



# A “Best Practices” Approach to Improved Operations & Maintenance of Water & Sewer Systems in Alaska Villages

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## Historical Approach to Rural Water and Sewer O&M:



- Provide training, technical and emergency assistance
- Define success loosely and separately by various programs
- Irregular, incomplete and inconsistent monitoring of success
- Infrequent and irregular feedback to system owners
- Reward good performance... sometimes
- Cross our fingers!

## A new approach: Best Practices



- Reward “best practices” with rewards from top to almost bottom – would provide incentives throughout
- Continue to provide training and technical assistance without regard to performance
- Define success clearly, widely and consistently across all programs (TA providers, funders, project administrators, etc.)
- Measure and report performance of all systems annually
- Target specific resources for consistent low performance

## Defining O&M Best Practices:



- Create a scale from 0 – 100 points
- No make or break criteria: total score can be achieved in different ways
- Each best practice is worth a specific number of points, most important practices are more heavily weighted
- Include elements associated with all aspects of successful O&M: governing body, manager, operator, etc.

## Key to Making Best Practices System Work: Annual Assessments



- Performed jointly by TA providers and through data collection
- Include all rural communities so progress can be tracked
- Provide performance report to system owner and explain benefits of higher performance

## Simplified example of Best Practices approach:



O&M Best Practice Score	Benefits
80 - 100	Priority points for large capital projects
60 - 80	Receive additional subsidy funding (not presently available)
40 - 60	Eligible for large capital projects
30 - 40	Receive “gap” subsidy funding (not presently available)
20 - 30	Eligible for energy efficiency projects
10 - 20	Eligible for small capital projects (Band-Aids)
0 - 10	Training and technical assistance

## Process for developing a Best Practices approach:



- TA providers develop initial scoring criteria for best practices
- All programs work together to establish initial ties to benefits
- Notify communities and provide schedule for implementation
- Begin implementing for SFY2015 (summer 2014)

**Questions  
and  
Discussion  
about  
Proposed  
Best  
Practice  
Approach**

