

Safe Water Facilities for Villages

Several Native village where only primitive water conditions now exist will acquire safe water facilities under a \$1 million demonstration program authorized recently by Congress.

"Hopefully," Senator Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, said, "after the first facilities prove successful, the program can be expanded to include all rural villages."

The facilities called for will provide a central source of fresh water, showers, toilets, clothes, washing facilities, office space for the village health aide, and an educational and informational program relating to health and

hygiene. All sewage from the facility would be treated in order to prevent pollution of the village environment.

The names of the villages to be affected were not released.

The cost of the expanded program is estimated to be between \$15 and \$18 million.

"Many of the health problems of our rural villages can be directly linked to an unsafe water supply," Stevens explained.

"By providing each village with a central source of safe water and with needed sanitary and health facilities all housed under

roof, we can substantially improve the quality of village life at a minimum cost."

The \$1 million authorization was included as part of the House-Senate conference compromise version of the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1970.

The central water facilities program was first proposed by Senators Stevens and Edward Kennedy in the "Alaska Safe Water Facilities Act," introduced after the Subcommittee on Indian Education traveled throughout Alaska's rural areas last spring.