



## **MEDIA RELEASE: PETERSBURG AQUATIC CENTER MECHANICAL ROOM FIRE**

Date: October 20, 2020  
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### **For Immediate Release**

On the evening of October 16<sup>th</sup> at approximately 8:30pm, the Petersburg Aquatic Center experienced an event in its mechanical room which appears to be caused by a catastrophic failure of the pool boiler breakers. The fire alarm system and sprinkler system in the mechanical room operated correctly, and the fire did not get out of control, however the power supply and protection equipment to the pool boilers is destroyed.

After consulting with SEAPA's Engineer, it was found that no disturbance of the electrical system existed prior to the event at the aquatic center. The failure of the boiler breakers, and subsequent electrical phase to phase fault, caused the city-wide brownout that was experienced on the system.

When a failure of this type and magnitude occurs, the system saw the fault as an additional load and tried to meet the load requirements. Petersburg was interconnected to Wrangell and Ketchikan at the time of the event and the system protections did operate as designed to shed loads in Ketchikan and allow for recovery of system-wide voltage and frequency as quickly as possible. Additionally, system protections in Petersburg also detected the fault at the pool and operated correctly in attempts to clear the fault.

Parks and Recreation is working with PMPL and Mattingly Electric to further define the failure in the pool mechanical room and to restore power to other mechanical and lighting systems in the facility. The Borough and School's insurance provider is working with staff to identify a commercial electrical contractor to come to Petersburg and begin the process of repairing the damage.

Parks and Recreation will be providing additional information as it becomes available as to schedules for the pool closure and for reopening of the community center portion of the facility. Please call Parks and Recreation for facility scheduling information at 772-3392.