

City of North Pole
125 Snowman Lane
North Pole, AK 99705



Where the spirit of Christmas lives year round.

Notice of Violation for Utility's Sewer Discharge Permit

The Utility Department continues to work toward a solution of the loss of river flow at its sewer discharge on the Tanana River. Fall 2012 was the first time the Utility discovered there was loss of river flow in the channel where it discharges treated wastewater. River flow

returned to the channel in spring 2013. There was loss of flow again in fall 2013.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) allows the Utility to discharge treated wastewater to the Tanana River under a permit.

The permit requires there be a mixing zone where the river flow dilutes the treated wastewater. Without river flow there is no mixing zone and the Utility is in violation of its permit.

In November 2014, the ADEC issued the City a Notice of Violation (NOV) for its violation of its discharge permit. Even though the violation is the result of an act of nature, the Utility is technically still in violation of its permit.

The NOV initiated the process where the Utility must propose a solution to the violation of its discharge permit. In July 2014, the state capital budget awarded the City a \$500,000 grant to find a solution to the problem. We have been working with an engineering firm to find a

practical solution to the NOV.

The Utility submitted a report to ADEC in August 2015 proposing two possible solutions—a longer sewer main that reaches a more reliable channel of the Tanana River and a large discharge pond.

The Utility must submit its final choice to ADEC by December 11, 2015. Each solution has advantages and disadvantages and both will be very expensive to construct. The Utility will also need to get permits from federal and state agencies because construction will occur in federally protected wetlands. The longer sewer discharge main would require installing a sewer main under the flood control dike and this requires a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers.



Channel where the Utility discharges treated wastewater. The flow pictured above is only treated wastewater. The river channel when flowing is up to three feet deep.

November 2015



Gas Lines installed in North Pole

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The Interior Gas Utility (IGU) installed over 70 miles of natural gas pipelines in the North Pole area this past summer. The project started in April clearing trees and brush in utility easements. Contractors started installing gas lines in May. Installation continued throughout the summer ending in October with restoration of landscaping. The contractors used a combination of trenching and directional drilling to install the gas lines.

The Interior Energy Project has evolved over the summer. The original plan was for IGU to install gas lines in the Borough in six phases wrapping around the City of Fairbanks. In a separate project, Fairbanks Natural Gas (FNG) was also installing gas lines within Fairbanks. The initial plan was to truck liquefied natural gas from

the North Slope to Fairbanks. This proved to be financially impractical. This summer, the State announced a plan to purchase FNG with the goal of turning it into a public versus a private corporation.

The Interior Energy Project continues to evolve. One track is exploring combining IGU with FNG to form a single public gas utility serving the Borough. With the collapse of the original effort to build a gas liquefaction plant on the North

Slope and truck gas to Fairbanks, the State began seeking other sources of natural gas. At the time of this newsletter, the state has narrowed the search to five proposals to provide natural gas. The goal is to identify a supplier by the end of 2015.



Installing gas line under Santa Claus Lane.

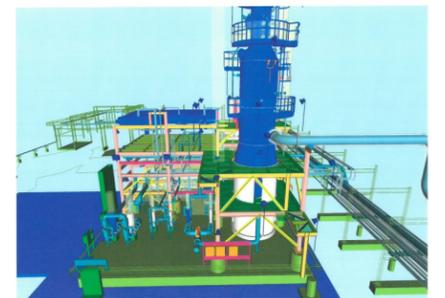
Protect your water service from freezing

As the temperatures drop and the frost penetrates deeper into the ground, it is important that you turn on your circulation pump if you have one on your utility water service.

Petro Star Constructing Asphalt Plant

This summer, Petro Star broke ground on an asphalt plant at its North Pole Refinery. Construction will continue throughout the fall and winter with a goal for the plant to open in May 2016. The facility will restore a local source of

asphalt oil lost when Flint Hills Refinery shut down in 2014. The asphalt plant will only be the second asphalt oil plant in the state. A local source of asphalt is expected to reduce the price of road projects in the Interior.



Sulfolane Update



Groundwater contaminated with sulfolane continues to be a concern in North Pole. All the occupied properties within the City located above the sulfolane plume are either connected to the City's utility or have a source of clean water provided by Flint Hills Resources.

The City has made efforts to achieve solutions to sulfolane contamination in and outside of the city limits. In June, the City Council adopted an ordinance requiring permits for

installing drinking water wells. Well permits are no-fee permits, but are intended as a mechanism to educate property owners and well-drillers about sulfolane. The Cities of North Pole and Anchorage are the only municipalities in the state that regulate wells. In October, the City passed a resolution that it would consider providing water to properties outside the city limits with contaminated wells.

The lawsuit the City initiated in 2014 against Flint Hills Re-

sources and Williams Petroleum for the harm sulfolane has caused to the City continues. The lawsuit is in the discovery stage. The City has proposed solutions to avoid a lengthy and expensive court battle, but to date, neither Flint Hills nor Williams have seriously responded to the City's offers.

For information about sulfolane contamination, see the DEC website: dec.alaska.gov. In the Quick Links section, click *North Pole Sulfolane*.

Improving Our Infrastructure



Repaving part of 4th Avenue.

The road projects that occurred in the City this past summer included repaving of parts of 3rd and 4th Avenues, Blanket Boulevard and Davis Road; all of Ouida Way; and paving road approaches along 5th and 8th Avenues. These projects were funded by the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS).

As a FMATS member, the City is eligible for funding to improve its transportation infrastructure. The City's cost for these projects is 9% of the total project cost. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities manages FMATS projects for the City including design and hiring and overseeing the construction contractors.

Next year's planned FMATS project includes paving the pedestrian paths on Blanket Boulevard, Snowman Lane and 5th and 8th Avenues and preventative maintenance fixing cracks on roads throughout the City.

Musical Park Equipment at Terry Miller Park



The City continues to improve its recreational resources. The latest addition to our parks was installation of Harmony Park musical equipment at Terry Miller Park. Installation of the equipment was made possible by a generous donation of \$25,000 from the Snedden Family Foundation. Virginia Farmier, the

Executive Director of the foundation, was instrumental in securing the gift for the City. The Foundation was also a donor to the 1st Sergeant Thomas Uptgraft Senior Fitness Trail. The City's investments in its recreational facilities is an effort to improve the quality of life within the City for its residents and visitors.

Utility Received \$1.9 Million Grant

In July, the Utility received a Municipal Matching Grant (MMG) for \$1.9 million to renovate aging sewer lift stations. The Utility was one of only four communities awarded a MMG in this year's State Capital Budget—there were 51 grant applicants. The MMG requires a 30% match totaling \$840,000. The Utility estimates the lift station project will cost \$2.8 million.

The Utility will use the grant to rehabilitate four lift stations not upgraded in the first two phases of lift station rehabilita-

tion. The lift stations to be rehabilitated are on Cary Street, Hurst, Tanana, and Mockler Roads. If there are sufficient funds, the Utility will also upgrade the lift station on Patriot Drive. The Utility expects construction to begin in June 2016 and construction will be completed by October 2016.

The rehabilitation work will repair rusting buried lift station cans; replace aging pumps, pipes and hardware; and upgrade the electronic controls. The prior lift station projects incorporated sophisticated

electronic controls and a telephone-based warning system. These systems will be the model for the lift stations included in this project.

Stantec Engineering will provide the Utility with engineering and construction management services for the lift station project. Stantec purchased USKH, the engineering firm that provided engineering services for the two prior lift station projects so there is consistency across the projects.



Lift station on Hurst Road scheduled for rehabilitation.

Skateboard Park Equipment from Eielson AFB

This past spring, Eielson AFB contacted the City to see if it was interested in receiving their surplus skateboard park equipment. The Public Works Department first had to register to receive surplus government property before we could collect the equipment. This process took several months, but finally in September we collected the equipment.

The equipment will enable the City to significantly increase the size of our skateboard park. Our skateboard park now only has a half dozen pieces of equipment. The equipment from Eielson has the potential to quadruple the pieces of equipment in our park. Expansion of the skateboard park will occur in phases as the Public Works Department rehabili-

tates the equipment.

The expanded skateboard park will make it an improved resource for local youth. Like the musical equipment installed in Terry Miller Park, the City's investments in its recreational facilities is an effort to improve the quality of life within the City for its residents and visitors.



Half-pipe skateboard ramp obtained from Eielson AFB.

North Pole Dogs now have their own Park

It has been several years in development, but the North Pole Dog Park is completed. We plan to continue to make improvements to the park, but it is open for use. The fences are closed and there is a parking lot on 3rd Avenue for park users.

The dog park is two parks in one. There is a large area open for dogs of all sizes. The en-

trance to this section of the dog park is located on 3rd Avenue. There is a section of the dog park made exclusively for smaller dogs if their owners do not feel comfortable around larger dogs. The entrance to the small dog park is through the gate located along the trail that parallels the elementary school fence.

When using the dog park be considerate of other users and please clean up after your dog. There are dog waste stations with bags and trash cans at the park.

