exemption. Alaska has recently adopted the Variances and Exemptions Rule by reference. Each of these options has limitations and will be applicable for certain types of systems. Each of these options requires public notification and an enforceable compliance schedule that will contain stipulated penalties. If you think you may need a variance or an exemption, please contact your local ADEC DW Program staff.

Continuing on my theme of “compliance”, I want to share with you some new compliance and enforcement tools the ADEC DW

Program plans to implement. This summer, we plan to have a special edition of the newsletter or at a minimum, a lengthy insert in our summer 2005 newsletter. This special issue of the newsletter will focus on those Alaska PWS that are in significant non-compliance, and will contain a listing of each PWS currently on the EPA Significant Non-Compliers (SNC) Exceptions List. The EPA SNC Exceptions List, is a listing of those PWS that have been out of compliance with one or more rules for more than one year. These are long-term compliance problems that significantly affect public health. Additionally, we plan to place a public notice in a newspaper with statewide circulation, most likely the *Anchorage Daily News* Sunday paper. The advertisement will be a large display notification (ad) that also lists those Alaska PWS in significant noncompliance. Our focus is public health protection and compliance, so we plan to use every tool available to us to let everyone know those PWS that are in non-compliance and therefore not consistently providing safe drinking water to their customers. For the ADEC DW Program, the concepts of public health protection and compliance are synonymous and we hope PWS owners, operators, utility managers, community leaders, and the general public agree.

Additionally, it is important to note that DW Program staff have recently

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Capacity Development *by David Khan*

This is another in a series of articles about Capacity Development and what Capacity Development means to you. As you read in *Northern Flows* issue 18, the 1996 Amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) required each State to develop a program to ensure that all new Class A public water systems (PWS), which includes community water systems and non-transient non-community water systems, must demonstrate adequate technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity prior to commencing operation. Capacity Development is becoming, and will continue to be, a big part of the Drinking Water (DW) Program. The DW Program will continue to push for all PWS to have adequate capacity. The department will evaluate the capability of the PWS to consistently produce and deliver water in compliance with drinking water regulations.

**Technical capacity:** To assess technical capability, the DW Program will examine the physical infrastructure of the system, including the adequacy of the source water, treatment, storage, distribution, and the ability of system personnel to adequately operate and maintain the system.

**Here are some of the questions that will need to be answered:**

- ▶ Is the system in compliance with all federal and state drinking water regulations related to water quality and monitoring?

- ▶ Are the monitoring compliance issues being addressed?
- ▶ Considering existing source water quality and potential sources of contamination, is the available or proposed treatment technologies



- ▶ and size appropriate to meet drinking water standards?
- ▶ Does the system have proof of water rights to meet projected needs?
- ▶ Is the certification level of the responsible operator-in-charge at or above the facility's classification level as required by ADEC?
- ▶ Does management provide opportunities for operator training?
- ▶ Does the system have a master plan to address infrastructure and capacity needs?
- ▶ Does the system have a plan for protecting its source water area?

**Managerial capacity:** To assess managerial capability the DW Program will examine the owner's accountability, staffing, organization, and means of communication with customers, professional service

providers, and the regulatory agencies.

**Here are some of the questions that will need to be answered:**

- ▶ Who has the legal ownership of the system?
- ▶ Does the system have an organizational chart?
- ▶ Is there a clear delegation of responsibilities for staff?
- ▶ Do managers have a procedure to monitor personnel performance?
- ▶ Is there a record keeping system for all required records?
- ▶ Does the system have a map and description of the treatment facility?
- ▶ Does the system have a map and description of the distribution system?
- ▶ Is the system implementing an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan that includes all existing equipment and processes essential to providing safe drinking water?
- ▶ Does the system have an adequate cross-connection control program?
- ▶ Does the system have a program to address water that is lost due to leakage?
- ▶ Does the system log or track, and address customer questions or complaints?

**Financial capacity:** To assess financial capability the DW Program (and possibly the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, RCA) will examine the system's revenue sufficiency, credit worthiness, and fiscal controls.

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**Question:** When mixing calcium hypochlorite do you add the water to the powder OR the powder to water?

a. Water to Powder

b. Powder to Water

Seasonal Systems *by Kathy Kastens*

Seasonal water systems only operate for a few months of the year, during specified seasons and close down for extended periods of time. These systems should devise a start-up routine that will ensure that the water system is "ready" to serve the public.

**The Startup Drill**

- ▶ Inactive water lines are susceptible to biofilm accumulation. Disinfect the well and distribution system, including hot water heaters and

- ▶ water softeners.
- ▶ Flush the disinfectant from the water system.
- ▶ Take a total coliform bacteria sample and send to an ADEC Certified lab for analysis. Sampling and analysis needs to be completed before opening to the public.
- ▶ Contact your laboratory at the beginning of the season and have them send you at least a half dozen sample bottles so you will always have a sample bottle on hand. The Total Coliform Rule

requires that at least 4 bottles need to be on hand at all times. This is to ensure you have enough containers should a routine sample test positive for total coliform bacteria and you need to collect 4 repeat samples within 24 hours of notification.

Summer (or winter) seasons are usually quite hectic and require a lot of work to make them go smoothly. A little planning always makes those little tasks seem so much easier. So, plan ahead and have a wonderful and profitable season. ~

Capacity Development cont'd. *by David Khan*

**Here are some of the questions that will need to be answered:**

- ▶ Does the system have the required revenues and reserves for current and future operations?
- ▶ Is a reserve system established to help pay for replacement and contingencies?
- ▶ Does the system follow accepted accounting standards and practices?
- ▶ Does the system conduct audits and/or perform well in audits conducted by others?
- ▶ Does the system prepare an annual budget and capital improvement plan?
- ▶ Does the system maintain a user charge system that allows equitable billing, collection, and enforcement?
- ▶ Does the system maintain general liability insurance?
- ▶ Has the system undertaken a cost of service study that allows it to fund operations, debt service, and depreciation?

When Capacity Development strategies are implemented, they improve a PWS's compliance as well as the public health of the community it serves. A properly run PWS contributes to the protection of public health. It serves as a line of defense between potential contaminants that could cause diseases and the public. Compliance monitoring requires securing funds, choosing a certified laboratory, ordering sample kits, arranging transportation for samples, collecting samples, sending samples, continuous routine monitoring, and record keeping. Obviously, financial capacity for operational expenses, technical capacity to provide operator training to take proper samples, and managerial capacity to evaluate operator performance would improve compliance, and is an important tool to prevent diseases outbreaks and illnesses associated with drinking water.

Capacity Development will also aid systems in acquiring financial assistance when a PWS applies for a loan or grant. The funding agency looks favorably on an application if the system is well run. A PWS whose operator is certified at the required water treatment level, whose manager has completed Department of Economic Development (DCED) approved Utility Management training, and the PWS is not on the Significant Non-Complier (SNC) list for being out of compliance with the Drinking Water Regulations, would get a higher score on its funding application. For example, a funding agency may assign a maximum of 5 points to a PWS with an operator certified at the required level and may only assign a maximum of 3 points if the operator is certified at any level below the required level. Out of the maximum possible score of 16, two points can represent a significant difference in the scores of competing water systems and obtaining funding. ~

**Answer:** b. You add powder to the water. Placing the water into the dry powder could cause an explosion. Remember when mixing calcium hypochlorite you should wear chemical safety goggles, a cartridge breathing apparatus, and rubberized gloves.

Message from the Manager cont'd. *by James Weise*

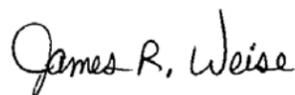
been making routine use of Administrative Penalties. Administrative Penalty Authority was required for primacy states under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, and Alaska is a primacy state. If you are a PWS owner and you receive a Notice of Violation (NOV) from the ADEC DW Program, do not disregard the NOV. This NOV will have a stipulation for pursuing an Administrative Penalty with a preliminary penalty determination assessment if compliance is not achieved within the time frame (schedule) described in the NOV. If the NOV schedule is ignored or missed, and DW Program staff complete and issue a preliminary assessment of Administrative Penalty, the minimum penalty for the PWS could be \$1,000. Please do not avoid picking up, or accepting certified mail from the ADEC.

When the mail is returned to ADEC as "Undeliverable" because of non acceptance, we have used, and will continue to use, the Alaska State Troopers and Process Servers, to redeliver our NOVs and Administrative Penalty preliminary determination assessments. The delay in accepting the ADEC notification is a significant determining factor in any reconsideration of penalty. Please remember, public health protection (safe drinking water) and compliance are required of a PWS, and public health protection is not negotiable.

On a statewide basis, the status of compliance for an individual PWS is readily available to PWS owners, operators, utility managers, community leaders, and the general public. This information can be obtained from the ADEC DW Program's website that shows the

most recent version of a corrected and updated PWS Significant Non-compliers (SNC) List. To check out the status of the current SNC List, go to: <http://www.state.ak.us/dec/eh/dw/dwmain/SNC.htm> From there, have fun and browse, and when you're done, let me know what you think.

Let's continue to enjoy our short-lived spring as we busily prepare our water systems and ourselves for summer. ~



James Weise  
Manager  
Drinking Water Program

<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/eh/dw/dwmain/SNC.htm>

Resources Corner: Bristol Bay Area Health Corp. cont'd. *by David Edmunds*

The role of the RMW is to provide community-based sanitation facility operator training and technical assistance. The BBAHC has employed two RMWs for their communities. They provide assistance in operations and maintenance, emergency repair, routine operator training, and compliance assistance with regulatory issues. BBAHC is the first and only Health Corporation that has had a RMW Intern Program that successfully led to the hiring of a local native Alaskan. This is an



excellent example of building capacity in rural Alaska. The BBAHC RMWs are Paul Arne (Lead RMW) and Alexi Ishnook. Both can be reached at 1 (888) 792-2242.

**Other Public Health Services**

In addition, BBAHC provides sanitary surveys for water systems, and inspections of wastewater systems, solid waste facilities, Head Start Facilities, and village clinics. They also work with the Village Safe Water Program and ANTHC engineers concerning repairs, and upgrades of water and wastewater systems, final inspections of sanitation facilities and design review activities. Other BBAHC programs

consist of rabies prevention, and a comprehensive injury prevention program, including safety training for snow machining, boating, 4-wheeling, and aviation. They also provide survival training for those working in remote areas. ADEC would like to commend BBAHC in its work in protecting public health of the local residents and looks forward to working with their staff in the future. If you would like more information concerning the BBAHC or their Environmental Health Department, visit them at their website <http://www.bbahc.org/about.html>. ~

Staff Profile- Field Operations & Implementation *by James Weise*

Cindy Christian is the Drinking Water (DW) Program's Statewide Field Operations and Implementation Manager, and is located in the ADEC Fairbanks Office. This is a new position in the DW Program. Cindy is responsible for assisting the DW Program Manager in management of the large DW Program as well as the "day-to-day" operations of the program, and the supervision of 4 senior-level supervisory staff located in the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Soldotna, and Wasilla Offices. She provides oversight to staff in the implementation of the DW Program's Compliance and Enforcement Strategy for achieving the ADEC/EPA goals described in the performance partnership agreement (PPA) and public water system supervision (PWSS) grant application work plan.

Cindy routinely is the "acting" DW Program Manager when the manager is out-of-office on business or vacation and readily enjoys the 24/7/365 schedule the Program Manager maintains in an attempt to stay current with projects and keep the State of Alaska DW Program on track. Actually, she probably doesn't enjoy this too much, but she doesn't complain, and that is the sign of a "team" player.

Cindy has a bachelor's degree in biology from Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania and a master's degree in public administration from the University of La Verne, La Verne, California. Before coming to Alaska, Cindy taught biology in middle school, high school, and college in Texas. Cindy came to Alaska in 1986 and worked for the American Red Cross at the Eielson Air Force Base Clinic, and then in 1989, became the Laboratory Director for Northern Testing Laboratories, Inc., in Fairbanks. Cindy started with the ADEC DW Program in December 1999 as the Coordinator for the Northern DW Program area, Fairbanks Office, and then was promoted in January 2005 to the Field Operations and Implementation Manager.

Cindy is actively involved in the Alaska Water Wastewater Management Association (AWWMA), and was the statewide president of the organization in 1999. She is also actively involved in the "Water for People" organization and is truly concerned with public health



protection through safe drinking water and waste management.

Cindy enjoys a rich family life with her husband, Don and son, Benjamin. They enjoy fishing and skiing together as well as other outdoor activities. Cindy has two known weakness, actually "true loves", shopping at Nordstroms and dark chocolate.

Cindy is a very important member of the ADEC Drinking Water Program team, working to ensure public health protection through public water system compliance. Cindy believes and supports the concepts of a consistent quantity of high quality and safe drinking water for the residents and visitors to the State of Alaska. ~

**LT1ESWTR FYI**

This NOTE is for those public water systems that received a letter from us at ADEC asking if you wanted to request an extension for the Long Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT1ESWTR) and submitted that request. The extension request will be reviewed, evaluated and approved by EPA because ADEC does not yet have full primacy for this Rule.

If you are a public water system that needs an extension to meet the January 2005 requirement and has not yet submitted the extension request, get it in NOW! ~

Resources Corner: Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation *by David Edmunds*

To promote health with competence, a caring attitude, and cultural sensitivity”, this statement is the primary mission of the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC). The BBAHC is a Tribal Organization that provides services in the Bristol Bay Region, encompassing 46,000 square miles in Alaska. They serve 34 native communities comprised of Yupik, Athabascan, and Aleut Alaskan Natives. BBAHC has over thirty years of experience and in 1980 became the first tribal organization in the U.S. to manage and operate the Kakanak Hospital and Bristol Bay Service Unit for the Indian Health Service under Public Law 93-638 of the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act. Communities can contact the BBAHC Environmental Health Department for assistance regarding educational opportunities for water/wastewater operators and utility managers, drinking water laboratory services, remote maintenance assistance, regulatory compliance assistance, and a variety of other services. The majority of these services are provided with minimal cost to the communities served.

**Training**

The BBAHC Environmental Health Department provides/coordinates numerous training opportunities for PWS. Their Remote Maintenance Worker Program provides routine operator training as well as quality operator training in Water Distribution and Treatment, and Wastewater Collection and Treatment. Coordination with other agencies allows the BBAHC to provide additional courses. The next course sponsored by the BBAHC is

the Utility Manager Training Course taught by the State of Alaska Department of Community Advocacy (DCA). Additional training on Consumer Confidence Reports will be provided by the Alaska Rural Water Association (ARWA). They also work at bringing in specialized courses with the assistance of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's (ANTHC) Division of Sustained Operations and the Indian Health Service, examples of courses include: Pumps and Pumping Maintenance, Electrical Controls and Boiler Maintenance. Training in the Bristol Bay Area for 2005 is as follows:

| Date        | Class  | Location    |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| April 28-29 | Toyo Stove Repair  | Dillingham  |
| May 2-6     | Introduction to Utility Management (CCR Workshop Included) | King Salmon |
| October TBA | Lift Station Maintenance                                   | TBA         |

Please contact Deya Imdieke at 1 (888) 792-2242 if you have any questions concerning the above training, or additional training that interest you. You can always contact the Alaska Technical Training Assistance Center (ATTAC) or visit their website for additional information. →

**Laboratory Services**

The BBAHC operates three State Certified Laboratories in the Bristol Bay Region. These laboratories are located in Dillingham, Illiamna, and Chignik Bay. The laboratories can test for



total coliform, fecal coliform, and *E.coli* bacteria. The host lab in Dillingham provides all the community PWS in the area the necessary materials for collecting and mailing their water sample to the appropriate lab, with enough sample bottles to cover any sampling, repeat sampling, and special sampling.

The water system operator collecting samples needs to be aware of the 30 hour transit time for samples. If samples arrive at the laboratory in an excess of 30 hours, they cannot be analyzed and the community will have to resample. Results of the analysis are available in 24 hours and appropriately

reported to ADEC. Presently, public water systems served by BBAHC receive the service free of charge. Private samples from home owners or businesses pay a sample analysis fee of \$40. If you have any questions you can contact the BBAHC, Dillingham Lab at 1 (888) 792-2242.

**Remote Maintenance Worker Program**

The Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) Program is managed by the Department of Environmental Health which is aligned under the Division of Community Services.

<http://www.uas.alaska.edu/attac/index.html>

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Training Rules *by Karen Leis*

As the regulations project to adopt the federal Arsenic, Radionuclides, Filter Backwash Recycling, Variances and Exemptions, and various Analytical Methods Rules makes its way through the final steps of the process, and the various changes to the Sanitary Survey Inspector regulations and fees become fine tuned, I find myself looking toward the second phase of my job description with the DW Program. Once things calm down in the regulations writing and adopting by reference business, I plan to pick up more speed in the Training Coordination phase of this position. The ultimate goal of these changing regulations is to better protect public health, but that won't work if we

don't really understand how all the parts fit together.

No one knows better than I do how much more information and new requirements all this rule changing has generated. My advice is to read and learn as much as you can about the type of system you have and dive into the requirements. See if you can figure out for yourself what your monitoring and reporting requirements will be. A good first step is the ADEC DW Program website. The most information about federal rules is archived in the EPA's website on drinking water at: <http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW>. The links to the rules and the implementation guides can tell you a great deal.

What if the internet is down, or your question is not answered in the implementation guide?

You can call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791, and ask them. Don't forget your own DEC DW Program Environmental Specialist, who knows more about your system and Alaska's conditions than anyone "Outside". Finally, if you find areas that you would like for us to cover in *Northern Flows*, or in other ways, please tell us what sorts of training and research you could use. Email me with your training suggestions, and we can continue to work knowledgeably together to consistently provide safe drinking water.

[Karen\\_Leis@dec.state.ak.us](mailto:Karen_Leis@dec.state.ak.us)

**It's Time to Renew Your SOC/OOC Monitoring Waiver**

January 1, 2005 began a new three-year compliance period for the SOC/OOC monitoring requirement. With the 2005-2007 compliance period you should be aware of some new changes to the renewal process.

Now that Source Water Assessments (SWA) have been completed for each public water system, the SOC/OOC Waiver Review Area (WRA) will be based on Zone A of the SWA delineated protection area. The WRA will not be the same as the one in your original SOC/OOC Waiver Application. Drinking Water Protection staff will be reviewing each renewal using the SWA information to determine the level of risk to your public drinking water source from pesticides and other organic chemicals. If there appears to be a potential contaminant source or activity within the WRA, you will be given an opportunity to verify their presence before the renewal application is denied.

It's important to submit your waiver renewal application in order to avoid the high cost of monitoring for SOC/OOCs. The current waiver renewal application fee is \$65.00 but this is subject to change in the near future. You can find a waiver renewal application form on our web site:

<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/eh/dw/publications/forms.html>

or you can contact your local Drinking Water Program office. Send the form, and the required \$65.00 fee to: The Drinking Water Protection Program, ADEC, 555 Cordova Street, Anchorage, AK 99501. For more information, you can contact Suzan Hill at (907) 269-7521.