

Workshop summary: Water and Sanitation Innovations for the Arctic
The Hotel Captain Cook, January 13th, 2011, 8:30am-5pm

Meeting co-sponsored by: U.S .Arctic Research Commission & the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

This workshop was focused on water and sanitation issues in rural Alaska, with stress placed on the connection between health and clean water provision/sanitation and a potential reframing of the "issue list" in the context of climate change.

Objectives of the workshop:

- 1) Frame the problem in current context: Consider climate change and new knowledge implicating water/sanitation practices in the transmission of infectious disease.
- 2) Identify knowledge gaps related to these issues (this is likely to involve identification of problems in the present systems).
- 3) Discuss potential areas in which R&D might be helpful and future strategies for water provision and sanitation.
- 4) Determine most promising plans for funding opportunities related to water and sanitation research.

The workshop organizers were interested in discussion of potential research and innovation in the field. To this end, the morning session consisted of presentations on the current status of water and sanitation in the circumpolar region, climate change impacts on this infrastructure, and health challenges posed by inadequate water and sanitation in rural areas of Alaska.

The lunchtime session consisted of a panel of state, federal and academic representatives involved in grant seeking and funding. Numerous ideas pertaining to funding sources and strategies were discussed.

During the afternoon, the group broke into five "breakout groups" focused on: Research and Outreach, Development/Categorization, Health, Sustainability and Global Climate Change. Groups had a list of "guiding questions" put forth by the moderator and developed by the group lead. Each group had 10 minutes to present their product to the larger group and the workshop ended with a discussion of the preferred path forward.

A decision was made to complete 4 actions with regard to the workshop:

- 1) Create a short, 1 page summary of the meeting activities to accompany Powerpoint presentations that will be loaded onto the USARC website (www.arctic.gov)
- 2) Create a document that is a short summary of the meetings afternoon session, with clear summary points and a list of recommendations. These recommendations will be vetted by the group back to Rosa via each person's Steering Group member. This document will be prepared for the purpose of briefing the Governor.
- 3) Create a second document, similar to #2 that will be more geared towards the Alaska State Legislature.

- 4) Create a “one pager” summary suitable to present to Congress and similar political representatives.

The group appeared to feel that it would be worth meeting on at least an annual basis. The plan was put forth to meet again in conjunction with the ALPHA Alaska Health Summit in 2012.