

City of Kotzebue Fire Department

July 7, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Kotzebue Fire Department for the support of the proposed improvements of the "Fire Hall Lift Station and Sewer System." A sewer line that freezes, backs up, and pours sewage water into the main entryway of the Fire Hall has been getting progressively worse over the past several winters. The waste spills into the dirt/gravel/ice/snow walkway where emergency responders and the public enter the building. This door leads into the department kitchen, and on several occasions the overflow has made its way under the door and into the dining area. The Fire Department is staffed 24/7 with responders spending the night at the station, and when the old plumbing is out of service responders are not able to flush toilets, take showers, launder soiled uniforms, clean dishes, or even use sinks for washing hands. The health and sanitation issues are obvious as well as the disruption to daily operations. (The sewer line froze 7 times this past winter).

A grey-water cistern inside the building is located in a high use area. The persistent bad smell of the cistern is made worse simply by turning on the kitchen faucet. Regular maintenance has not prevented the foul odor from coming out of this poorly designed system.

As a member of the Kotzebue Fire Department since 2011, I would love to see the lift station and sewer system updated to eliminate the health concerns, bad odors, and unsanitary work environment for our first responders.

Thank you,

Kelly Marcus | Kotzebue Fire Chief
(907) 412-1337