

BERING STRAIT REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK



THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ON ENERGY IN OUR REGION

THE BERING STRAIT REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK IS MAINTAINED BY KAWERAK INC.'S ENERGY PROGRAM.
PART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM, NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

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OUR FUTURE - Young leaders Kendra Lee, Allison Topkok, and Audrey Topkok pose for a photo at the 2019 Bering Strait Regional Energy Summit on May 7-10 in Nome, AK.

2019 ENERGY SUMMIT

*An opportunity to network,
connect and learn.*

The 2019 Bering Strait Regional Energy Summit was held May 7-9, 2019 in Nome, Alaska. Additional workshops took place on May 10.

79 attendees joined us for this event (37 community representatives and 42 agency/organization representatives/guests). 25 sessions were held covering various topics such as energy efficiency, project planning, community projects in the region, energy leadership committee formation, and more. See the whole story inside!

WHAT'S INSIDE:

 **FEATURED STORY:**
2019 Bering Strait
Regional Energy Summit

 **COMMUNITY
SPOTLIGHT:**
Unalakleet, Alaska

 **COMING SOON:**
Training event: "Draft &
craft your community
energy action plan."

 **QUARTERLY CONTEST:**
Enter to win a portable
solar panel for charging
your devices on the go!



KAWERAK, INC.



FEATURED STORY: BERING STRAIT REGIONAL ENERGY SUMMIT BRINGS TOGETHER ENERGY ADVOCATES AND EXPERTS

Last month, the energy summit brought together dozens of community members, regional residents and energy organizations at the Mini Convention Center in Nome. The main goal: to discuss how we can reduce the cost of energy and improve energy education for the region.

Topics for the three-day event included energy saving basics, project planning, energy projects in the region, and funding opportunities. Presentations, workshops and networking events allowed participants to engage in various different group settings and meet people from other communities and statewide agencies.

A "Community Energy Fair" took place on Wednesday, May 8. Students, families and other community members came out to learn about energy, try out the energy bike displayed by the Village of Solomon environmental team, and engage with the visiting energy professionals in the room.

On Friday, May 10 additional workshops were held at UAF Northwest Campus including a grant writing course taught by Meredith Noble of SenecaWorks www.learngrantwriting.org and a Strategic Energy Management Workshop hosted by Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and the Alaska Network on Energy Education and Employment.

During the summit, participants were asked to nominate their peers or themselves to be a part of the energy leadership committee. Leadership was a big focus of the summit, and time was spent discussing what makes a good leader, what an energy committee should look like, and how projects become successful in a community. The energy leadership committee members will be announced this summer and regular meetings will be held starting fall 2019.

Takeaways from this year's energy summit can be summed up in the words of the participants. When asked to describe their feelings after the summit in ONE WORD, some of the words expressed were:

**Hopeful. Excited. Interesting.
Grateful. Timely. Encouraged.
and of course...**

Energized!

KAWERAK, INC.



Community Spotlight on Energy: Unalakleet, Alaska

When there was still snow on the ground in mid-April, the Kawerak energy team visited Unalakleet to learn about their local power company and check out their numerous renewable energy systems around the village.

The local utility is Unalakleet Valley Electric Cooperative, or UVEC for short, and was formed decades ago with the vision of creating reliable, sustainable energy for local residents. It has been a long and sometimes bumpy road for UVEC, starting from forming their own cooperative to getting to where they are now... but the proof is in the power. It's reliable, it's safe, and by rural Alaska standards, it's affordable.

One other thing it's working on: being **green**. In 2010, UVEC installed six Northstar 100 wind turbines on the hill just north of the community. The Towarak Windfarm produces one million kWh of power on an annual basis for the community, offsetting 70,000 gallons of diesel fuel.

As many know, wind energy can be unreliable, sporadic, and hard to store, but UVEC has done a great job of coupling that excess power with their diesel power house to get the most renewable energy bang for their buck.

Besides harnessing wind energy, Unalakleet residents are serious about capturing power from the sun. Across the community, one can see various solar arrays on local homes and businesses (thirteen, to be exact) and UVEC gives incentive to those customers who create additional power back onto the grid. If you produce more power than you're using the utility will give you a net metering credit at the rate of 16.38 cents per kWh (as of July 1, 2019).

It's a win-win for the community: customers save money, the utilities' diesel engines don't have to work as hard, and the reduced amount of diesel burned is that much kinder to the environment.

What's next for this forward-thinking community and customer-focused utility company?

A new distribution line is in the works. Crews are adding a 7,700 foot overhead power line that will improve the reliability of the system and decrease outages for outlying subdivisions. This is the largest infrastructure project for UVEC since the construction of their wind farm.

The next plan, after completion of the new distribution line, is stepping up the voltage in the lines from the wind turbines to town. By increasing the transit power from approximately 4,000 volts to 12,000 volts, stability will increase and there will be less line loss. Overall, this upgrade will save another 40,000 gallons of diesel fuel per year.

What comes after that? Power storage. By incorporating a battery bank into their grid, UVEC could save excess energy created by the wind turbines, and access that energy later - even allowing the community to operate in "diesels off" mode at times.

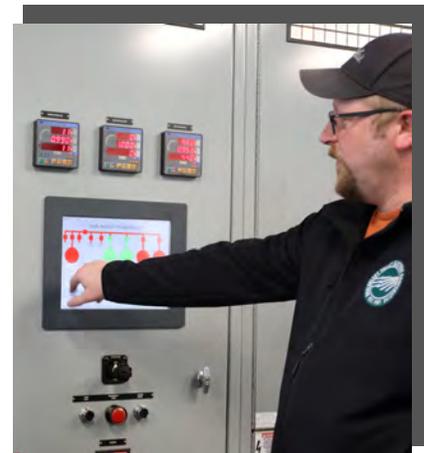
Diesels off?! That's nearly unheard of for a remote Alaska village, and another reason that Unalakleet is our community spotlight.

Keep an eye on this innovative and forward-thinking village... because they are setting a great example of what "sustainable energy" looks like in rural Alaska.

UVEC Power Stats at a glance: 
260 Members, 373 Meters
1 million kWh/year (produced by wind)
70,000 gallons diesel (displaced/year)
45.84 cents/kWh (Rate before PCE)
16.84 cents/kWh (Net metering credit)



PLUGGED IN - A renewable energy system circuit panel is displayed on a local home, showing how a residential solar array is tied into the electric grid.



POWER ON - UVEC manager Reese Huhta shows how their SCADA system operates in the power house.

 Follow UVEC on Facebook @UnalakleetElectric



WIND ENERGY - The Towarak Wind Farm has six Northstar 100 turbines that produce renewable energy for UVEC members.



SUN ENERGY - A local pizza restaurant has an impressive solar array on its roof.



Thank you, energy summit participants and guests!



QUARTERLY CONTEST!



This quarter, we are giving away one portable, folding solar panel. Great for camp or when you're out on your next adventure. Just unfold, plug in your USB device, and let the sun supply your power.

To enter to win this prize, go to the link Kawerak.org/energy and sign up for our "Energy News Email List." If you're already on our email list, you'll be automatically entered in the drawing!



Connect with us!
energy@kawerak.org

Learn more about our program:
kawerak.org/energy

Find energy-saving tips online:
energy.gov/energysaver

UPCOMING TRAINING:

- "Draft & craft your community energy action plan."
- Small group workshop on energy planning. Location to be determined.
- August 12-13, 2019
- Email energy@kawerak.org for details!

