

Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and Vulnerability Assessment for Alaska Village Mission Drinking Water System, Homer, Alaska PWSID # 245058 June 2003

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT # 644 Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

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The Drinking Water Protection Program (DWPP) is producing Source Water Assessments in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996. Each assessment includes a delineation of the source water area, an inventory of potential and existing contaminant sources that may impact the water, a risk ranking for each of these contaminants, and an evaluation of the potential vulnerability of these drinking water sources.

These assessments are intended to provide public water systems owners/operators, communities, and local governments with the best available information that may be used to protect the quality of their drinking water. The assessments combine information obtained from various sources, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), public water system owners/operators, and other public information sources. The results of this assessment are subject to change if additional data becomes available. It is anticipated this assessment will be updated every five years to reflect any changes in the vulnerability and/or susceptibility of public drinking water source. If you have any additional information that may affect the results of this assessment, please contact the Program Coordinator of DWPP, (907) 269-7521.

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Source Water Assessment for Alaska Village Mission Source of Public Drinking Water, Homer, Alaska

By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Executive Summary

Alaska Village Mission is a Class B (transient/noncommunity) water system consisting of one well in Homer, Alaska. The wellhead received a susceptibility rating of Low and the aquifer received a susceptibility rating of Medium. Combining these two ratings produces a Low rating for the natural susceptibility of the well. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Alaska Village Mission public drinking water source include: roads, residential areas, septic systems, injection wells and a DEC recognized contaminated site. These identified potential and existing sources of contamination are considered sources of bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals. Overall, the public water source for Alaska Village Mission received a vulnerability rating of High for bacteria and viruses, High for nitrates and nitrites, and Low for volatile organic chemicals.

Introduction

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) is completing source water assessments for all public drinking water sources in the State of Alaska. The purpose of this assessment is to provide owners and/or operators, communities, and local governments with information they can use to preserve the quality of Alaska's public drinking water supplies. The results of this source water assessment can be used to decide where voluntary protection efforts are needed and feasible, and also what efforts will be most effective in reducing contaminant risks to your water system. Ecology and Environment, Inc. has been contracted to perform these assessments under the supervision of ADEC.

This source water assessment combines a review of the natural conditions at the site and the potential and existing contaminant risks. These are combined to

determine the overall vulnerability of the drinking water source to contamination.

Description of the Homer Area

Location

Homer is located on the southwest end of the Kenai Peninsula on the north shore of Kachemak Bay on the east side of Cook Inlet (see Inset of Map 1 of Appendix A).

Precipitation

The Homer area averages about 24.65 inches of precipitation per year, with approximately 54.9 inches of snowfall (ACRC 2002).

Topography and Drainage

The majority of businesses and residents in Homer are located at the base and the top of a steep bluff. Several creeks provide drainage off the ridge into Kachemak Bay, Cook Inlet, or the Anchor River.

Groundwater Use

Over 90% of homes are fully plumbed. Water is supplied by a dam and 35-acre reservoir at Bridge Creek, is treated, stored in a 500,000-gallon tank, and piped to the majority of homes in the City. The system provides 2 million gallons per day. Other residents use individual wells or have water delivered to home tanks (ADCED 2002).

Geology and Soils

The vast majority of sediments exposed along the western side of the Kenai Peninsula are Quaternary sediments (Magoon, Adkison, and Egbert, 1976). These sediments are from former glacial streams,

abandoned-channel deposits, glacial moraines and deposits from existing streams (Glass, 1996). They generally consist of a combination of sand, gravel, silt, and clay. There can be significant variation in the composition of sediment layers over relatively small areas. As a consequence, aquifers in the area may be either confined or unconfined, depending on the local sequence of sediment layers (Glass, 1996). The bedrock on the northern coast of Kachemak Bay comprises limestone, shale, coal, peat and petrified wood, while that on the southern shores of the Bay is primarily graywacke, siltstone, arkose sandstone, greenstone, metachert and argillite (Harmon, 1998).

Alaska Village Mission Public Drinking Water System

Alaska Village Mission is a Class B (transient/noncommunity) water system. The system consists of one well located on Mission Road in Homer, Alaska.

The well was installed with a sanitary seal on October 13, 1997 to a total depth of 165 feet. A properly installed sanitary seal may provide protection against contaminants from entering the source waters at the well casing. The site is properly drained and the well is grouted. Proper grouting provides added protection against contaminants traveling along the well casing and into source waters. The well serves up to 60 non-residents.

Alaska Village Mission Drinking Water Protection Area

In order to evaluate whether a drinking water source is at risk, we must first evaluate what are the most likely pathways for surface contamination to reach the groundwater. Some areas are more likely to allow contamination to reach the well than others. These areas are determined by looking at the characteristics of the soil, groundwater, aquifer, and well.

The most probable area for contamination to reach the drinking water well is the area that contributes water to the well, the groundwater recharge area. This area is designated as the Drinking Water Protection Area (DWPA). Because a release of contaminants within the DWPA is most likely to impact the drinking water well, this area will serve as the focus for voluntary protection efforts.

An analytical calculation was used to determine the size and shape of the DWPA. The input parameters describing the attributes of this aquifer were derived from Freeze and Cherry (1979), Glass (1996), and from a review of well logs in the area found in the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and United States Geological Survey databases. Additional methods were also used to take into account any uncertainties in groundwater flow and aquifer characteristics to arrive at a meaningful DWPA (Please refer to the Guidance Manual for Class B Water Systems for additional information).

The DWPAs established for wells by the ADEC are separated into four zones. These zones correspond to differences in the time-of-travel (TOT) of the water moving through the aquifer to the well. The time of travel for contaminants within the water varies and is dependent on the physical and chemical characteristics of each contaminant. The following is a summary of the four DWPA zones and the calculated time-of-travel for each:

Table 1. Definition of Zones

Zone Definition

- A $\frac{1}{4}$ the distance to the 2-year time-of-travel
- B Less than the 2-year time-of-travel
- C Less than the 5-year time-of-travel
- D Less than the 10 year time-of-travel

As an example, water moving through the aquifer in Zone B will most likely reach the well in less than 2 years from the time it crosses the outer limit of Zone B.

Zone A also incorporates the area downgradient from the well to take into account the area of the aquifer that is influenced by pumping of the well. Water within the aquifer in Zone A will reach the well in several hours to several months.

Inventory of Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources

The Drinking Water Protection Program has completed an inventory of potential and existing sources of contamination within the Alaska Village Mission DWPA. This inventory was completed through a search of agency records and other publicly available information. Potential sources of contamination to the drinking water aquifer include a wide range of categories and types. Potential drinking water contaminants are found within agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial areas, but can also occur within areas that have little or no development.

For the basis of all Class B water system assessments, three categories of drinking water contaminants were inventoried. They include:

- Bacteria and viruses;
- Nitrates and/or nitrites; and

• Volatile organic chemicals.

Inventoried potential sources of contamination within the drinking water protection area were associated with residential and light industrial type activities. The sources are displayed on Map 2 of Appendix C and summarized in the tables in Appendix B.

Ranking of Contaminant Risks

Once the potential and existing sources of contamination have been identified, they are sorted and ranked according to what type and level of risk they represent. Ranking of contaminant risks for a "potential" or "existing" source of contamination is a function of toxicity and volumes of specific contaminants associated with that source. Further, contaminant risks are a function of the number and density of those types of contaminant sources as well as the proximity of those sources to the well. Rankings include:

- Low;
- Medium;
- High; and
- Very High.

The time-of-travel for contaminants within the water varies and is dependent on the physical and chemical characteristics of each contaminant. Bacteria and Viruses are only inventoried in Zones A and B because of their short life span. Only "Very High" and "High" rankings are inventoried within the outer Zone D due to the probability of contaminant dilution by the time the contaminants get to the well.

Tables 2 through 4 in Appendix B contain the ranking of potential and existing sources of contamination with respect to bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals.

Vulnerability of Alaska Village Mission Drinking Water Source

Vulnerability of a drinking water source to contamination is a combination of two factors:

- Natural susceptibility; and
- Contaminant risks.

Appendix D contains eight charts, which together form the 'Vulnerability Analysis' for a source water assessment for a public drinking water source. Chart 1 analyzes the 'Susceptibility of the Wellhead' to contamination by looking at the construction of the well and its surrounding area. Chart 2 analyzes the 'Susceptibility of the Aquifer' to contamination by looking at the naturally occurring attributes of the water source and influences on the groundwater system that might lead to contamination. Chart 3 analyzes 'Contaminant Risks' for the drinking water source with respect to bacteria and viruses. The 'Contaminant Risks' portion of the analysis considers potential sources of contaminants as well as a review of contamination that has or may have occurred, but has not arrived or been detected at the well. Lastly, Chart 4 contains the 'Vulnerability Analysis for Bacteria and Viruses'. Charts 5 through 8 contain the Contaminant Risks and Vulnerability Analyses for nitrates and nitrites and volatile organic chemicals, respectively.

A score for the Natural Susceptibility is achieved by analyzing the properties of the well and the aquifer.

A ranking is assigned for the Natural Susceptibility according to the point score:

Natural Susceptibility Ratings				
40 to 50 pts	Very High			
30 to < 40 pts	High			
20 to < 30 pts	Medium			
< 20 pts	Low			

The well for Alaska Village Mission is completed in a confined aquifer. Confined aquifers are somewhat protected from migration of water from the surface by an overlying low-permeability layer, such as a clay. However, contaminants at the surface have the potential to impact this aquifer adversely because wells penetrating the aquifer can act as conduits. The confining layers in this area can be somewhat discontinuous, which also increases the susceptibility of the aquifer. Table 2 shows the Susceptibility scores and ratings for Alaska Village Mission (see Charts 1 and 2).

Table 2. Susceptibility

Susceptibility of the Wellhead	Score 0	Rating Low
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	11	Medium
Natural Susceptibility	11	Low

Contaminant risks to a drinking water source depend on the type, number or density, and distribution of contaminant sources. This score has been derived from an examination of existing or historical contamination that has been detected at the drinking water source through routine sampling. It also evaluates potential sources of contamination. Flow charts are used to assign a point score, and ratings are assigned in the same way as for the natural susceptibility.

Contaminant Risk Ratings					
40 to 50 pts	Very High				
30 to < 40 pts	High				
20 to < 30 pts	Medium				
< 20 pts	Low				

Table 3 summarizes the Contaminant Risks for each category of drinking water contaminants (see Charts 3, 5, and 7).

Table 3. Contaminant Risks

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	50	Very High
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	50	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	25	Medium

Finally, an overall vulnerability score is assigned for each water system by combining each of the contaminant risk scores with the natural susceptibility score:

> Natural Susceptibility (0 - 50 points)+ Contaminant Risks (0 - 50 points)=

Vulnerability of the Drinking Water Source to Contamination (0 - 100).

Again, rankings are assigned according to a point score:

Overall Vulnerability Ratings					
80 to 100 pts	Very High				
60 to < 80 pts	High				
40 to < 60 pts	Medium				
< 40 pts	Low				

Table 4 contains the overall vulnerability scores (0 - 100) and ratings for each of the three categories of drinking water contaminants. Note: scores are rounded off to the nearest five (see Charts 4, 6, and 8).

Table 4.	Overall Vulnerability to Contamination by
Category	

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	60	High
Nitrates and Nitrites	60	High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	35	Low

Bacteria and Viruses

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is Very High, with the injection well representing the greatest risk to the drinking water well (See Chart 3 - Contaminant Risks for Bacteria and Viruses in Appendix D). Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health. Due to the detection of bacteria and viruses during recent water sampling, the score on Chart 2 is the maximum score.

After combining the contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by bacteria and viruses is High.

Nitrates and Nitrites

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is Very High with the injection well representing the highest risk to this source of public drinking water (See Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D). Nitrates are very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water.

The last five years' sampling history for Alaska Village Mission public water source indicates the most recent concentration detected was 1.270 mg/L on 3/7/01, which represents 13% of the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). While nitrates and nitrites can occur naturally in groundwater, a level of 20% of the MCL or more is considered to be due to manmade sources. Water with levels of nitrates and nitrites below 100% of the MCL is considered safe to drink by ADEC. After combining the contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by nitrates and nitrites is High.

Volatile Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is Medium with the roads, residential areas, septic systems, injection wells, and contaminated site representing the risk for volatile organic chemicals (See Chart 7 – Contaminant Risks for Volatile Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

Residents in the area typically heat their homes with various types of on-site fuel sources, including propane

and heating oil stored in aboveground or underground storage tanks. Although this report does not address heating oil tanks (unless their location is known), they can pose a risk of volatile organic chemical contamination to drinking water sources. The most common causes of fuel leaks of these heating oil systems are overfilling the tank, ruptured fuel lines, leaking storage tanks, damaged or faulty valves and vandalism. Secondary containment around the tank and regular system maintenance can help prevent many of these harmful fuel leaks and help protect the drinking water supply.

Class B water systems generally are not required to test for volatile organic chemicals. After combining the potential contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by volatile organic chemicals is Low.

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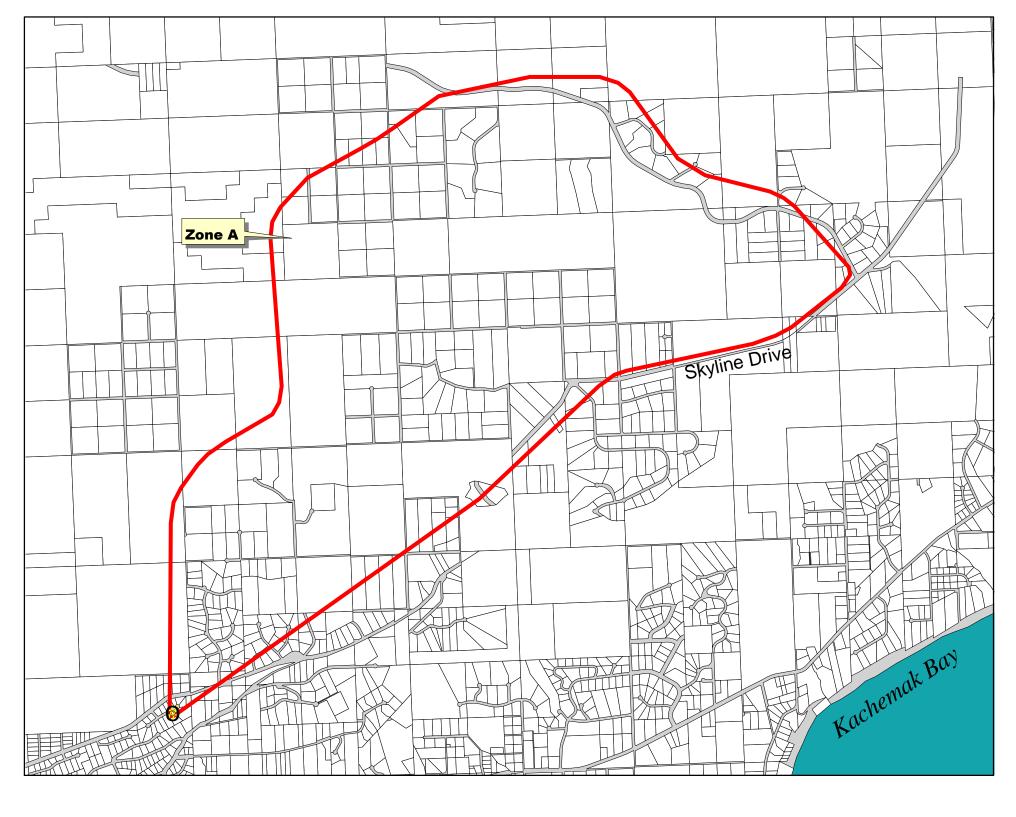
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APPENDIX A

Alaska Village Mission Drinking Water Protection Area (Map 1)

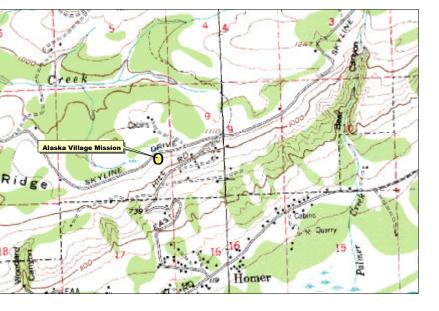
Drinking Water Protection Area for Alaska Village Mission





Alaska Village Mission Well Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)





Map 1

APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Alaska Village Mission (Tables 1-4)

Contaminant Source Inventory for Alaska Village Mission

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Location	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	А		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	А		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	А		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-3	А		2	
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А		2	284 acres
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R2-145	А		2	
Contaminated sites, DEC recognized, non-Superfund, non-RCRA	U04	U4-1	А		2	Ohlson Mtn. DERA Site, RecKey 198823X929503. Transformer oil with PCB's found at site.
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-117	А		2	

Table 2

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 245058.001

Alaska Village Mission Sources of Bacteria and Viruses

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	А	High	2
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low	2 284 acres
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R2-145	А	Low	2
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-117	А	Low	2

Table 3

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 245058.001

Alaska Village Mission Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Location	Map Number Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	А	High		2
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	А	Low		2
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	А	Low		2
Logging (active)	E02	E2-3	А	Low		2
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low		2 284 acres
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R2-145	А	Low		2
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-117	А	Low		2

Table 4

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 245058.001

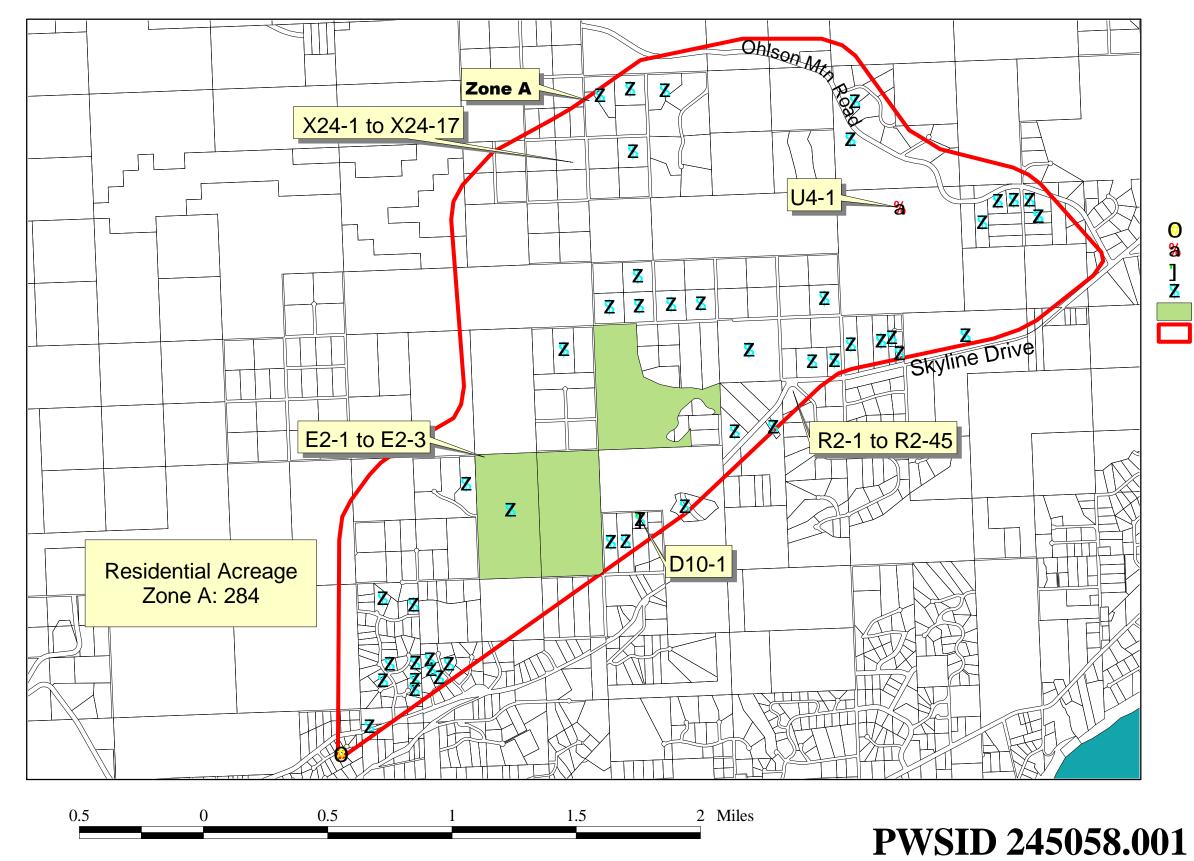
Alaska Village Mission Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals

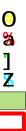
Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Location	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	А	Low		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	А	Low		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	А	Low		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-3	А	Low		2	
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low		2	284 acres
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R2-145	А	Low		2	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-117	А	Low		2	

APPENDIX C

Alaska Village Mission Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map 2)

Drinking Water Protection Area for Alaska Village Mission and Existing and Potential Sources of Contamination





Alaska Village Mission Well Contaminated sites, DEC recognized-U4 Injection wells-(Drainfield Disposal Method)-D10 Septic systems-R2 Logged Area-E2 Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)





APPENDIX D

Vulnerability Analysis for Alaska Village Mission Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1-8)

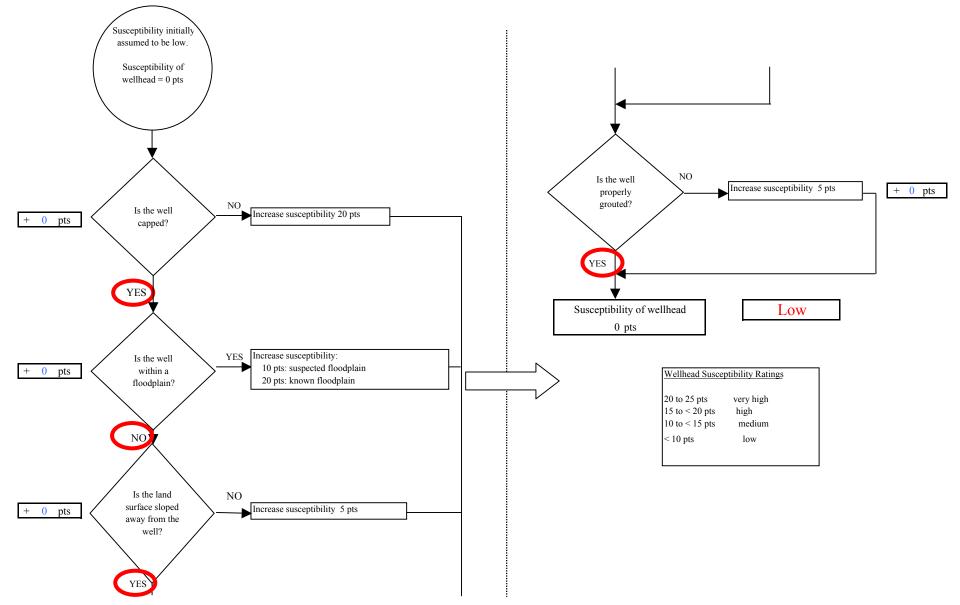
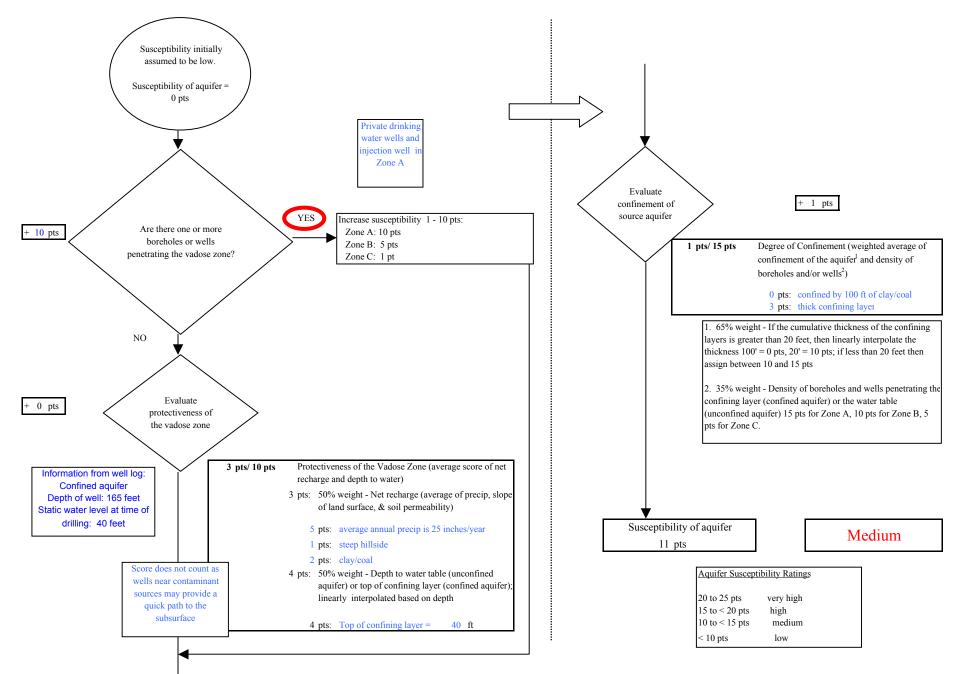
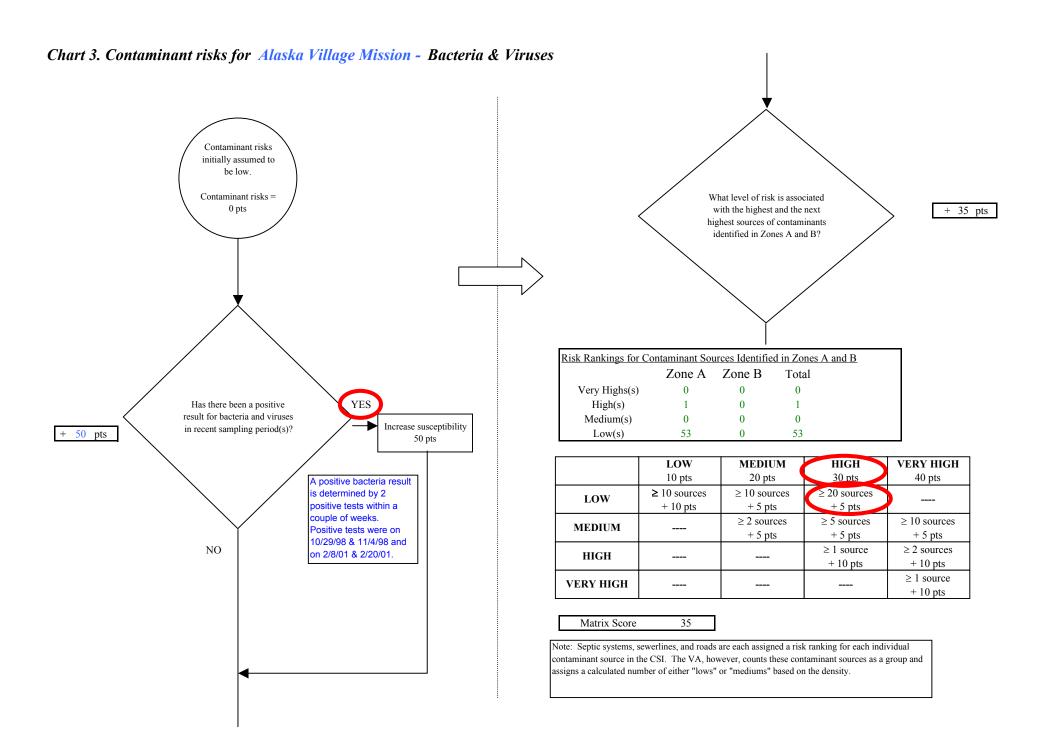
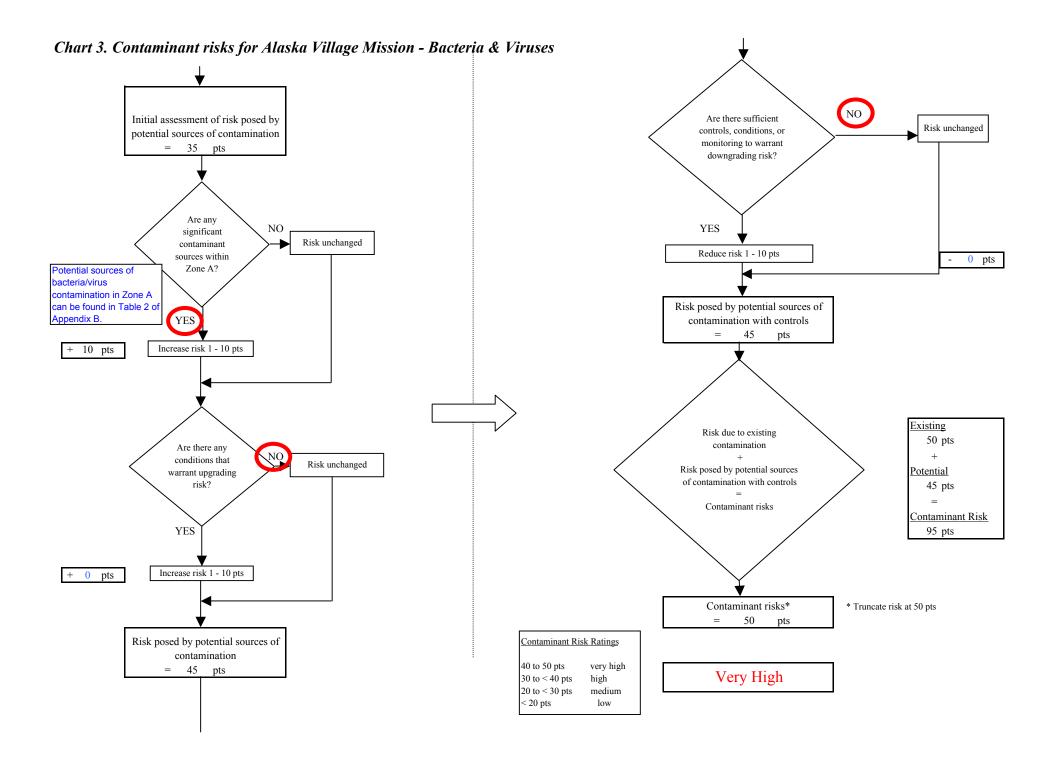


Chart 1. Susceptibility of the wellhead - Alaska Village Mission

Chart 2. Susceptibility of the aquifer - Alaska Village Mission







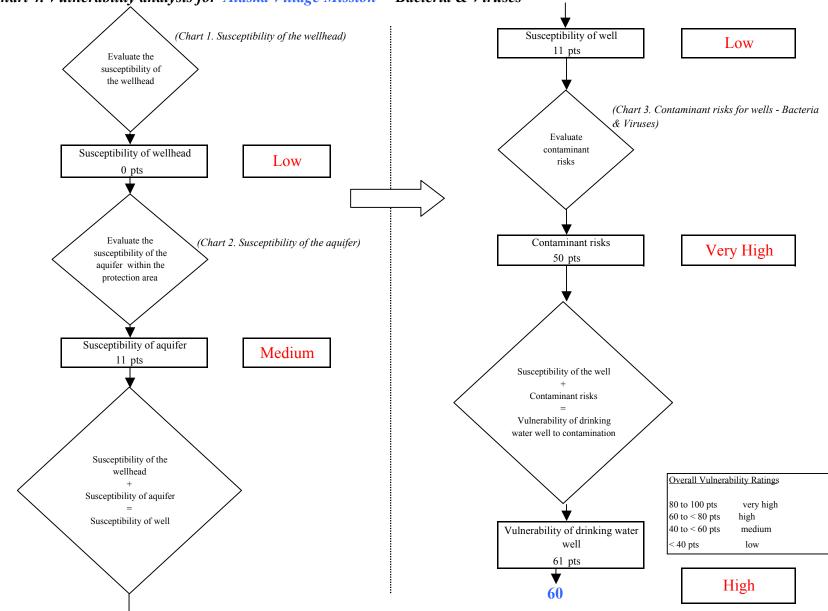
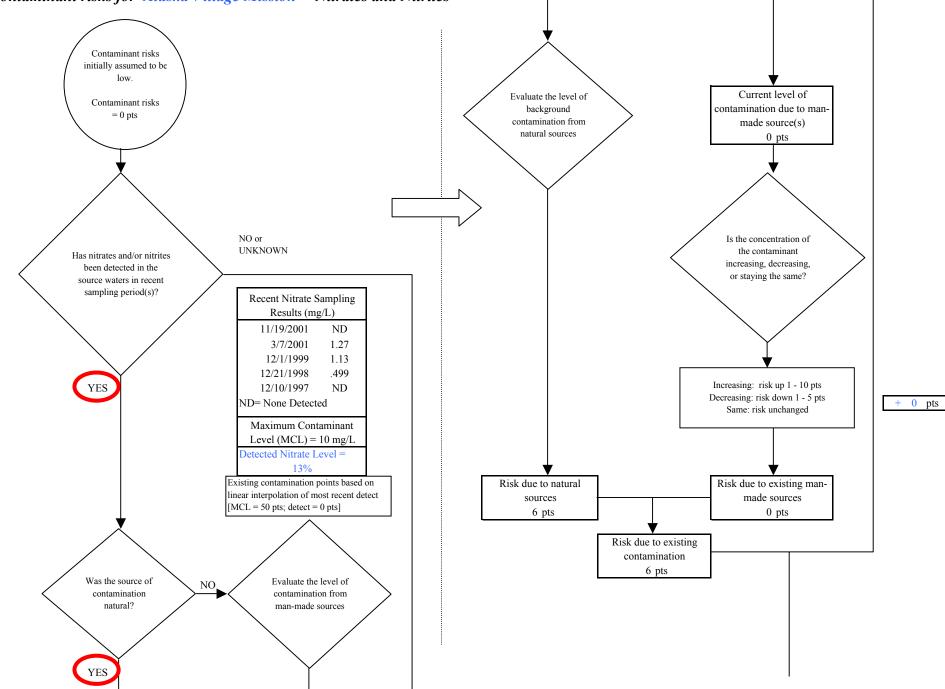


Chart 4. Vulnerability analysis for Alaska Village Mission - Bacteria & Viruses





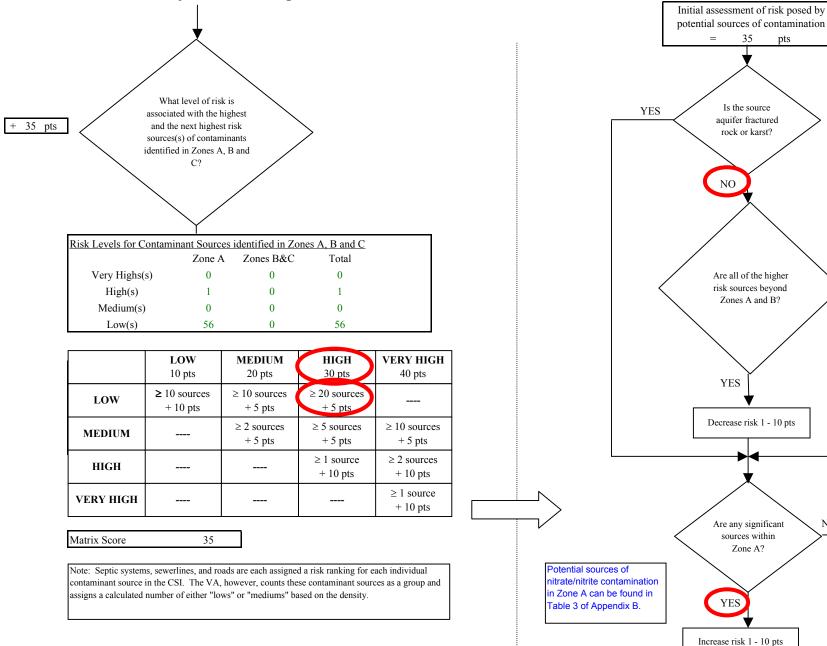


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Alaska Village Mission - Nitrates and Nitrites

NO

NO

Risk unchanged

Risk unchanged

- 0 pts

+ 10 pts

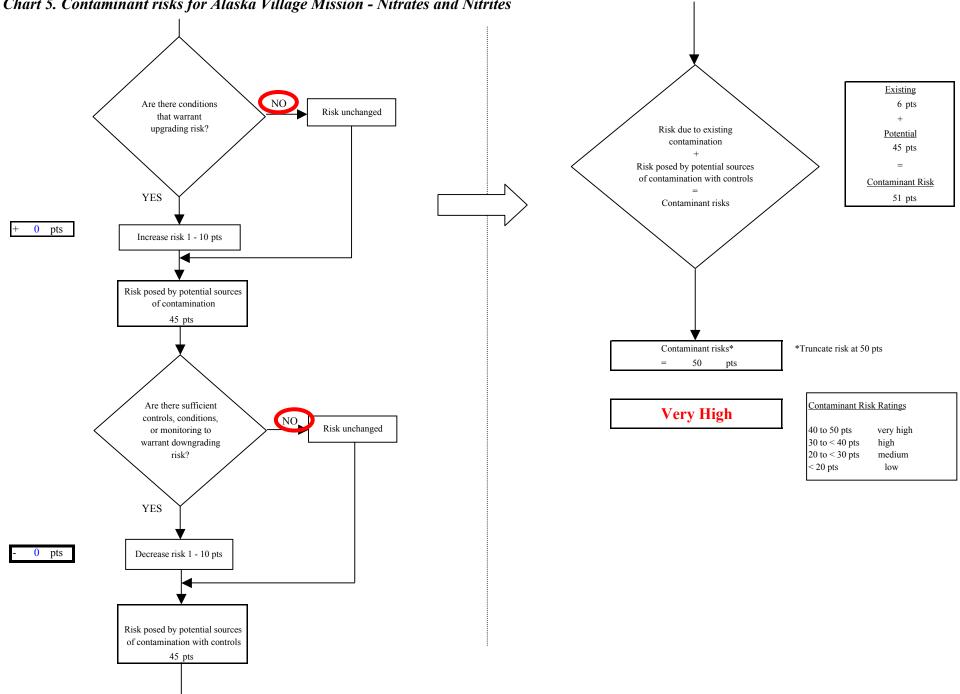


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Alaska Village Mission - Nitrates and Nitrites

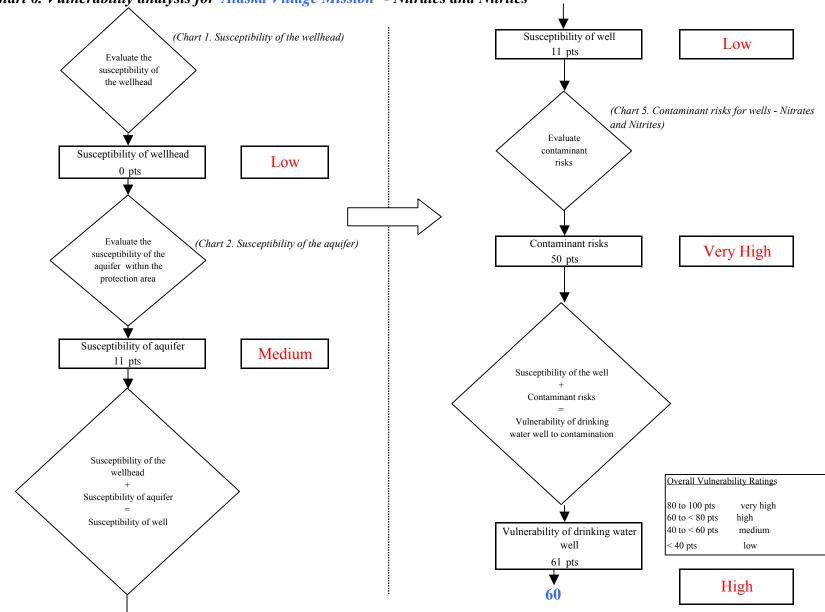
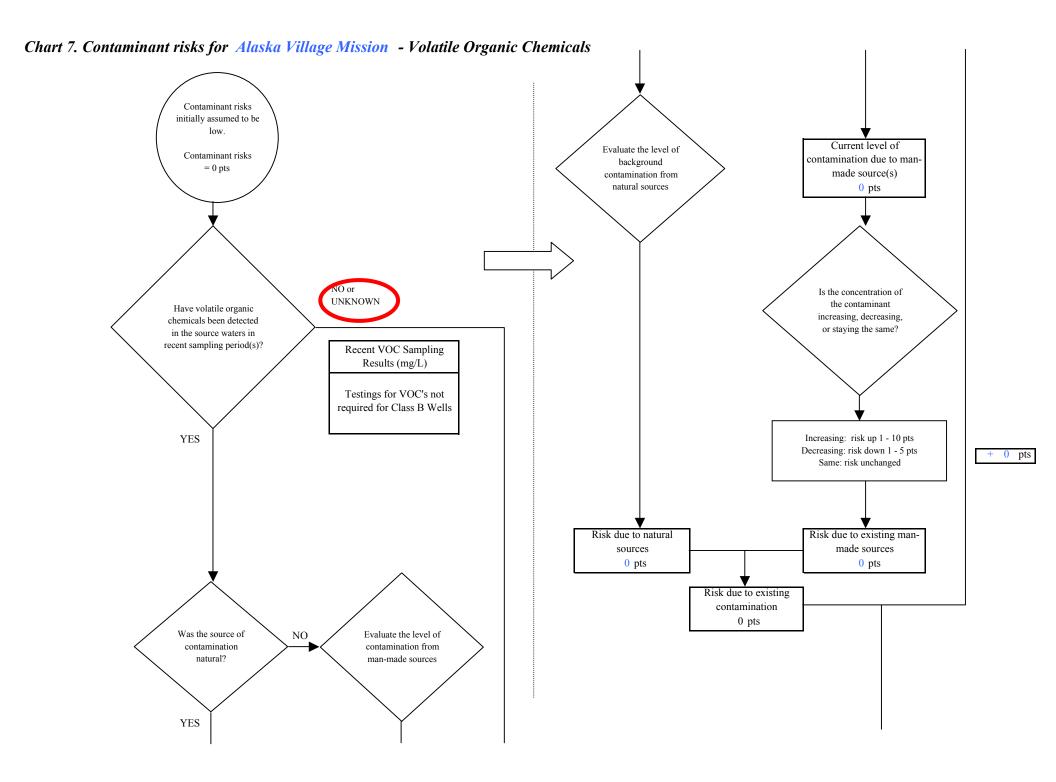


Chart 6. Vulnerability analysis for Alaska Village Mission - Nitrates and Nitrites



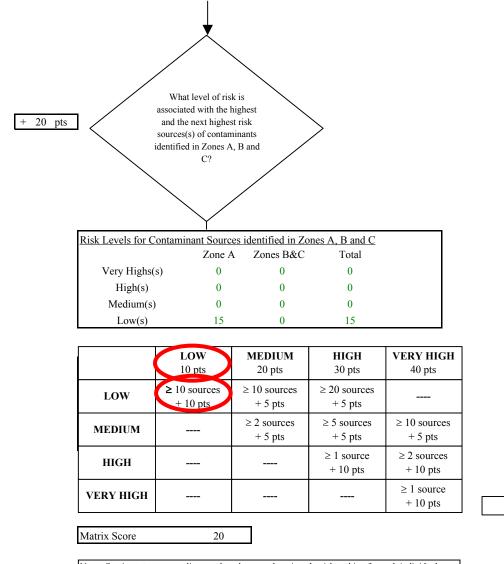
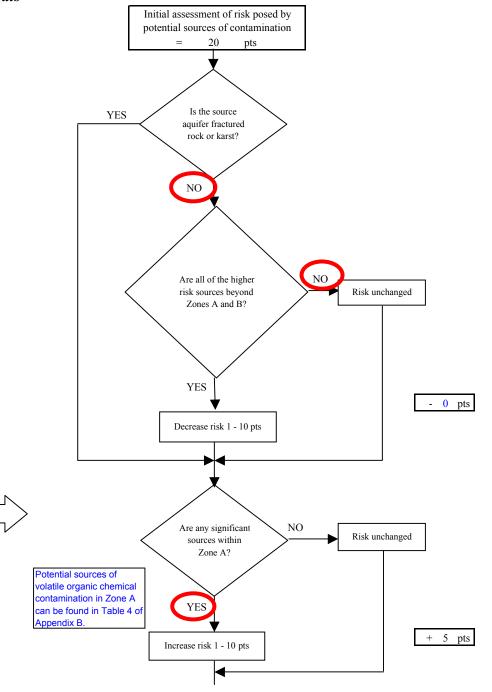


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Alaska Village Mission - Volatile Organic Chemicals

Note: Septic systems, sewerlines, and roads are each assigned a risk ranking for each individual contaminant source in the CSI. The VA, however, counts these contaminant sources as a group and assigns a calculated number of either "lows" or "mediums" based on the density.



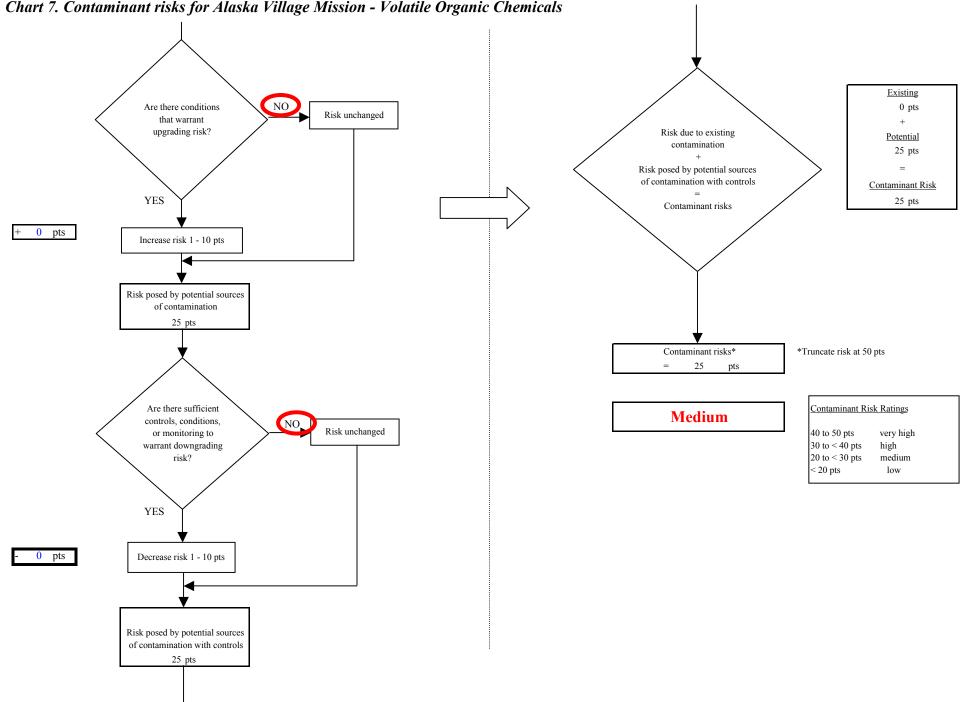


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Alaska Village Mission - Volatile Organic Chemicals

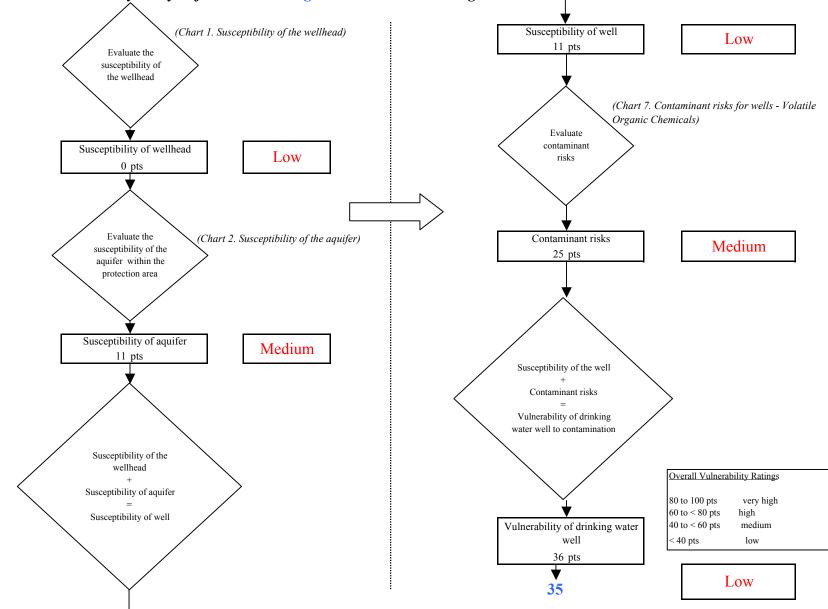


Chart 8. Vulnerability analysis for Alaska Village Mission - Volatile Organic Chemicals