



Meeting Date: November 17, 2021

Staff Contact: Adrienne Candelaria, Customer Service Division Manager

TITLE: OB-21-23 – Customer Conversations: Strategies for Resuming Normal Operations post-COVID

ACTION: Information Only

SUMMARY:

Three virtual Customer Conversations meetings were held on different days in October of 2021 to solicit customer input on development of policies regarding water and sewer accounts that have fallen behind on payments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-COVID, in 2019, the monthly average number of past-due accounts eligible for disconnection was 576. During the pandemic, that number has risen to more than 5,000. The average delinquent residential account balance is now almost \$300. Meanwhile, late fees and disconnections for non-payment have been suspended since the beginning of the pandemic in March of 2020.

As the community and the economy emerge from the pandemic, the Water Authority needs to prepare for a return to normal billing and collection operations. The utility's Customer Conversations program provided an ideal forum to solicit ideas from ratepayers on best ways to proceed in this area – before late fees and disconnections resume. The focus was on ways to communicate the availability of assistance programs and payment arrangements to ratepayers enduring economic hardship.

By a large margin, Customer Conversations participants agreed that a message of compassion – that help is available – would be the most effective way to get past-due customers to set up payment arrangements and thereby avoid curtailment of service. (All customers who are behind on their water bills can avoid disconnection by setting up a payment arrangement requiring no down payment, and late fees will remain suspended until all past-due customers have had an opportunity to set up a payment arrangement).

Besides payment arrangements, help is also available in the form of the utility's Water Assistance Fund, its low-income credit program, and some \$2.5 million in federal funding from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). The Water Authority will promote these programs via through bill inserts, social media, and radio and billboard

messaging. To date, approximately \$90,000 in ERAP assistance has been awarded to 120 customers.

One hundred forty-nine customers in total participated in the Customer Conservation meetings, which were conducted in an online Zoom format. Participants who remained for an entire meeting and completed post-event evaluation forms were each given a \$25 Visa gift card and entered in a raffle for a rain barrel.

Content for the Customer Conversations meetings, each of which was 90 minutes in duration, was developed in consultation with the utility's Technical Customer Advisory Committee, staff from the Customer Service Division, and the Public Affairs Manager. It included video presentations, interactive polls, and moderated breakout discussions. A complete outcomes report, prepared by the contractor who coordinated the meetings' online components and registration process, is available in the supporting documents to this agenda item.

Some meeting metrics, briefly noted:

- Customers from all four city quadrants participated in the meetings (NW 27%, NE 39%, SW 22%, SE 12%)
- 74% of participants were under the age of 65 (53% under the age of 55)
- Participant evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, with 72% strongly agreeing that their time had been well spent; 83% strongly agreeing that they felt their input was valued; and 78% strongly agreeing that they would participate in future meetings if given the opportunity.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None



Customer Conversations

FALL 2021

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SUMMARY

For the past 11 years, the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority has held annual Customer Conversations to solicit input and feedback from customers on pertinent issues and approaches. Due to the restrictions on gatherings, it was decided to conduct the Conversations for 2021 virtually. Kesselman-Jones, an event production company, was retained to guide the Water Authority through the process of pivoting this live event to a virtual, interactive format.

The Customer Conversations were scheduled for Wednesday, October 13 at 6:00 pm; Thursday, October 14 at 6:00 pm; and Saturday, October 16 at 10:00 am.

Program Overview

Each Customer Conversation was designed to be one hour and 30 minutes long and consisted of pre-recorded explainer videos, polls, breakout sessions and a report out. A professional facilitator, Elizabeth Lynch, was retained to host the event and provide facilitators for the breakout sessions. Recorders/room hosts were provided to document the discussions and provide technical support. Following is an abbreviated agenda for the program:

Welcome
Introduction
Housekeeping Video
Why are we here?
We value your input!
Practice POLL: How much do you know about water rates
Video: Adrienne Candelaria
Water Authority Website Snapshot
Timeframe for discussion in breakouts
Breakout 1 "Effective Messaging"
Report Out
Breakout 2 "Payment Structure"
POLL: Down payment Required?
POLL: Hard Decision: Who Goes First?
POLL: Second Chances?
Closing

Attendees

The goal was to have 50 to 60 people in each Customer Conversation. Given this is the second year and prior attendance patterns had been about 50% participation, a registration cap of 100 was set for each Conversation. All Water Authority customers were invited to participate. Notification was distributed via invitation for those that had requested to be added to the invitation database, social media, press release, newsletters, and event calendars. Slots filled up very quickly and registration was closed within days of the campaign beginning; therefore, seats were added and opened to the quadrants that were appearing to have lower representation numbers. An option to request to be added to an invitation database was made available.

Some 379 people registered and 149 actually attended.

In addition to the invited participants, Water Authority experts were made available to each breakout room. There were also numerous special guests in attendance who observed, but did not participate.

Incentives

To encourage participation, attendees were offered a \$25 Visa gift card, upon completion of the event evaluation. This resulted in a 100% return of surveys. There was also a "raffle" prize offered for each conversation of a rain barrel. The Water Authority managed the fulfillment of the raffle prize and Kesselman-Jones, the gift cards.

Production

The events were held via the Zoom platform and registration managed on a separate platform. Kesselman-Jones provided technical and customer support. A housekeeping video was produced to provide participants with basic information on navigating the features of the platform.

All of the videos presented throughout the Customer Conversation were closed captioned. There were plans in place to close caption the entire event, and the option was made available to all who participated via the Zoom platform closed captioning.

A branded backdrop was provided to the lead facilitator.

Kesselman-Jones had redundant internet in place in case of outage, and a plan was set in place if the lead facilitator lost internet connection.

REGISTRATION OVERVIEW

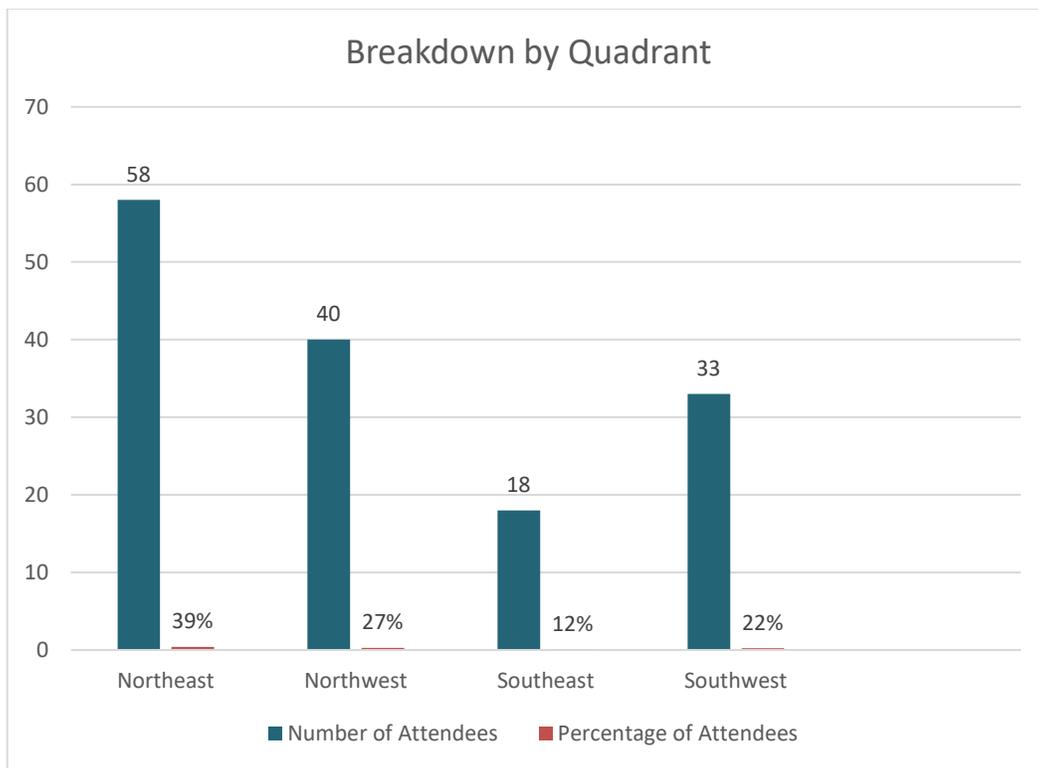
Registration for the Water Authority's 2021 Customer Conversations began on September 15 and closed once the sessions reached a registration cap set at 70.

REGISTRATION TOTALS

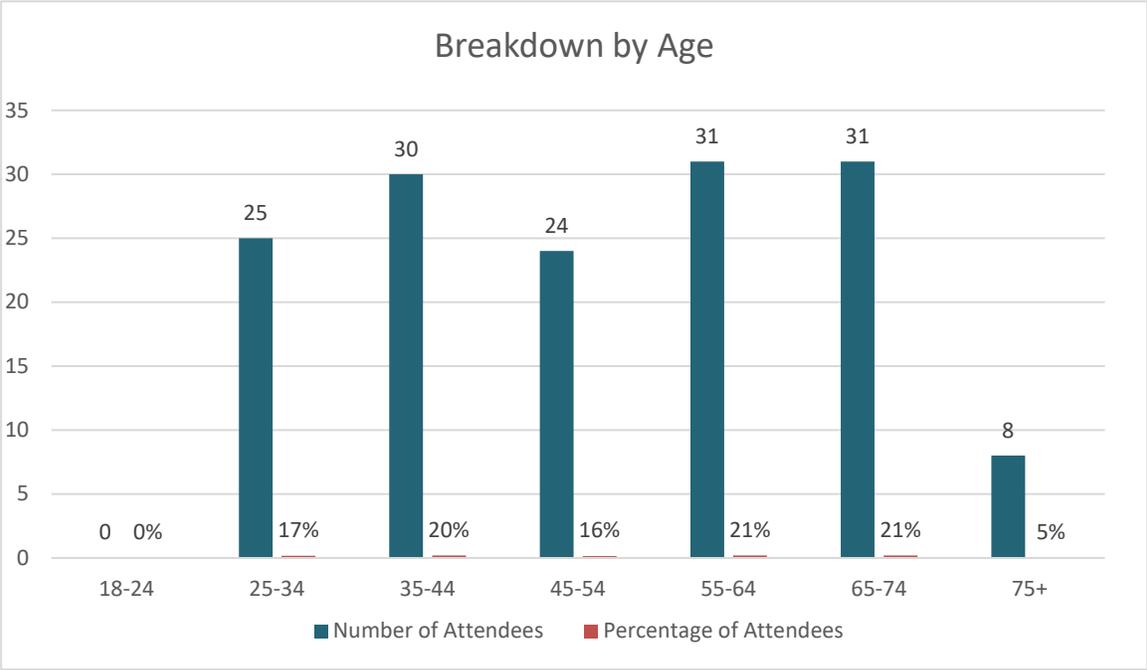
Total Registrations	379
Total Attended	149
No Shows	230
Percent No Shows	61%

Following is the registration data collected from the attendees. Data is available on request for registrants who did not attend as well upon request.

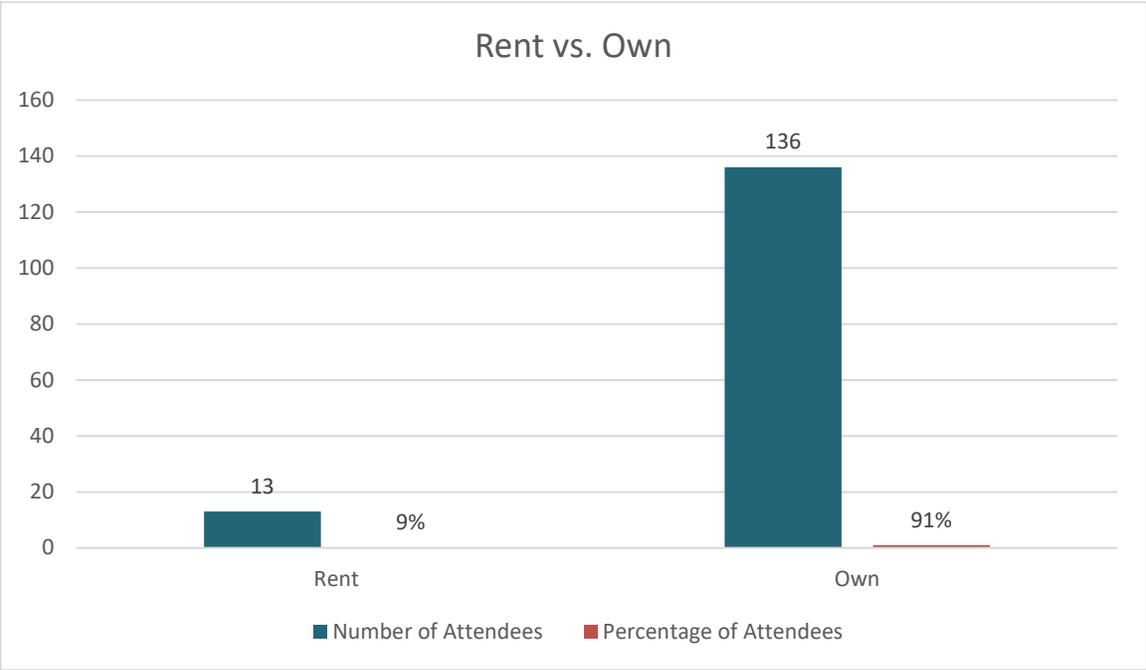
ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY QUADRANT



ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY AGE

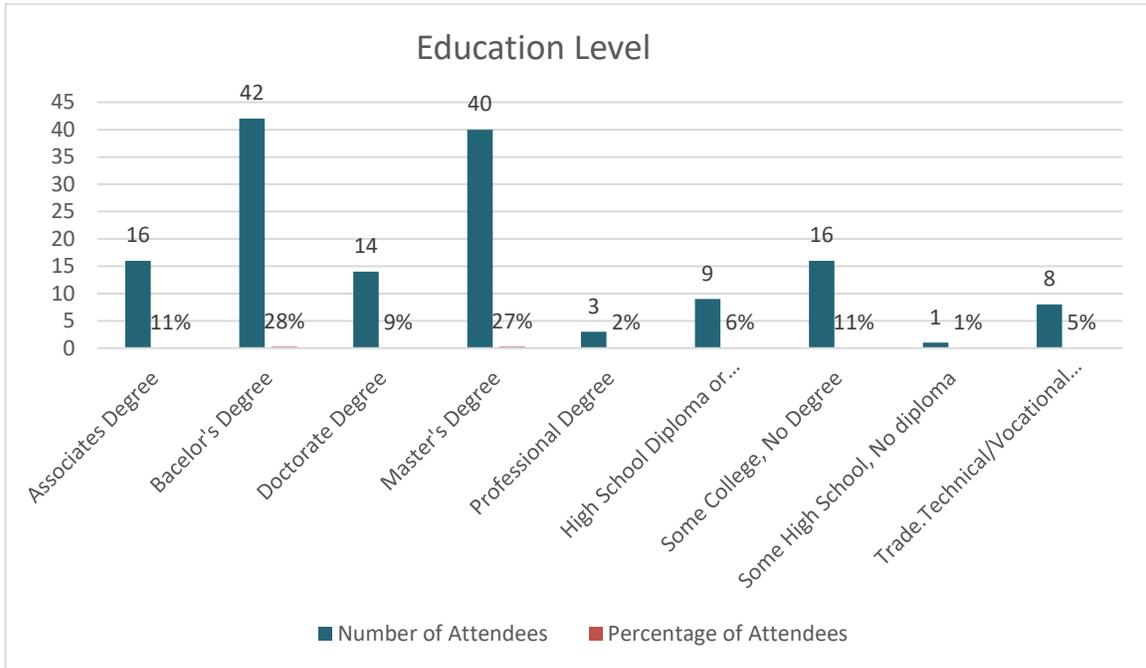


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: RENT VS. OWN

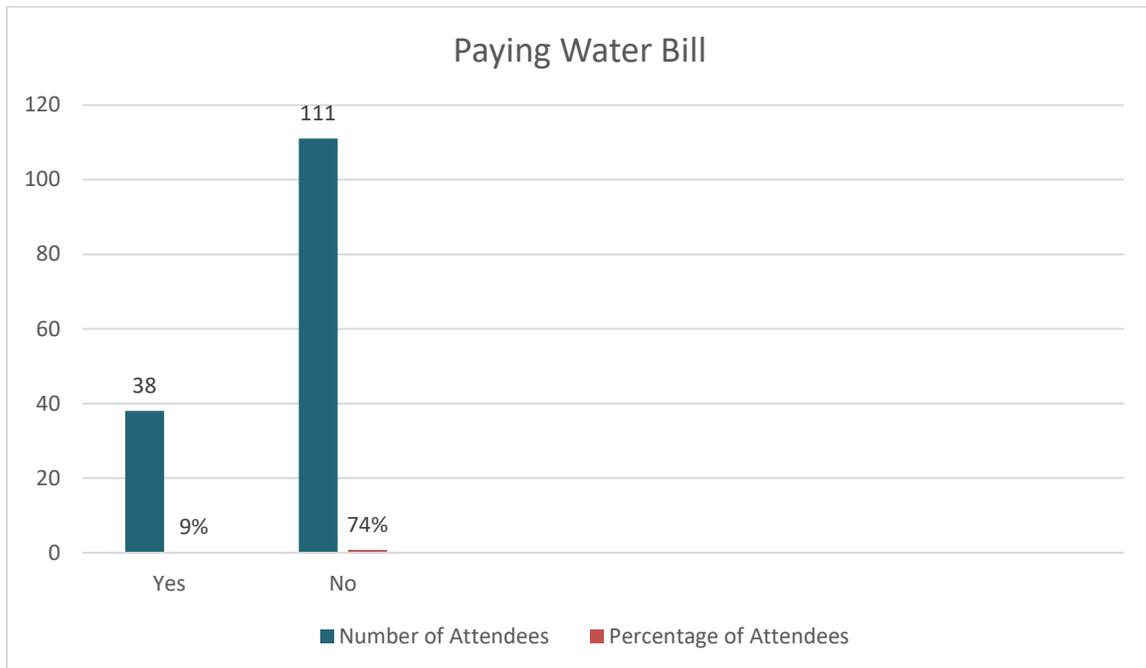


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: EDUCATION LEVEL

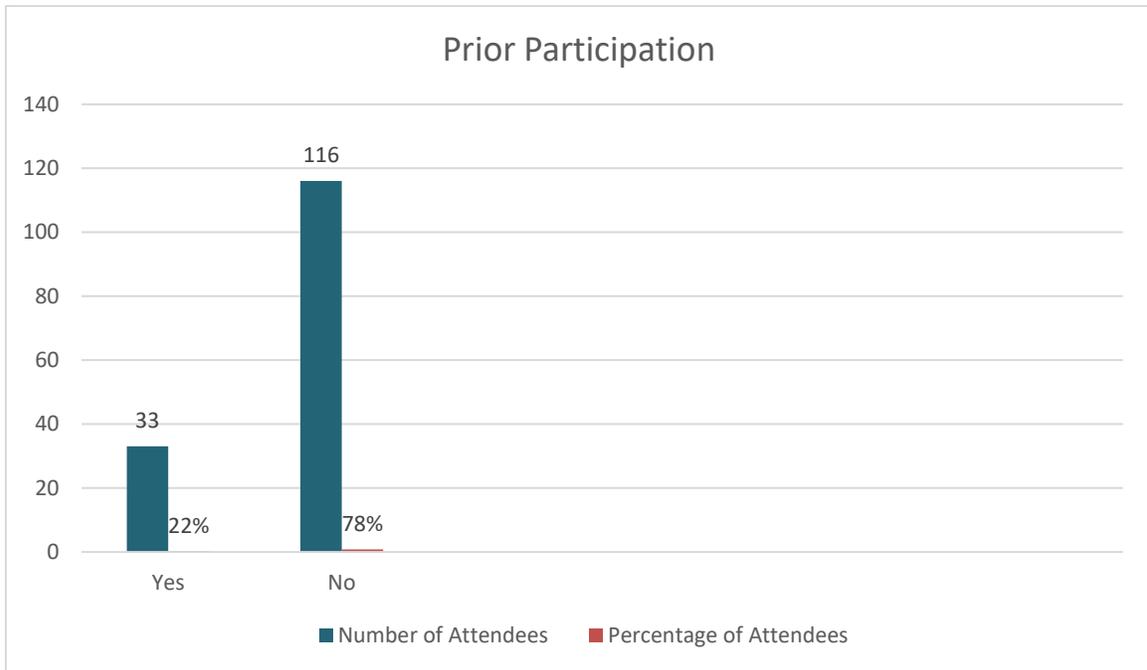
57 percent of people who registered to participate graduated with a bachelor's degree or above.



ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: HAVE YOU BEEN UNABLE TO PAY OR WORRIED ABOUT PAYING YOUR WATER BILL IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS?

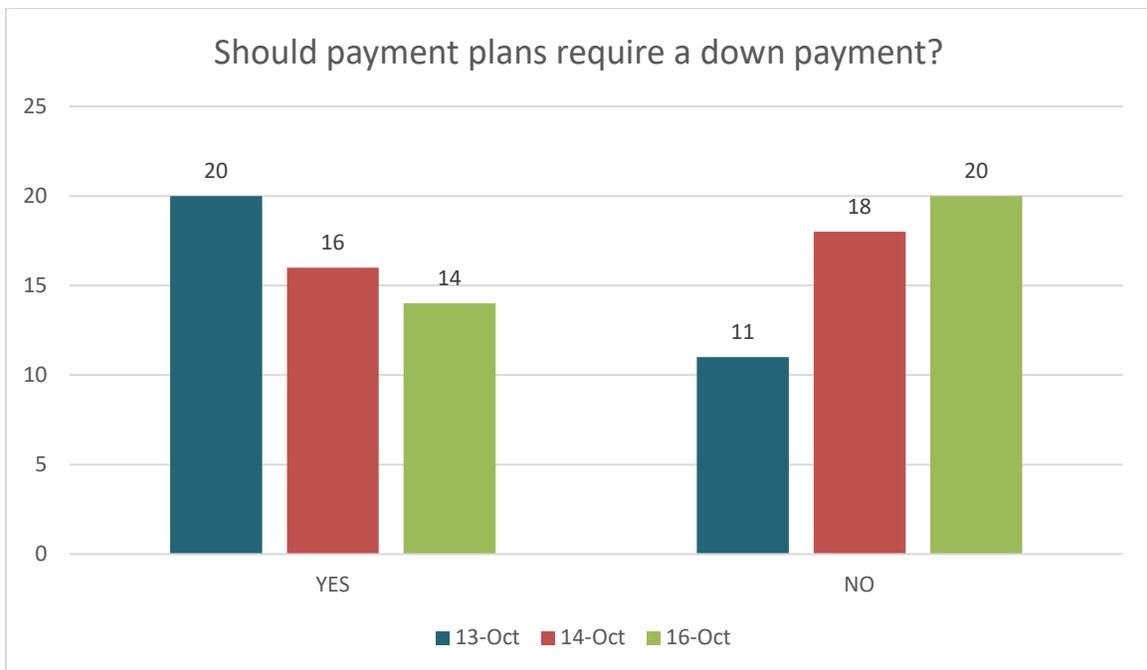
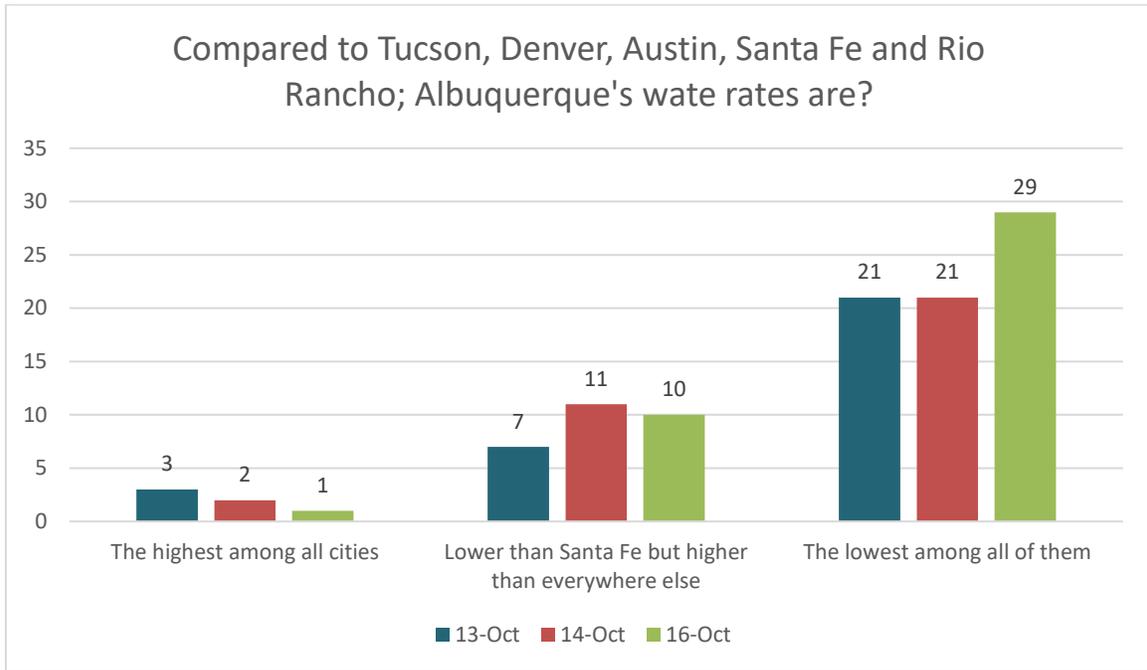


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN A WATER AUTHORITY CUSTOMER CONVERSATION PROGRAM BEFORE?

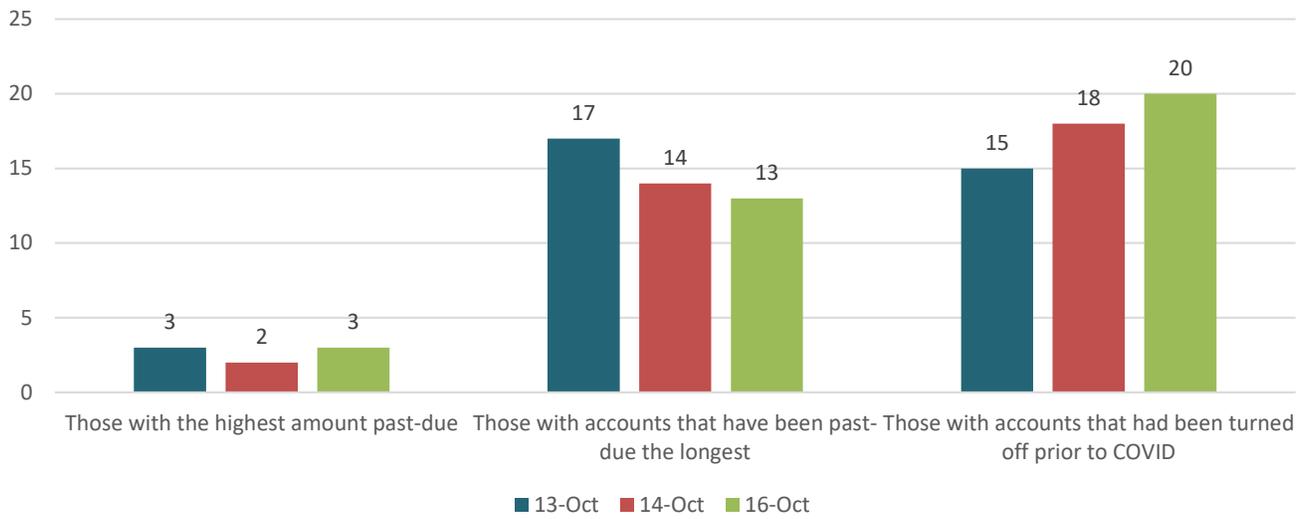


POLL RESULTS

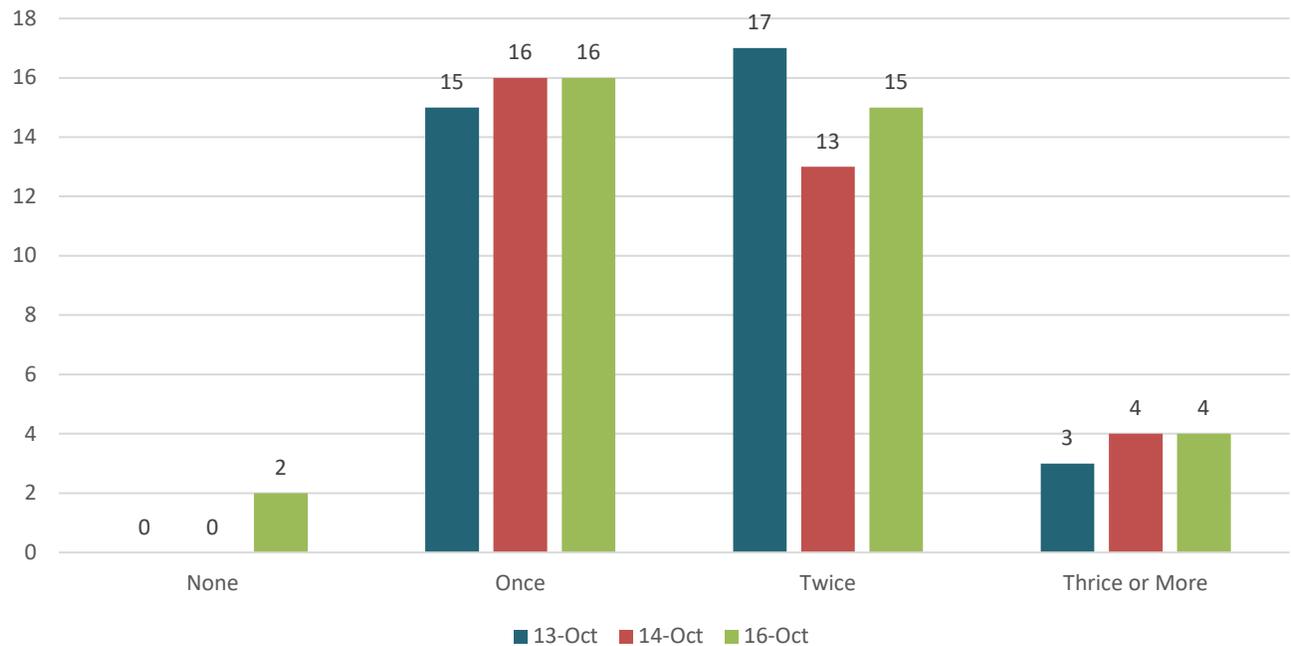
Four polls were conducted over the course of the Customer Conversation. Response was not mandatory and some people were unable to respond to the polls due to the device they were using to access the event.



Which past-due accounts, not on a payment plan, should be turned off first?



Once a customer has signed up for a payment plan, how many times should they be allowed to miss a payment before the water is turned off?



BREAKOUT 1 : PAYMENT PLAN MESSAGING

Q1. What theme would be most effective in encouraging people to get on a payment plan, and why?

- Community Approach
- Relief
- Get rid of worry
- Compassion came through from all, but also be direct.
- Present Options, without intimidation.
- No Bill Due Texts
- Be Real Be Direct
- WA can cut their bill in half. Emphasize that customers are getting a good deal based on rates of other states.
- Sending out a flyer about catching up and how WA can assist Educate people more on assistance if home owner or renter.
- If payment plan is over 12 months' maybe an incentive for their first month.
- Make it an auto enrollment thing for a payment plan.
- Stress reduction.
- "Were in this together" to show that even those of us that have been able to pay our bill can help those who haven't". Suggested emphasis on community.
- Carolee – pulled up her bill online and mentioned the two funds they can donate to, she suggested changing the name of the fund to be clearer that it's helping your community members, "good neighbor" mentioned again.
- It's necessary but we are here to help
- Incentives, pay off in 3mo or less no fees or more fees longer payoff takes.
- Keep message consistent. Compassion, Consistency
- Ramp up urgency. Invite people to be part of solution.
- Phone and mail communication. True deadlines and make them clear.
- Urgency Needed maybe run TV and Radio to describe the importance of this
- Compassion
- Community – you are not in this alone
- Emphasis on value of service
- Availability of resources to help – messaging through other support services

Q2. Brainstorm as a group to write 2 or 3 advertising slogan and/or taglines designed to spur customer who are past-due to get on a payment plan.

- Go with the flow, get on a payment plan
- Avoid disconnection
- Conserve and Save
- Don't let time pass you by...
- Easy way to catch up.. Start a payment plan now...jump ahead...
- Together we can help one another during these stressful times".
- "It makes cents"
- "Worried about paying bills? We're here to help."
- "We care about family, and you are a part of ours."

- Hey are you past due on your balance? Has covid prevented you from making your payments? Let the Water Authority Help with a Payment Plan!
- Together we can help one another –
- Every little bit helps" every drop counts.
- We'll Meet You Half Way
- "Behind on your water bill? Call [phone #] for help! "
- Get your head back above water!
- Staying afloat.

BREAKOUT #2 : PAYMENT PLAN RULES

Q1. Should payment plans be a one-size fits all, or should the Water Authority take aspects of peoples' individual situations into account when setting up plans for people?

- Flexible and treated on a case by case
- Tailored or Equalized Billing
- Average out across future billing months
- Payment Plan Tiers
- Multiple option or payment equalization

Q2. If the Water Authority does decide to take aspects of customers' situations into account, which of the following do you feel would be the most important to consider, and why?

10/13

Vote on options in slide:	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5	Room 6
Current employment status (unemployed get longer to pay)	2	0	4	3	2	2
Amount owed (i.e., longer for larger amounts)	1	3	0	3	3	3
Payment history (pre and/or post-COVID)	3	0	0	1	2	2
Death in the immediate family	0	1	0	0	0	0

*Breakout 7 & 8 were not used on 10/13.

10/14

Vote on options in slide:	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5	Room 6	Room 7
Current employment status (unemployed get longer to pay)	3	4	0	1	2	3	No Votes taken
Amount owed (i.e., longer for larger amounts)	0	1	4	3	2	2	
Payment history (pre and/or post-COVID)	1	1	1	1	0	0	
Death in the immediate family	0	0	0	0	1	0	

*Breakout 8 was not used on 10/14.

10/16

Vote on options in slide:	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5
Current employment status (unemployed get longer to pay)	0	3	0	1	2
Amount owed (i.e., longer for larger amounts)	1	2	4	2	3
Payment history (pre and/or post-COVID)	6	2	0	2	3
Death in the immediate family	0	0	1	1	0

*Breakout 6, 7 & 8 were not used on 10/16.

Post Event Survey Results

A link to the evaluation was provided at the end of the event in a link in the chat as well as emailed in a post-event thank you note. To receive the incentive, participants had to complete the evaluation. Due to this, we received a 100% response to the evaluation.

Q1: I feel that my time was well spent

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
10/13/2021		1.75% (1 participant)	19.30% (11 participants)	78.95% (45 participants)	57
10/14/2021		10.20% (5 participants)	22.45% (11 participants)	67.35% (33 participants)	49
10/16/2021		2.33% (1 participant)	25.58% (11 participants)	72.09% (31 participants)	43

Q2: I feel that the Water Authority truly wanted my input

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
10/13/2021			10.53% (6 participant)	89.47% (51 participants)	57
10/14/2021		4.08% (2 participants)	12.24% (6 participants)	83.67% (41 participants)	49
10/16/2021			20.93% (9 participant)	79.07% (34 participants)	43

Q3: I would participate in this type of meeting again

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
10/13/2021		1.75% (1 participant)	14.04% (8 participants)	84.21% (48 participants)	57
10/14/2021	2.04% (1 participant)	6.12% (3 participants)	22.45% (11 participants)	69.39% (34 participants)	49
10/16/2021		4.65% (2 participants)	11.63% (5 participants)	83.72% (36 participants)	43

Q4: I felt that the meeting structure allowed and encouraged participants to offer feedback

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
10/13/2021			1.75% (1 participant)	98.25% (56 participants)	57
10/14/2021		2.04% (1 participant)	12.24% (6 participants)	85.71% (42 participants)	49
10/16/2021			20.93% (9 participants)	79.07% (34 participants)	43

Open Ended Survey Responses

10/13/2021 Conversation

- .
- Make these outstanding people pay please.
- Great facilitators
- Thank you for supporting each and every member of the community.

- I learned a few new things, like I didn't know our water bills were the lowest compared to Austin, Tucson, and Denver, as I would have thought they were the highest. Guess the Water Authority is doing a very good job at keeping costs low to consumers and educating customers on the benefits of conserving water.
- Useful info well presented. No real suggestions regarding customer non-payment
- well run meeting
- None
- I enjoyed learning about all the water authority is doing to support its customers. Thank you.
- I have always enjoyed these community conversations with the Water Authority. I learn things that I hadn't learned before and are very interesting to me.
- I'm glad that you are trying to reach out to the customers that need help paying their bill. It is great that you reach out to other customers for feed back.
- Good job
- Everyone was very nice and respectful. Things/questions were easy to understand.
- I really liked this structure. It was easier to be heard and participate than in years past when we would all meet in the community center and there were always side conversations
- Great
- N/a
- Too much importance to renter compared to home owners.
- The facilitators were outstanding!
- I think these conversations are a good community service; it allows people to have some input and insight and realize why utility companies run the way they do.
- It was difficult to provide input to some of the questions in a too short period of time. I'm more of a "take a little time to analyze all the variables and formulate a suggestion" type of person, rather than "let's throw out a lot of anything that comes to mind and see if any of it sticks to the wall". Consider emailing the questions to be asked for input to the registrants a couple days before the seminar so we can "chew" or "sleep" on it and provide more thoughtful ideas for the seminar.
- I liked the Facil... Sharon gently encouraging participation from the breakout group, it was easy to talk about ideas we had. THANK YOU for putting these on Abq Water Auth.
- this a difficult thing to implement, You can't please everyone.

- Because you offer a rebate, it would be appreciated to have the rebate automatically applied to the water bill, rather than having to use a third party credit card. Thank you very much.
- I appreciated the positive tone of the entire session. Everyone was very respectful. I also really liked the opening session with the information about the Water Authority's status.
- I really enjoyed the structure of the meeting and having the breakout room. It actually felt more organized than years passed
- This was the first time I participated in an ABCWUA conversation. I was impressed that our ideas were solicited and valued. Thank you for the opportunity
- I appreciated being able to poll for input, that's a very useful feature.
- Really interesting interaction. Only critique I would have is more info on budget type billing and low income credit. Do these programs interface with the payback plan.
- I think overall everyone was very nice and respectful with the topics. They clarified any questions we may have had. Also really great ideas overall.
- I believe the customers with overdue water bills should be held accountable. Don't forgive the bills. Sure a payment plan is fine, but that history of overdue bills needs to be paid by that address at some point.
- It is nice to know that you are taking the customers input into consideration. Thank you
- I learned so much about the water authority and its efforts to support customers. Thank you
- Thanks for giving us an opportunity to be a part of the solution. Keep up the good work
- I think that this was great. You included the customers with a chance to put in our 10 cents worth.
- well run meeting
- Thank you for wanting feedback from your customers! I think your outreach is commendable.
- Thank you Water Authority for listening to the community.
- None
- Good participation
- I enjoyed participating in this meeting; I felt my input was valuable, and my opinion mattered.
- n/a
- .

10/14/2021 Conversation

- It was a wonderful meeting and it benefited me a lot.
- Great session - I'm glad it ran pretty smoothly being a virtual meeting
- Meeting was well organized and goals met given the variety of participants' backgrounds.
- Thanks for a great experience and being open to feedback.
- No comment
- Thank you so much Great Meeting
- I felt that the water authority did not clarify explicitly what the agenda of the meeting was. Many of us had to come up with slogans or visual catch phrases to help convince people to pay their water. This was not stated in signing up for this, not all of us are marketing executives. The connection was also spotty and would lose the meeting off and on
- Great experience, sound was somehow not clear during the conversations
- This event pertained payment plans for people who fell behind due to Covid. I think participants should have been vetted with preference given to those that would be using the payment plans. I feel their input would have been much more valuable to ABCWUA.
- If the agenda of the meetings could be shared with participants ahead of time. I believe better feedback could be provided to the ABCWA.
- Thank you for the opportunity to interact with community and water authority
- Na
- Very informative.
- No comments
- NA
- I had trouble with my phone and could not finish
- I enjoyed the process and it did go by quickly. Thank you!
- Thanks for letting me participate!
- Different format for me. First time using Zoom. Interesting 90 minutes. Participants brought good ideas to the forum.
- I thought there was too much importance put on renters opposed home owners.
- It was very interesting. I feel that the participants and the WA want to do the right thing.

- I love these customer conversation. I very much appreciate the Water Authority's desire for my input. I like working with other members of my community, who I happen not to know, to work on solving a problem.
- Thank you for allowing me to be part of this process. Blessing to you all.
- It was a wonderful meeting.
- Not at this moment
- I enjoyed the opportunity to come together as a community to address a major need. Thank you for including me and for bringing general awareness to helping my neighbors in need
- however accommodating the ABCWA wants to be there will always be people that don't take responsibility, and have to be addressed as such. thank you for your hard work and time
- As a group, we seemed to offer very similar suggestions and comments. I hope these are helpful to the Water Authority. You're dealing with a very complex and difficult situation, and I wish you luck.
- First time I've participated and this is a very strategic move. I'm sure the water authority doesn't think all \$6M will be recovered so strategizing how to recover as much as possible while leaving as many customers as possible with service really is a smart move.
- It was perhaps unnecessary, to have facilitators report on breakout group discussions. Perhaps that time could have been spent on brainstorming more scenarios.
- This was a great opportunity for community input w/the Water Utility. Please share this w/other utility companies such as PNM and Gas Co. This is a good way to have a sense of community.
- It was a great experience to know how I can help our community.
- None
- it was a good session
- Very professionally run
- thanks for getting community input
- It was great

10/16/2021 Conversation

- TEST
- I really liked the smaller break out sessions, there were some really terrific ideas shared. It was well worth my time.

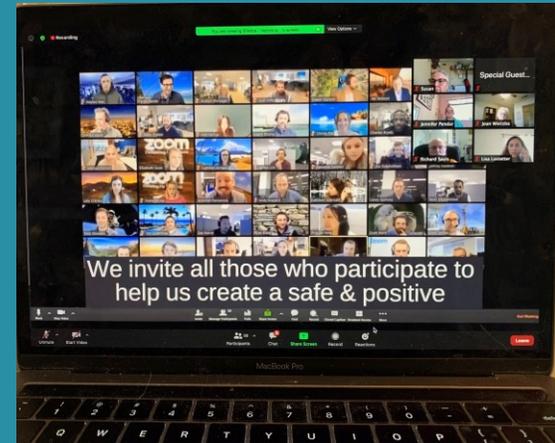
- None
- The meeting was very informative. Thank you!
- Very good discussion of different opinions.
- I learned a lot that I didn't know about. I'll definitely sign up for more meetings in the future. Thanks you to the host. Did an amazing job.
- Glad to know what the challenges are these days for public utilities and to transfer possible solutions to my work with apartment renters.
- Na
- I really enjoy participating in this forums put on by water authority and they do listen and us ideas
- First time attending, was very interested. Glad I attended.
- The ability to participate in this type of forum gave me a sense of accomplishment. I hope this input will benefit the community.
- No easy fix.
- Good meeting
- I enjoyed it.
- glad to help
- I was pleasantly surprised how well the zoom meeting went. Very well organized!
- There was not a whole lot of time for each person to be heard in the breakout groups, so maybe one or two less people in each group would have been better. I had an idea for an incentive plan that I never got to voice that I'll share here: take it or leave it as you like. I'm not sure if it's an option, but I think it would be very effective to offer people to pay their first and last month of their installment plan (the "extra" each month) if they sign up for the payment plan and if they pay on time for the duration of their plan. For example, let's say someone's installment plan is that they have have to pay an additional \$50 per month for 12 months in order to pay off their outstanding bill. I propose that ABCWUA pay the first month of the installment plan (if customers sign up by whatever date, as an incentive to get them to sign up for a payment plan at all), so people would only have to pay their "normal" bill for the first month (get used to paying it again and time to prepare for the larger bill next month). Then, if they pay the remaining bills (for this example, they pay 10 months of their regular bill and the additional \$50) on time and in full, their last installment will also be paid/forgiven by ABCWUA. It's a way to incentivize people to both start and finish a payment plan. Yes, ABCWUA takes a loss on that \$100, but they'll be receiving \$500 from that customer over the course of the year (instead of the \$600 that's owed), but \$500 is considerably better than the \$0 they'll get when the person can't/doesn't pay and they have to shut off the water. I also feel that if someone misses one (just one) of their installment payments, but pays the base monthly usage amount, they should still be permitted to stay on the payment plan: their missed installment is just added to the end of their 12 month term. If, however, they miss a month altogether, they forfeit the \$50 credit at the end and have to pay two more months on their payment plan (so basically, they end up paying the full amount and lose the \$100 credit/payment from ABCWUA). If they fail to pay two months (or more), though, they forfeit both of the \$50 credits and their payment plan will need to be renegotiated/restarted with no incentives anymore, but

for only the amount that remains past due. I hope our input was helpful; thank you for asking for it!

- The forum was nice and informative and I hope our input was helpful.
- It was a good program. I feel our input will be used wisely.
- Great format. Very well organized to make good use of time and feedback.
- I really appreciate that WUA wants inputs from the public. I really liked the format of the meeting and the moderators/facilitators were very professional and welcoming. I felt that there wasn't really enough time in the breakout sessions to expand on some of our thoughts -- I don't think we got to all the questions in the breakout session with our facilitator, and were cut off each time when it was time to return to the full group session.
- Thank you for the opportunity to share. It would be great to hear about the outcomes from this meeting.
- I gave my comments but it seems like the Authority just wants confirmation of their own answers. Please make the questions to your customers more open-ended.
- Well done. Well organized and ended on time. Thank you
- Overall, great meeting. However, I believe the breakout sessions allowed to get more feedback from the smaller groups.
- Just wanted to make another suggestion regarding the payment plan. Although it will be difficult, I believe it would be helpful if all the local utilities would collaborate and adopt similar payment plans. (If a customer is behind with one utility, they are likely behind with others.) One approach being used by all might enable consumers to more readily enroll and participate in the payment plans, instead of needing to understand the unique rules applicable to each utility. Thank you.
- Thank you for these wonderful meetings. They are always informative, we are clearly listened to, and our suggestions are often implemented.
- Awesome conversations. Feedback from us participants were really welcomed. Presentations and Facilitators were well organized and efficient with the time we had for this webinar.
- Do another one of these events for climate change.
- The moderators were very pleasant to work with and encouraging.
- It is a good idea to have a payment plan when needed as problems arise due to unforeseen circumstances.
- It was my first time participating and it is something I would do again! Thank you!
- The breakout rooms were great small group feedback.
- I'm not sure of what other outreach efforts were made to encourage customers to attend these meetings but the demographics of the meeting did not seem to adequately capture the demographics of the WUA customers who were most likely to be delinquent on their accounts. While I appreciated the opportunity to share my thoughts but I am not in the affected demographic so I'm not sure if my thoughts and ideas are useful to those who are experiencing financial strain from COVID-19 or other economic disruptions.
- I think an equal initiative to incentivizing payment plans, outreach to the paying community for a neighbor assist \$1, round-up or easy way to help those who have fallen behind would be possible. It also appears that perhaps the individuals behind may have misunderstood the covid-relief during the no-shut-off guidelines, and not known that they would be accruing bills

and need to pay these back due utilities in the future. Is there any State or Federal covid-relief aid that can be obtained by the water authority to offset this situation, because I think a lot of folks had no idea that they would not only owe their current bill but the 18 months or so that they were not "required" to pay.

Customer Conversations 2021: *Insights on a Return to Normal Billing Operations*



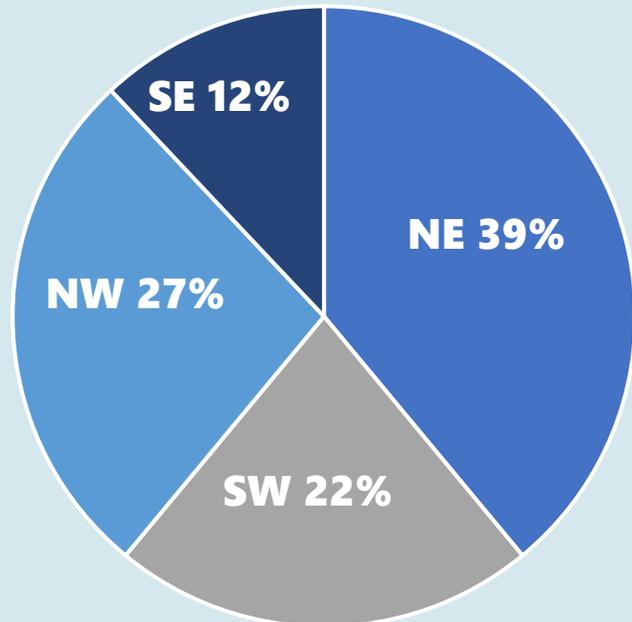
REGISTERED: 379

ATTENDED: 149

AGED 54 or YOUNGER: 53%

WORRIED/UNABLE TO PAY: 9%

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION:



Participants

Effective Messaging
Mitigating Factors
How many chances?
Down Payments?
Prioritizing Turn-Offs

Discussion Topics:
Return to Normal
Operations

Effective Messaging

Emphasize compassion:
Help is available!



**Discussion Topics:
Return to Normal
Operations**

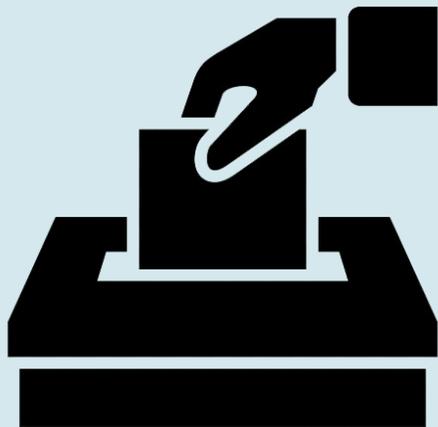
Mitigating Factors

Amount Owed: 37

Payment History: 33

Employment Status: 32

Death in the Family: 4



**Discussion Topics:
Return to Normal
Operations**

How many chances?

0: 2

1: 47

2: 45

3+: 11

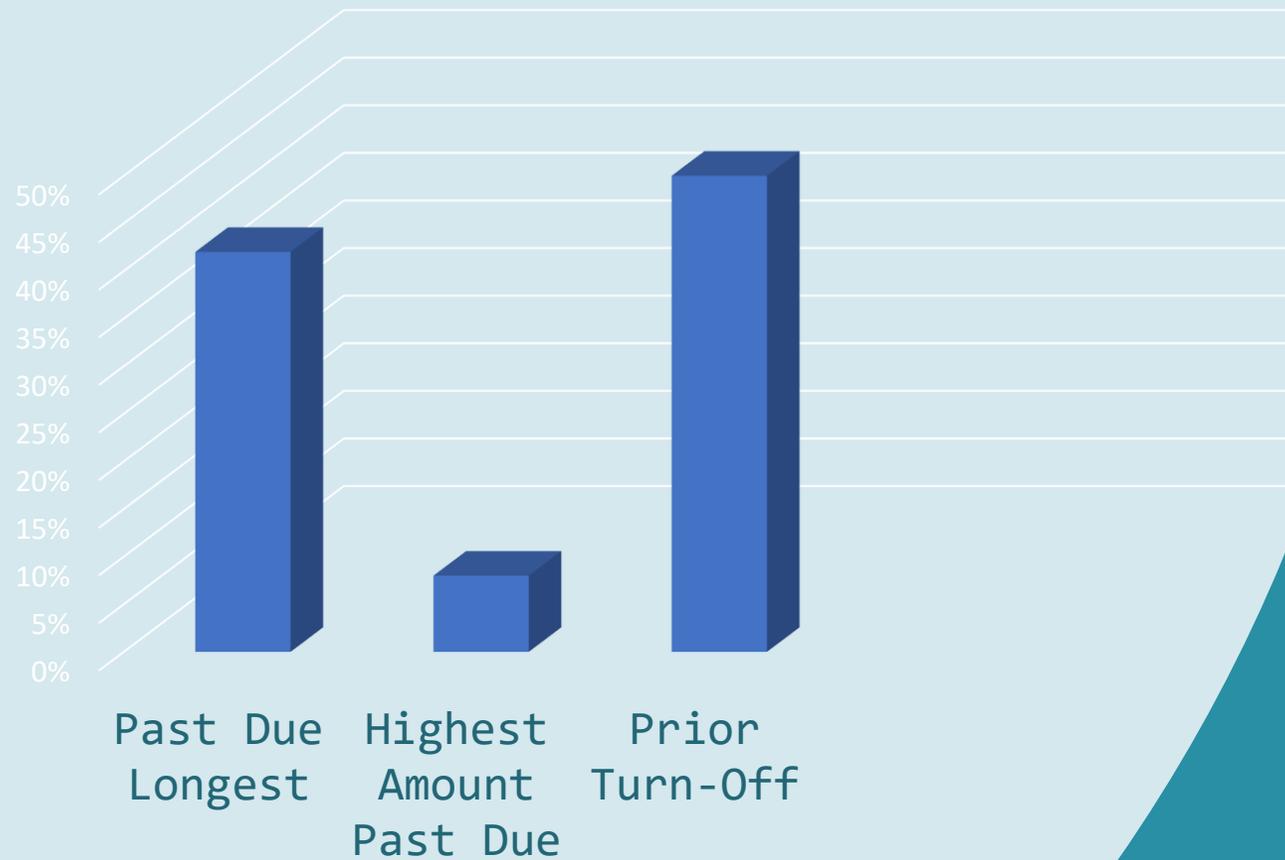
Down Payments?

YES: 50

NO: 49

**Discussion Topics:
Return to Normal
Operations**

Prioritizing Turn-Offs



**Discussion Topics:
Return to Normal
Operations**

Feedback: Somewhat or Strongly Agree

TIME WELL SPENT: 95%

WATER AUTHORITY WANTED MY INPUT: 99%

**MEETING STRUCTURE ENCOURAGED
PARTICIPATION: 99%**

“Thanks for a great experience!”

“Very informative!”

“Our ideas were valued!”





**Falling Behind on
Payments**



**Help is Available:
Payment
Arrangements**

WELCOME TO THE WATER AUTHORITY

MAKE
PAYMENT

CUSTOMER
SERVICE

REPORT
EMERGENCY

PAYMENT HELP
FOR RENTERS

CONSERVATION
REBATES

INFO FOR
BUILDERS

**Help is Available:
Emergency
Rental Assistance
Program**



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor



NM Emergency Rental Assistance Program
www.RentHelpNM.org



Deborah K. Romero
Cabinet Secretary

State of New Mexico – Emergency Rental Assistance Program - Tenant Certification for Utility Assistance

I, _____, certify that the following is true and correct:

My date of birth is (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

My (check only one) New Mexico driver's license OR ID card number _____ is: _____

My (check only one) Individual Tax ID Number OR Social Security Number _____ is: _____

I currently live at the following address:

Street Address City State Zip Code

Other than me, other people regularly live at this address.

I rent this property from a landlord

I am a customer of the Water Authority (ABCWUA), my account number is _____

and my account is currently past due in the amount of \$ _____.

(check/complete only one of the following)

This past-due amount represents about _____ months of charges OR

I do not know how many months this past-due amount represents.

My household income is (check and complete only one box):

\$ _____ in adjusted gross income as reported on Form 1040 from 2020 taxes filed with the IRS; OR

\$ _____ per _____ from wages/paychecks, cash for performing work, tips, self-employment (including ride-sharing, food delivery, Avon/Mary Kay, etc.), unemployment or disability payments, public assistance, and any other sources not named above.

Both of the following are true for my household:

one or more individuals within the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak; and
one or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

I am requesting that the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration ("DFA") pay the Water Authority (ABCWUA) my past-due balance up to 12 months into the past and my average monthly charge (based on the past 12 months) up to 3 months into the future, each from the date of this certification and in DFA's discretion based on its review of the information above.

By signing below, I authorize the Water Authority (ABCWUA) to disclose to DFA any nonpublic personal information concerning my account, including the information above, that may be needed to process my application for assistance. I also authorize DFA to make the above utility payments on my behalf and to disclose to the U.S. Department of the Treasury or any other federal agency or auditor any nonpublic personal information it receives that may relate to DFA's compliance with this program. I understand and agree that by providing this certification, if DFA cannot otherwise confirm that my income qualifies me for rental assistance, I must submit a form certifying my income every three months to continue to qualify.

My household has not received, and does not expect to receive, another source of public or private subsidy or assistance for the utility charges described above. Any knowing or intentional misstatement above may subject me to criminal or civil liability.

Signature Name Date

Help is Available:
Emergency
Rental Assistance
Program

**Help!
I Can't Pay My
Utility Bills**



**Help is Available:
Water Assistance Fund**



**Help is Available:
Low-Income Credit
Program**



Office of Community Services

**Help is Available:
Low Income
Household Water
Assistance
Program**



**Return to Normal
Operations**