# FY 2024

# Alaska Native Villages Grant Program Fact Sheet





#### What is ANV?

The Alaska Native Villages (ANV) grant program supports communities living in rural Alaska by providing access to new and improved wastewater and drinking water systems and by delivering training and technical assistance to ensure proper operation and maintenance of these systems. Since 1996, the program has addressed the challenge of delivering critical infrastructure to remote communities with significant, urgent need. The remoteness, geography, permafrost, and cost associated with these areas continues to present challenges to these communities in establishing and maintaining safe drinking water and means of sewage disposal.

The State of Alaska and the federal government continue to work with tribal and city governments to fulfill their responsibility to protect human health through the provision of safe water and adequate sanitation to the rural Alaskan communities. EPA Region 10 (serving Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and approximately 200 Alaskan Native Villages) manages and administers this grant. To expedite the delivery of critical infrastructure to communities

On the SDS list, a project is ranked from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating the most serious need. A project ranked as a 4 indicates that a community does not have safe drinking water or a safe wastewater system and a 5 indicates that both drinking water and wastewater services are inadequate.

with the greatest need, the ANV uses the Indian Health Service's Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) to identify construction projects.

In addition to construction funds, the ANV program provides technical and training assistance to program participants through the Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) and Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) programs.

The RUBA program helps increase the managerial and financial capacity of rural water and wastewater utilities. The RMW program provides technical assistance and training directly to operators of these utilities.

### ANV Program has Extensive Impact

Since its inception, the ANV program has improved water infrastructure services for thousands of homes. Over the past the past 20 years, the number of rural Alaskan homes withiout water, sewer, or both has decreased by a notable 70%, as illustrated by the dashed trend line on the chart on the next page. In FY24, the program recieved \$39 million in appropriations to continue this work.

Construction, operation, and maintenance of water infrastructure in Alaska is no easy feat, especially given the rural isolation of many communities. These communities often lack adequate safe drinking water sources or a means of safe sewage disposal. However, the ANV program continues continues to make a significant difference for communities.

#### To learn more about the ANV program, click here.

On the cover: Aerial view of Ninilchik, an Alaskan Native village, with Cook Inlet and Aleutian volcanoes in the background



#### Improving Water and Wastewater Service in Alaska Native Villages

## Case Study: Native Village of Venetie

The Native Village of Venetie is home to over 150 people, is located along the Chandalar River and is about a two-hour flight due north of Anchorage. Within the Village, a combined water treatment plant and washeteria that was built in 1991 served as the only source of both running water and wastewater management for the population. The washeteria held restrooms, laundry facilities, showers, and drinking water facilities that were used by the entire village. Over time, the Village completed improvement projects to upgrade and service the water treatment plant and washeteria, but by the mid-2010's, the facility had exceeded its life expectancy.

Engineering reports on the state of the washeteria and water treatment plant found severe deterioration of the facility. There was extensive building deterioration, exacerbated by condensation in the water treatment plant, high temperatures within the facility, and leaking machinery. Lack of ventilation in the water treatment plant and the resulting high interior temperatures may have also contributed to the overheating of acidic chemicals within the water treatment plant and increased corrosion rates.

After the engineering report was published, the community chose to replace the failing water treatment plant and washeteria with a new, modular building. They were also able to reuse many of the newer mechanical elements from the old facility, reducing the overall project cost. The Alaska Native Villages program provided \$820,500 in funding to assist this overdue project.

The new water treatment plant serves all residents, as well as the school, teacher housing, and the new health clinic. Residents can access the new washeteria for laundry, showers, and restrooms; potable hauled water for their homes; and wastewater treatment.



The original washeteria and water treatment plant, constructed in 1999. Photo Credit: Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development; <u>Division of</u> <u>Community and Regional Affairs' Community Photo Library.</u>



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