
Meeting Date: January 27, 2021
Staff Contact: David Morris, Public Affairs Manager

TITLE: OB-21-3 – 2020 Customer Conversations Recap

ACTION: Presentation Only

SUMMARY:

Three virtual Customer Conversations meetings were held on different days in November of 2020 to solicit customer feedback regarding planned changes to the utility's outdoor watering recommendations. Staff also sought input on a new landscape care guide being developed by the Water Authority's Conservation section. Ninety-two customers in total participated in the meetings, which were conducted in an online Zoom format due to COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. Participants who remained for an entire meeting and completed post-event evaluation forms were each given a \$25 Grubhub gift card and entered in a raffle for conservation-related prizes.

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. 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. Chief takeaways regarding watering recommendations and landscape guides include: the need to keep programs and as simple and straightforward as possible; the need for sensitivity regarding the costs of landscape conversions and "smart" technology; and the importance of readability and simplicity in charts, publications and guides.

Some meeting metrics, briefly noted:

- Customers from all four city quadrants participated in the meetings (NW 21%, NE 36%, SW 16%, SE 27%)
- The no-show rate among registrants was 56%
- 75% of participants were under the age of 65 (45% under the age of 55)
- Participant evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, with 87% strongly agreeing that their time had been well spent; 95% strongly agreeing that they felt their input was valued; and 91% strongly agreeing that they would participate in future meetings if given the opportunity.



Customer Conversations

FALL 2020

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SUMMARY

For the past 10 years, the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water 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 2020 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 Tuesday, November 10 at 6:00 pm, Thursday, November 12 at 4:00 pm and Saturday, November 14 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:

00:00	00:04	4	Welcome
00:05	00:06	2	POLL: Have you participated in a live Customer Conversation in the past?
00:06	00:09	3	Housekeeping Video
00:09	00:13	4	Introduction
00:13	00:15	2	POLL: In 1994, average monthly household water usage in Albuquerque was approximately 14,000 gallons per month. What do you think the monthly average was in 2019?
00:15	00:23	8	VIDEO: Water by the Numbers (Yuhas)
00:23	00:25	2	POLL: Where are You with Water by the Numbers?
00:25	00:35	9	Breakout Session: Water by the Numbers
00:35	00:41	6	VIDEO: From A to C, Perce, Part I
00:41	00:58	19	Breakout activity and intro video:
00:58	1:02	3	VIDEO: Preferred approach, Perce, Part II
1:02	1:18	16	Breakout #3: Select preferred chart and discuss approach.
1:18	1:20	2	POLL: How do you want information delivered?
1:20	1:30	10	Report Out
1:30	1:32	2	Closing

Attendees

The goal was to have 35 to 40 people in each Customer Conversation. Because there was no history on online participants attendance pattern, a registration cap of 70 was set for each Conversation. All Water Authority customers were invited to participate. Notification was distributed via water bill inserts (October), social media, press release, newsletters, event calendars and conservation staff outreach (nurseries/gardening club.) Slots filled up very quickly and registration was closed within days of the campaign beginning; therefore, much of the social media was cancelled and unfortunately some individuals received the invitation after the registration was closed. An option to request to be added to an invitation database for future events was made available.

We had 209 people register and 92 attendees.

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 Grubhub gift card, deliverable upon completion of the event evaluation survey. This resulted in a 100% return of surveys. There were also "raffle" prizes offered for each Conversation: a desert-friendly landscape design; rain barrel; smart irrigation controller; and a gift certificate from a locally owned nursery. CWA Strategic Communications managed the fulfillment of the raffle prizes 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 Conversations were closed captioned. There were plans in place to close caption the entire event, however, the individual requesting the captioning cancelled the week prior to the event.

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

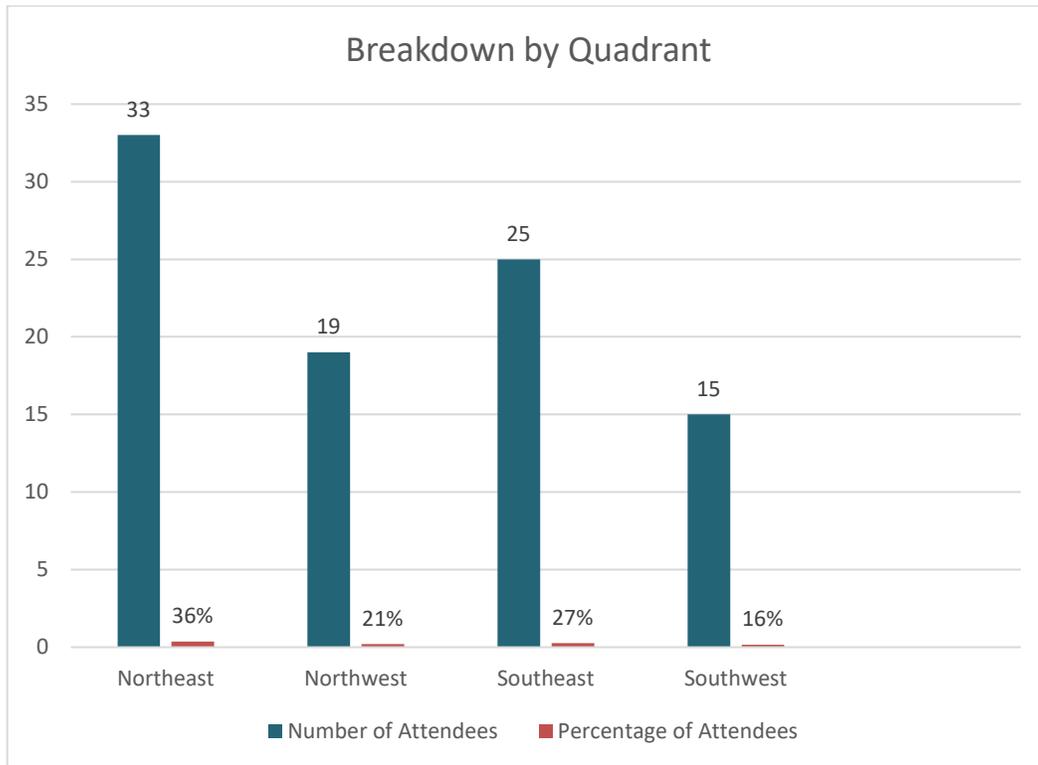
Registration for the 2020 Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority's Customer Conversations began on September 15 and closed once the sessions reached a registration cap set at 70.

REGISTRATION TOTALS

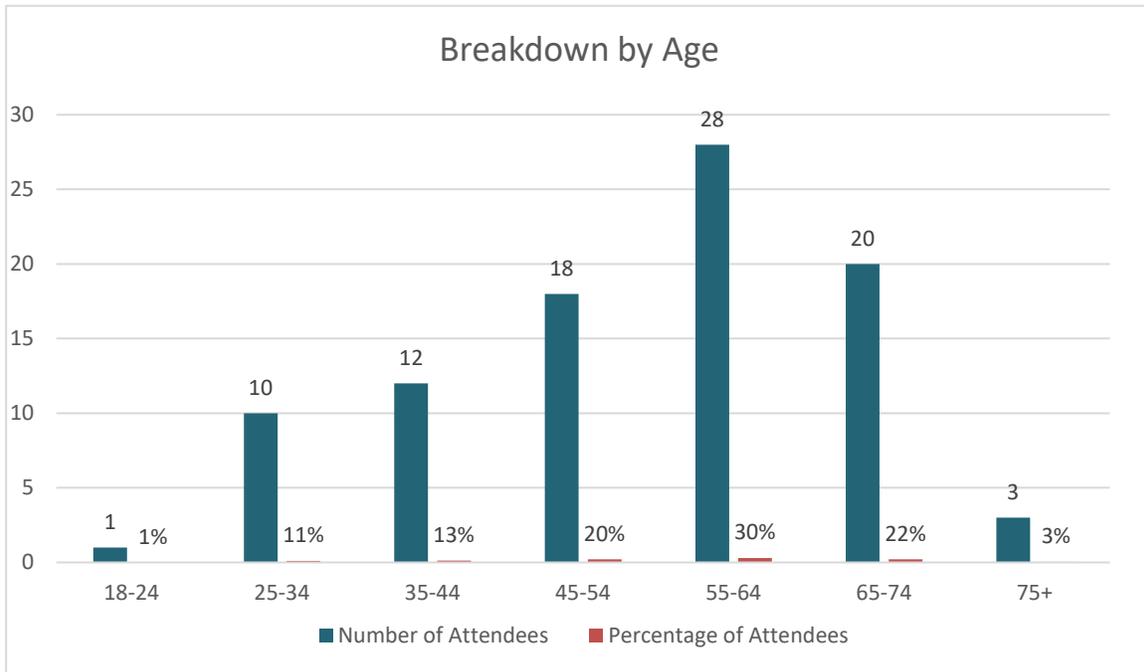
Total Registrations	209
Total Attended	92
No Shows	117
Percent No Shows	56%

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

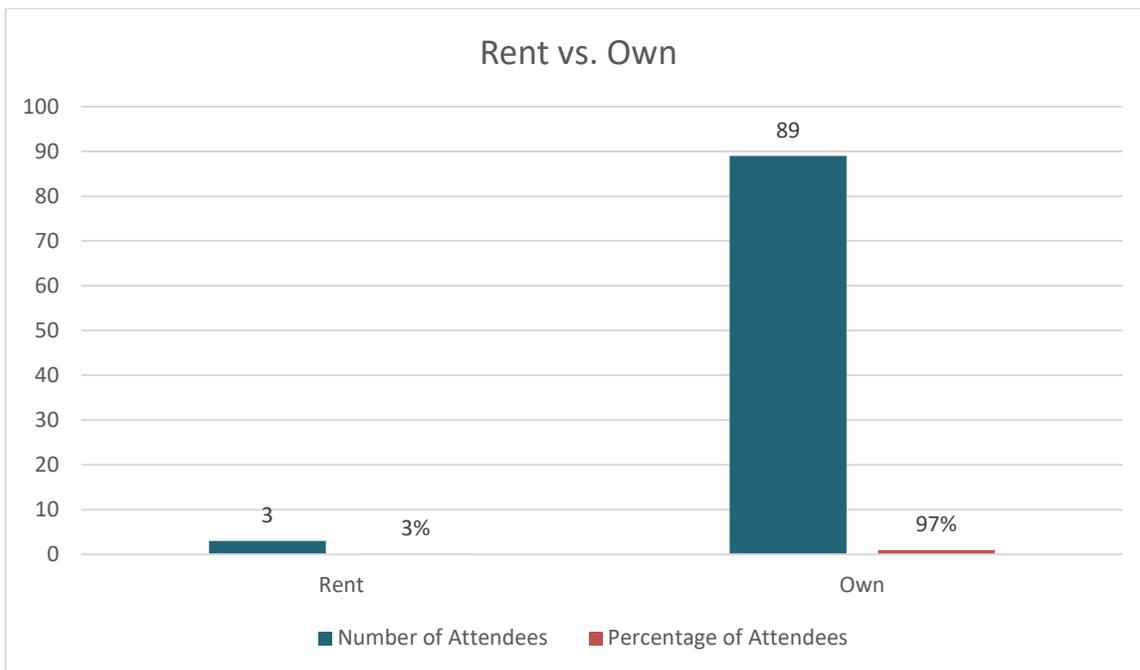
ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY QUADRANT



ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY AGE

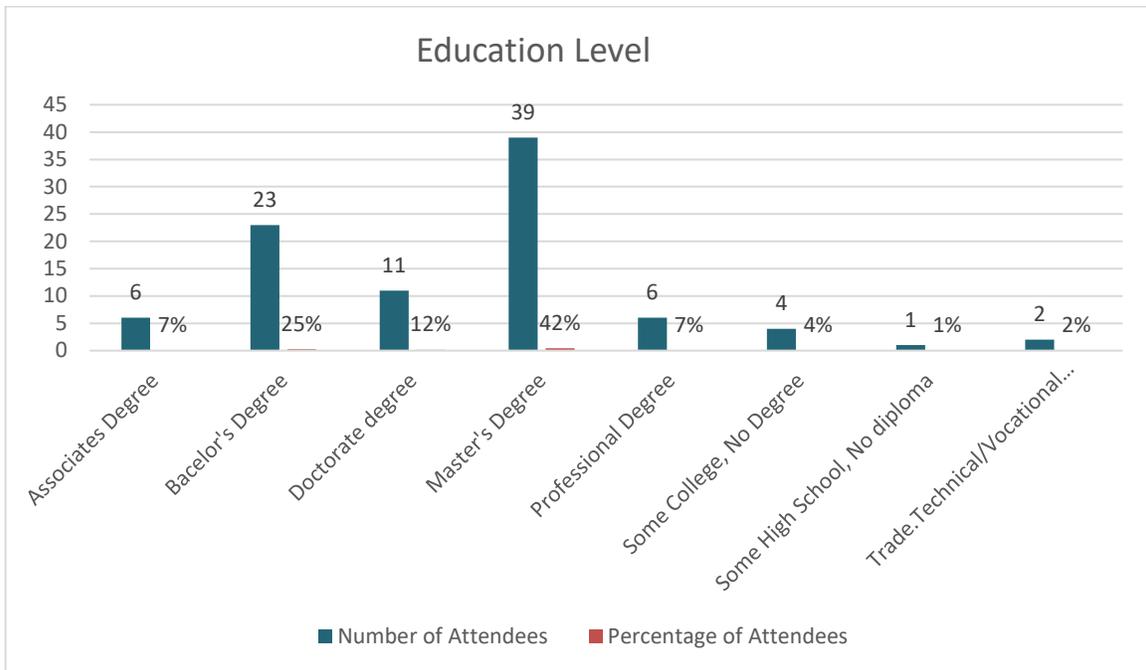


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: RENT VS. OWN

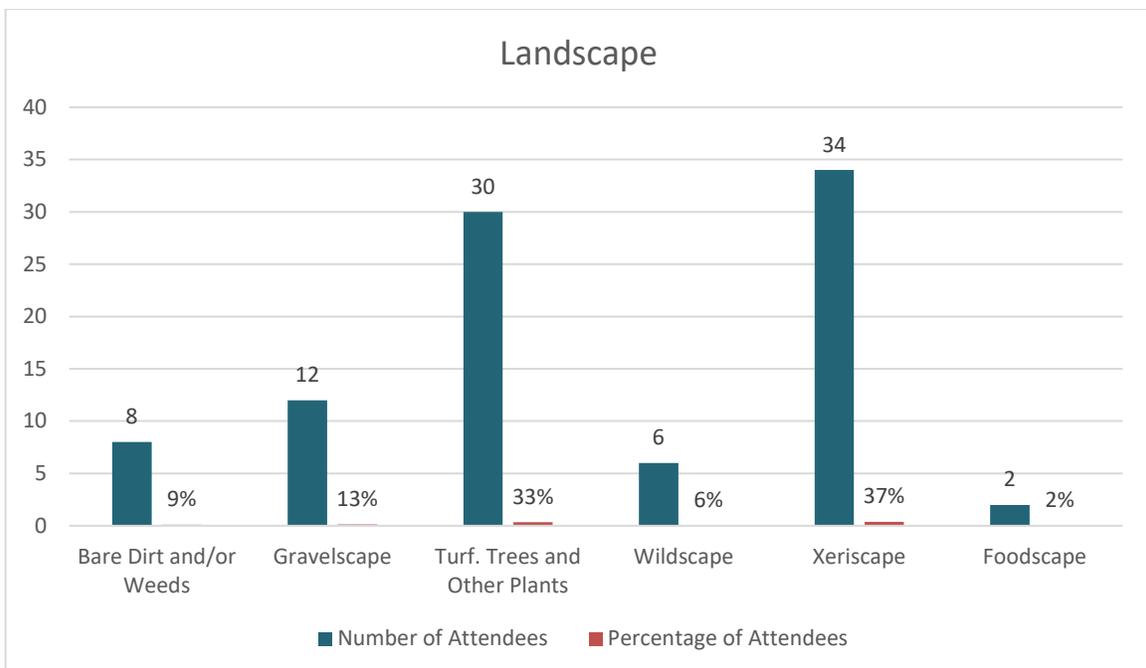


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: EDUCATION LEVEL

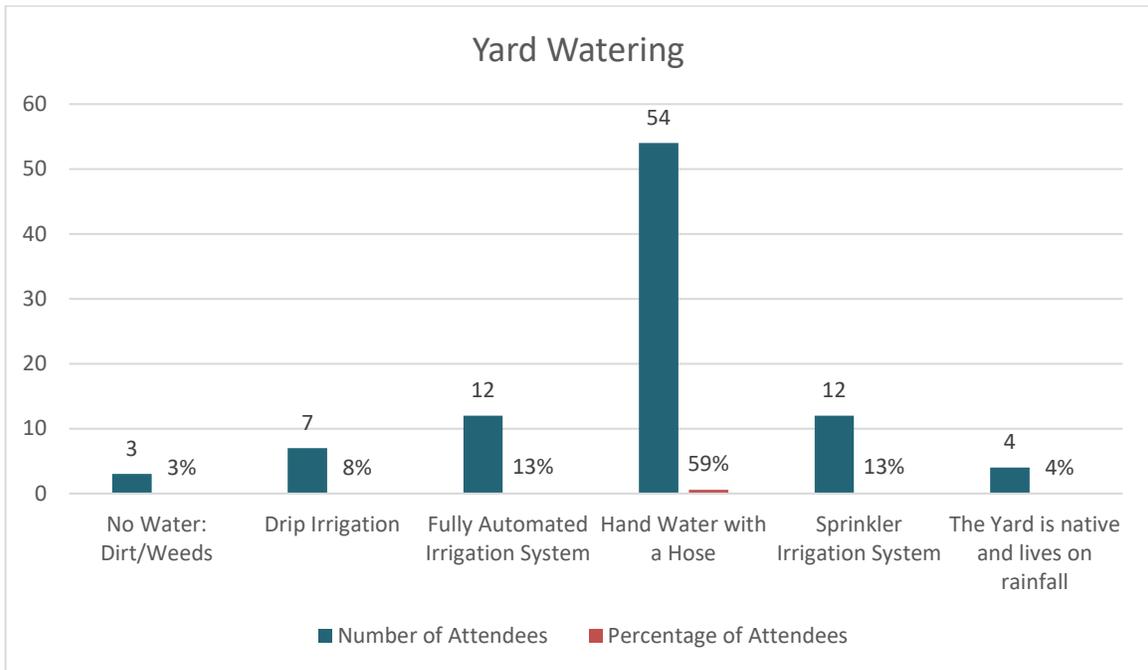
57 percent of people who registered to participate graduated with a bachelor's degree or above.



ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY LANDSCAPE

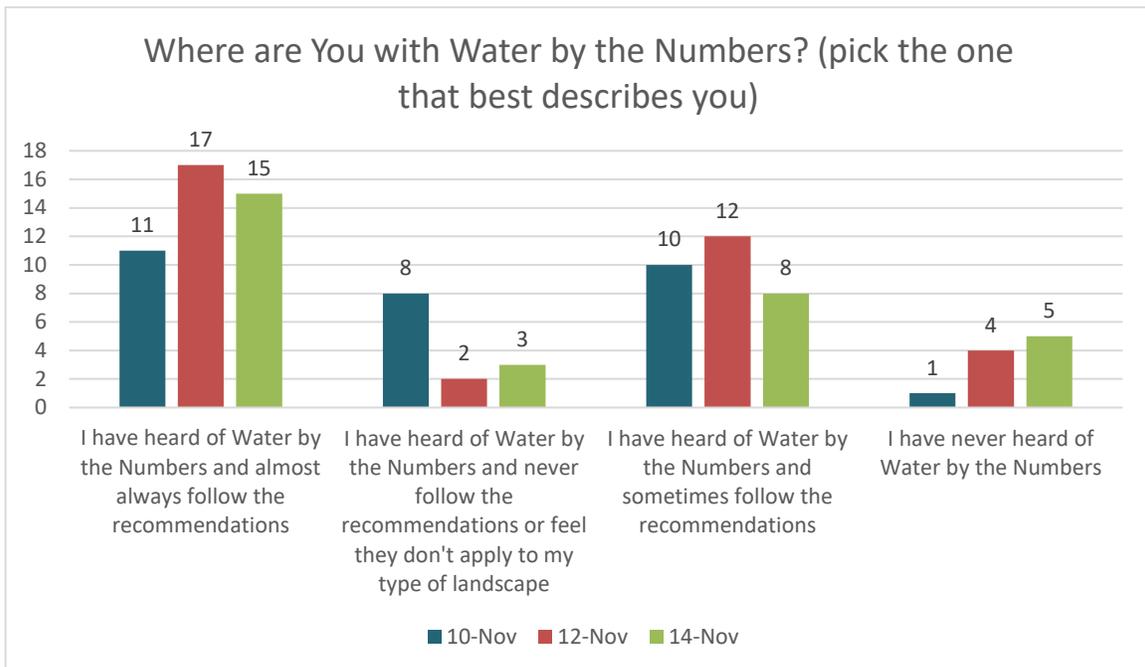
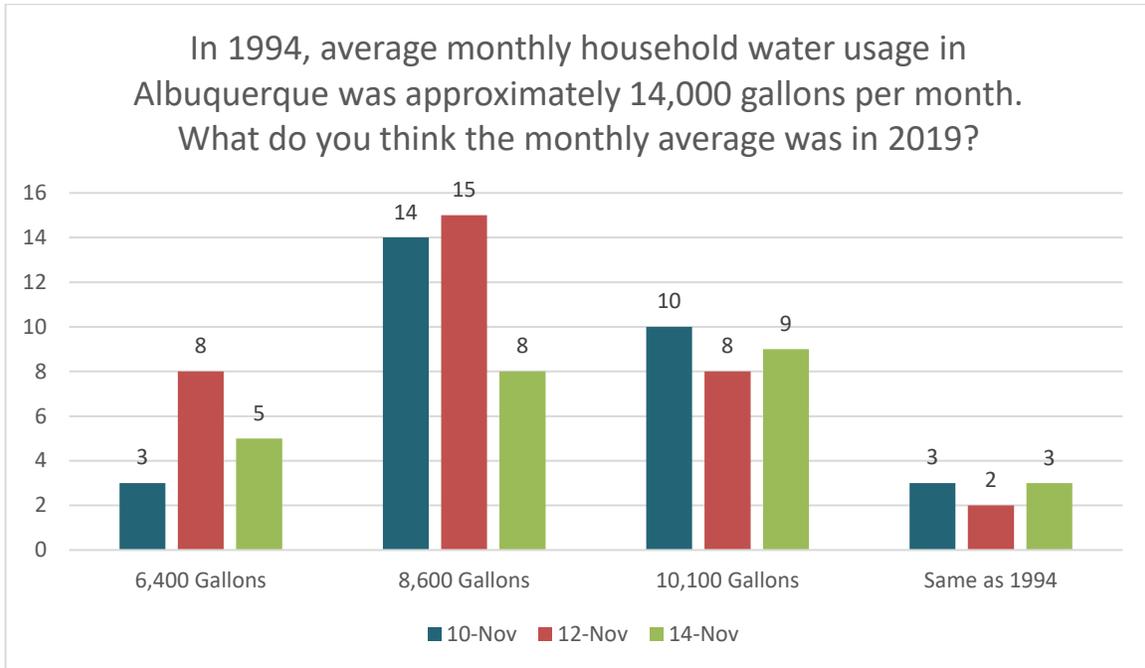


ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHIC: BREAKDOWN BY YARD WATERING

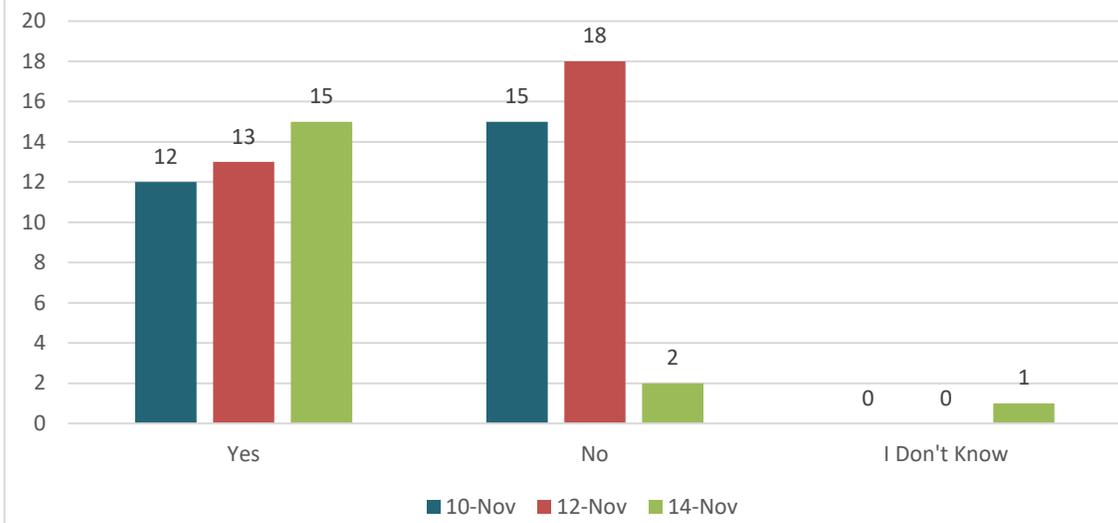


POLL RESULTS

Four polls were conducted over the course of each Customer Conversation. Response was not mandatory and some people were unable to respond to the polls for technical reasons.



Have you participated in a live Customer Conversation in the past?



Besides the guidebook we're developing, what would be the best way to share information like this with our customers?



BREAKOUT 1

Q1. For customers who have heard of Water by the Numbers and almost always follow the recommendations. What do you like about it, how have you found it helpful, what has worked for you, etc.?

- Found it helpful because it was obvious and good guidance to follow.
- Have grass in the front yard and have programmed irrigation. Use the water by numbers system for the schedule on the timer.
- Forgets to water the trees but the water by numbers program reminds her to water them and how often.
- Like how simple the program is.
- Customer has no grass and has a timer but it is unplugged/disconnected just hand waters plants now and then. Would like assistance in fixing the irrigation system so it can be used.
- Water by numbers helped organize schedule and provide a reference point. Customer has had to extend summer watering and needed a bit extra due to the temperatures.
- Easy to remember and follow. Instructions are simple. It could be more specific and tailor the program to the climates and plants.
- Very easy to follow but assumes water with a watering can doesn't count. Customer may be using more water when needed.
- Feels like she is contributing but it was very hot this year and doesn't have the xeriscape plants and would like assistance changing.
- Good rule of thumb but you can't generalize all plants so occasionally has to adjust.
- The Water by Numbers is an efficient program and works well with native plants. Has changed to turf rock concrete and planted xeriscape plants.
- Follows Water by the Numbers, said they do not water when the ground is still wet and also watch the weather to make sure they do not waste water.
- Overall like the program. Personally, use for container garden drip system.
- Good recommendations on the water by numbers flyers.
- Letting the customer know what needs to be watered and how long is very helpful. Will always follow the guidance.
- Always follows the recommendations.
- Does have a lot of landscaping to do. Uses a drip system and the Water by Numbers to help keep track.
- Many customers felt that the Water by Numbers program is easy and effective for them.
- More water as needed for the vegetables so often adjust for that but uses the water by numbers for everything else.

- Waters less due to their home already having desert landscaping and the plants do not need as much water. Reduces water when there is rain.
- Mainly uses hand watering and re-using water from cleaning.
- Little harder to stick to when it is a hotter summer, but it is easy and a helpful guide.
- One customer is a recent New Mexico resident, but he was interested in water conservation before. He called the Water Authority after receiving an expensive water bill and learned how to water. He found that the system worked very well and has started to do new landscaping and remove a lot of grass.
- The timing guidelines are really nice to have within the recommendations.
- Has an irrigation system that they can set a timer for. Not a lot of water needed because they have AstroTurf.
- Just put in a full xeriscape when she moved in and did the follow by numbers, now their plants are self-sustaining. Having xeriscape is easier to take care of.
- When you are from another state the guidelines are essential in helping customers know how much to water.

Q2. For customers who have heard of Water by the Numbers and sometimes follow the recommendations. Please say more - when do they & don't they?

- Haven't attempted to follow the program.
- Don't water as much as is recommended because big trees in yard are good with groundwater.
- Inconsistency with recommendations from Water by Numbers vs where trees purchased.
- Try the best they can to follow but some of it feels like guesswork.
- Customer purchased a new home and have taken time to organize the irrigation this year. Had a Water Authority consultant visit this year and was told the Water by Numbers program was no longer being used?
- Occasionally add in another day when bushes look dry as it is needed.
- Have garden beds and need more water in the high heat.
- Does not know if the Water by Numbers is used for lawns or all irrigation.
- Great guideline. Don't water quite as much because of irrigation with a well.
- Customers does not have grass, has turf/rocks so not much watering needed.
- Landscape doesn't require it, native trees and landscapes.
- Have not been consistent in following.
- Would need assistance in planning to properly implement.
- One customer has artificial turf, and two small garden beds and waters much less than recommendations. Recommendations are more than adequate to keep garden alive and thriving.
- Unable to keep a garden and waters much less than the recommendations.

- Customer believes that trees provide a lot of ground cover and does not need to water as much.
- Hot weather required not following recommendations because more water required to keep garden alive.
- Water by the Numbers does not meet the needs of the plants some customers have that need to be watered more than the recommended amount.
- Does not always follow it, especially during the fall. Feel it's not necessary.
- Two customers felt that Water by the Numbers recommended using more water than was necessary. They said that they tend to spot water.
- One customer appreciated the fact that the Water Authority has recommendations and follows other guidelines, such as watering in the early morning or evening, but found it difficult to remember how many times of week she should be watering and to keep on a schedule. She prefers to water based on the appearance of her plants.
- A deep water once a week and spot waters as needed is preferred. Feels that if a plant cannot thrive with a small amount of water, it doesn't belong in her yard.
- Another customer said that they have trouble following Water by the Numbers because it is difficult to change the settings on his irrigation system. He finds it cumbersome to remember to change the frequency of their watering and to reprogram the controller.
- Tries to follow the water by numbers system but some areas of the yard require more in the summer due to temperatures.
- Has lots of grass because of children and it requires more watering.

Q3. I have heard of it but never follow the recommendations or feel they don't apply to my type of landscape. Please say more...

- Feel it is challenging because of our weather. He has mostly lawn and that requires more water.
- Was advised by sprinkler company to use another method. Turf was doing horrible during warmer months.
- Unsure what the program applies to and his irrigation needs to not fit the program. He has multiple vegetable gardens and a small lawn. These need more water than the recommended amounts.
- Has a multi-water yard, lawn, garden, trees, He has noticed if he doesn't water more than the numbers his lawn dies, has a water controller, front yard has to be watered by hand.
- Would use more water if he followed the system. He tries to conserve.
- The cartoon makes me feel that it is for kids.
- Would also like to know how to water certain things like trees, shrubs, and other plants, so he doesn't over water. Lots of confusion if the guide applies to these plants and trees or just lawn.

- Customer has no grass just a drip system for different zones and water bill is low. Does not water three times as recommended as it is not needed.
- Don't follow the water by numbers because of the different plants (yucca, cactus, rose bushes) they had and felt confused on what needs to be watered and when.
- Does not use system, is a new home owner but would like more information on how to use rain barrels.
- Has trees that she is unsure on how much to water as they seem to really need more and more especially during a drought and not having a lot of rain.
- One customer had heard of Water by the Numbers but lives in the South Valley and waters using the acequia. They have a day of the week when they are supposed to water and fill in when necessary. The customer felt that the program did not apply to their situation.
- Doesn't have time to follow.

Q4. I have never heard of it. Do you do any outdoor watering? If so, how do you determine when and how much to water.

- Has a dirt and lawn yard and so it would help keep her on track. Started with a drip system, to a hose, to a soaker. Has questions about depth.
- Does not understand if you water for 6 hours a day it defeats the purpose of the water by numbers. There are no tips on when the best time to water is.
- My yard is xeriscape just a couple shrubs and flowers, so we use little water.
- Use drip system and gardening containers.
- Would like more information on rain barrels.
- New to Albuquerque, new homeowners.
- He just moved into the valley from the heights and now has a lot of grass, trees and a garden. Wasn't paying attention before because he didn't have landscaping.

Q5. You saw in the presentation that it seems like the degree to which people are relying on it has gone down. Are there any of you that used to follow it, but now you don't rely on it as much? (If anyone says yes, ask the reason).

- Was told not to follow the water by numbers due to the damage it could cause to her grass and tree roots. She was told that it could rot the roots.
- Do not have a use for it.
- Did not remember to use the program.
- Likes the helpful guide and sees the reminders but doesn't want commit to it and feels it's too time consuming.

- Sometimes use a timer but isn't reliable.
- Lack of community engagement.

Q6. If anyone in group has never heard of the program. "The Water Authority shares the Water by the Numbers information in TV ads, radio, billboards, radio, bill inserts – is there a delivery method they've missed where you might have been more likely to notice the information?"

- Overwhelmingly customers agreed that social media was a missed opportunity.
- Multiple mentions of Instagram campaigns as a useful tactic.
- Postal mail. Many customers agreed they like information to come with their monthly bill.
- Many of the senior citizen customers agreed they would like to see more on TV as it is the easiest way to reach them.
- Multiple customers said they receive electronic bills and wondered what they missed by doing this. Is there a way for customers to get this information if they are only receiving bills electronically?
- Need more advertising out and around Albuquerque.
- One customer found out about Water by the Numbers through his water bill. He said that he did see an advertisement for it on television as well, but it was not informative and he did not connect it to the Water by the Numbers program at the time.
- Billboards are nice as they are voluntary attention.
- Customer suggested giving something free to customers in order to get their attention, or else emphasizing the savings from water conservation.

BREAKOUT #2

Q1. What do you think are the biggest roadblocks homeowners would face in moving from A to B or C?

- Costs.
- Inertia.
- Technical hurdles.
- Long-term maintenance.
- Would need to learn more about plants.
- Don't want to give up my grass.
- Confused by different zones.

- Multiple have young children and will keep their grass for them.
- Knowing what to do after removing high water vegetation.
- Has grass and will not remove it. The grass connects her to deceased husband so when she uses the lawn mower it reminds her of him.
- Has mostly converted to xeriscape because the old drip system is not working, broken and out dated. Would like to change to smart irrigation but converting is difficult due to cost.
- She likes to do her own watering and installing a drip system might be confusing. Can consultants help with setting that up?
- She would be really happy to change to B but is disabled. Would come up with the cost if she can receive assistance getting everything setup. Would like to see a gutter flooder promotion.
- Wants to go xeriscape, has grass and plants that take a lot of water. Needs assistance in how to make the conversion. Suggestions on which plants are best would be helpful.
- Especially in the current pandemic situation and with the poverty of the state cost is a big barrier.
- Renters vs. landlords as a road block.
- Rebate requirements were confusing and not sure if they are eligible.
- Landscapers can be unresponsive.
- Ease of access to resources and more information sessions.
- Upfront capital invested into automatic fancy sprinkler system. It was a big cost so it is hard to give that up.
- Maintenance to the irrigation system. They got frustrated with the system was not working right and the cost of having to fix it every time is got clogged or there was a leak. Customer would like to know what the cost to maintain it and ongoing costs moving forward would be.
- Front is xeriscape with irrigation and back yard uses hoses. Was told she needed a new system and the cost was going to be a huge amount of money. She got a quote and sent it back to the WA consultant to help her decide if it was correct. In the end the cost to get it replaced was going to cost more than her budget.
- Does not agree with the cost to convert to drip and an irrigation controller. Had converted already to a controller but not the new smart irrigation technology. Let her lawn die and was not able to receive the rebate.
- What should we do with trees? They take a lot of water but have a role to play with temperature in neighborhoods and ecosystems. Does xeriscape include trees and worried that there could be long term effects of not including trees on the environment.
- Worried about the added heat that rocks absorb and like the looks of the grass and his dogs love the grass. Would like guidance on watering the different types of grasses, trees and plants he has.
- Difficult to convince people from other parts of the country that are used to having large lawns to not want to have that here. Has used drip systems and xeriscape for many years and has never qualified for any of the rebates and would like to have a benefit for those that are following the guidelines.

- Front yard has rocks, the backyard had grass and 3 trees. Killed the grass and cut down 2 of the trees. Has changed to gardens and would like to install drip irrigation but would need assistance in doing so.
- Access to plants.
- In general, customers felt that they needed more support and information to move to a more water conservation-friendly landscape.
- One customer still water with a hose and feels like she could convert her yard, but would need more support to get it started.
- Not sure how much of his yard is currently "xeriscaped" and needs more information to determine how much more work they need to do and where to start.
- Another customer was able to convert because he knows people who were conservation horticulturists. They gave him information, specifically about implementing a drip system with shallow root grass, that helped him convert his yard. He does not feel like he needs more support, in part because he found a great, affordable landscaper.
- Finding plants, or people who are lower cost landscapers to come out and do the work if people are unable to do it themselves.
- Some people still believe that having grass is completely necessary.
- Where to get the smart irrigation and who would install it for her? Has a system from 2009.
- Sold a large house xeriscape. Would be purchasers from out of state asked where is the grass so hinder on selling home without grass.
- Making artificial grass look presentable and appealing.
- Getting education on it. Wants to know what the cost damage would be to convert.
- Knowledge.
- Time.
- Are rebates an option?
- Has kids so what works for them?
- Need more information on how to do more DIY or really go into what the costs could be.
- Would like to know what the costs could be for moving from A to B when it comes to earth moving and doing it yourself.
- How to adjust the irrigation system on their own.
- Fear of the digital bridge.
- Learning curve.
- Needing a professional to do it/ guidance.
- Using the rocks and xeriscape does not seem safe to seniors.
- Resistance to being hooked up to a smartphone, or a laptop.
- Someone showing them.
- Not understanding the benefits and how it would be useful.

- Visually not seeing a green lawn and just seeing rocks. Are there any rebates available to transition from lawn to rocks? Do not like the heat that rocks radiate, and the weeds that come through with xeriscape. Aesthetics are not always pretty.

Q2. How aware/knowledgeable do you think the average homeowner is about “Smart” Irrigation technology?

- Many customers were very enthusiastic about “Smart” irrigation technology.
- Mistrust, loss of control with smart technology.
- Has a controller but hasn't heard of the smart controller.
- Some have not heard of the technology.
- Some have multiple smart devices already and are familiar with the technology.
- One customer thought it was a fantastic idea. She would be willing to use it and stop watering via hose if a system were to be set up for her.
- Another customer, who currently struggles with a difficult irrigation system, responded that having a system that would be easy to reprogram would be a “definite upgrade.”
- Already uses smart technology throughout house, so it would not represent a large shift. He remarked that the main benefits of using a “smart” irrigation system would be that it would automatically adjust for changes in weather.
- One customer felt that an additional system would be overwhelming, and that she would prefer to water with the hose, especially since she does not have a lot of property. She expressed discomfort with the technology and said that she would need to hire someone to help.
- If it needs internet that could be another cost added for some people.
- Has installed Smart Irrigation Tech and received a rebate from the Water Authority.
- Not a priority to install but are aware.
- One customer wanted to confirm that a “Smart” irrigation system could detect leaks on its own.
- There are a lot of resources at 505outside.com.
- Most in the group are partly knowledgeable of Smart technology, but were intrigued by the deep watering side.
- Some believed it is common knowledge to the average homeowner.
- If you do not have resources to pay your water bill, this would be out of reach to those families. So what resources are out there that could be offered to lower income homes that need assistance paying their bills to get this system?
- Feels the move to a different system would be nice, but he said it sounds expensive so he thinks he should just keep what he has.
- This is something that many are just newly learning.
- Need more guidance on usage and benefits.

- Hard to tell what a “average homeowner is” everyone is at their own knowledge base, and some may know terms differently than others.
- Not knowledgeable & unaware of how it works.
- Old fashioned type of irrigation is best.
- Would like more information on smart irrigation and what the upfront cost will be.
- Did have an estimate with this as an added expense. She did not understand the value of it because she did not feel she had all the information.
- Information needs to be easier to understand.
- Guidance on who to contact.

Q3. What do you think is the best way to get people to move from A, to B or C?

- Offering classes and more education in this area.
- Explain cost savings overtime to overcome that hurdle OR help pay.
- Assistance with figuring out what plants I currently have and what nice and appropriate additions would be.
- Would be nice to have a list of landscapers that were more helpful. Partnering with master gardeners in training to cut down costs.
- Online classes or information sessions.
- Having an app for water days.
- Partner with organizations and nurseries to further the ease of access to plants.
- Some sort of device like what PNM has to control the amount of water usage city-wide.
- Providing rain barrels.
- More awareness of the rebates and resources available to help make the conversion.
- Sponsoring of neighborhood programs and more information from the media.
- Promoting in the monthly bill and media.
- Targeting new customers in new homes and some type of real time usage monitoring system.
- Make it affordable
- Likes the idea of the guide and maybe some hand holding with the guide.
- Would like information on how much water his size of yard needs.
- Have guest speakers come in to neighborhood association meeting to inform about smart irrigation technology.
- Partnerships with the schools to inform kids about this as well.
- Rebates- encouraging people to move to the next level.
- Landscape examples show the positives and how beneficial it will be for them.
- Simplifying the setup technology, easier to understand for customers wanting to do it themselves.

- Flyer Inserts- Bold colors.
- Internship to learn how to do it online or in person.
- Wanting more help financial assistance even with rebates.
- Have a landscaping company partner with the Water Authority to make the costs better.
- Providing more information to everyone on how to do it efficiently, and what the upkeep will be.
- Be proactive and have partnerships with new builders to already have those smart systems in place.
- Social influencing to others so that they feel more encouraged to move away from grass. Reminders of the costs for a lawn vs. smart systems in the long run.
- Reminding people that the ecosystem is different and grass may not belong here.
- Targeted education mailings in partnership with the MVD. Send to people who have changed over their licenses/registrations with their cars from another state.
- Ways to find out about the rebates before taking action.
- When they send water bill send link to the xeriscape guide.
- More incentives. People would want to participate with maybe a credit on water bill, or offer for something.
- Classes on how to do a sprinkler system or how to do water upgrades on their own. People need more education.
- Drip systems, new technology, mulching, benefits for trees and how to keep water in the ground. How to take care of trees and landscaping. Details, more details!
- Conserving rainwater information. Rain barrels and what do you need to do that? Would the city provide rain barrels for discounted rates?
- Experts to help with education.
- Social media campaigns.
- TV for older community.
- Showing people how plants that don't use so much water can be appealing to the eye.
- Water is inexpensive in Albuquerque, so setting a standard and doing some rate increases and rebates to show the financial incentive for moving from one to another and for lower uses.
- Videos to watch rather than an actual guidebook to read, on-demand online classes.
- Analysis and goals for how to get there step-by-step. Hands on consultants to find out where to start.
- Information is the most important. What the definition of xeriscaping and all the benefits.
- The issue is knowing "why" they would want to change. Having people understand why, and what if we don't start saving our water?
- Global warming. Learning how to save, but still have a nice landscape.
- More marketing on TV and the importance of why to move towards a change.

- A demonstration home in a neighborhood that can host something and showcase how Water Authority can help and encourage neighbors to follow suit.
- Having someone do it for the customers (sprinkler company or plumbing company).
- Xeriscape showing the positive and sample plans of how it can work with actual layouts of the plants- guidance on what to buy, how to water if needed (a template).

BREAKOUT #3

11/10

ROOM #	HOW MUCH	HOW DEEP	HOW LONG
1		2	2
2	5		
3		5	
4	4		
5	1	3	2
6	3	1	
7	4	1	1

11/12

ROOM #	HOW MUCH	HOW DEEP	HOW LONG
1	3	2	1
2	4	1	
3	4	1	
4	2	2	2
5	4	2	1
6	3	1	1
7	3		

11/14

ROOM #	HOW MUCH	HOW DEEP	HOW LONG
1	5		
2	3	1	1
3	4	2	0
4	3	1	1
5	4		
6	3	1	
7	*	*	*

*Breakout 7 was not used on 11/14.

Q1. What do you like and dislike about each approach?

- Would probably increase their water usage by using this information.
- Some liked the How Much approach, but would appreciate all information to help conserve water.
- Many liked all three approaches.
- How long doesn't make sense to one customer, there are too many types of plants and landscapes.
- How long is helpful to know about the duration of how much to water and when.
- How deep was not important because it's a lot of work to figure out deep the soil goes and how much is even more work to do with having to count how many plants and trying to figure out more.

Q2. How willing are you to do the things required by these approaches?

- Very willing if it does not increase water usage.
- If it's easy very willing.

Q3. What made you vote the way you did?

- How deep as a consensus is newer information that none in the group had really learned about before.
- Some wanted to know how much because it is hard to determine based on the various types of plants, or how their gardens are grouped together.
- One wanted to know about how long because they have a timed irrigation system, and they are unsure about how long they really need to have the time set for.
- How long seemed easier to follow.

- Doesn't require as much equipment as the other two and believes it is a great jumping off point.
- How long is the easiest.
- Helps save money by knowing how long.
- It really needs to be a combo of all three because it depends on soil types and plant types. Does not have a depth meter so how long seems easiest.
- How Much would be too difficult to measure.
- Likes How Deep and has a meter for her indoor plants. Finds checking with the meter fun. May need a video to show how to use the meters for some people.
- Bought a product ASPA 80 to hold moisture in the lawn and has a depth meter. His water is well water so how much would not be helpful.

Q1. How easy is the chart to read and understand?

- Font is too small on the description.
- Drop colors are not consistent on chart and it is confusing.
- It is fairly clear but wonders if this will be available in multiple languages.
- Dripline was hard to read and understand.
- The top one is difficult to communicate for those that have English as a second language.
- More specificity to seasons would be nice.
- Need more specifics like where to water trees.
- Believes that the chart is very clear and easy to read. The pictures are very helpful.
- Inches deep is clear but what can be used to measure this?
- It does have a nice breakdown but hard to see with different font sizes.
- Third option with the hoses -Customers like how it's broken down.
- Too messy. Does not like the small print on one page.
- Would like it on multiple pages so it is simplified.
- Too much information about how long. The hose section does not state if it should be drip or fully on.
- Make it so it's easier to read.
- Greg likes the graph with how to water trees, shrubs, plants.

Q2. Can you think of any ways the chart could be simplified?

- Have more bold print
- First page should be an overview first and if people want to look at more of the guide they can.
- Could be quicker and easier to understand if it is more linear or color coded differently. Also, could make it right justified to make it clearer in design.
- Could be easier if grouped by types of plants and how often those specific plants need to be watered.
- Under "dripline" the font "how long" was hard to read.

- Too much information at once under the drip line info and layout issues.
- Colors in regard to the fonts/ slides/ information being shown.
- Add in which plants or flowers fall into what category, what zones, area (easy to follow guide).
- Color coding the information to time and plants.
- Bigger font for all the options
- Group actually believes it was simple, maybe even too simple. They would have liked a lot more information.

Q3. Are there any terms in the chart with which you are unfamiliar or require further explanation or definition?

- Using the hose as in pressure to be used.
- Warm vs. Cool season turfs what are they?
- Young plants require more water to build the root base.
- Scary due to the amounts and the pressure that would be needed. Would like further information on how these numbers were determined.
- What is a wildscape? May need more information on this.
- More information about how much flow would need to be going through the hose for the recommendations to work. He felt that 70 minutes of watering with a hose would be a lot if there was a high volume of water going through.
- One of the customers also expressed confusion about the referenced "xeriscaping" guide in the chart.
- Did not understand the Rain water, demand watering- more explanation to what that means.

Q4. Can you think of anything missing from the chart that you would like to see included?

- More information on smart irrigating.
- Many would like to see information for food gardens.
- Info on having consultant to visit their homes.
- Add a soaker hose system to the chart.
- Useful to have a demonstrative image for each of the types.
- Make it a more interactive guide on a website.
- It would be nice to have more of a go-to resource guide.
- How often was not on there. Or a time of how long
- Is there any information on how to keep the water in the ground longer?
- Adding how long it would take to go so deeply into the ground.
- Would like more details like temp ranges and types of turfs.
- Include a xeriscape guide with this information.
- Hyperlinks to the resources.
- Information on time of year watering of different plant types.

- Shorten the “how often” times to a more concise amount. 1-3 days is a big gap, and it is hard to know how much water each of the item actually needs with such a large variation.
- Something that breaks down the difference from ornamental grass and other types of grass. Maybe this could be its own chart.
- What the need is for slower growing plants and how it differs from the rest of the items on the chart.
- Per area (westside, north valley, etc.) they wanted a guide to the soil and how much they need to water for that area.
- Would have to tie ribbons to tell which plants are which. Would like a magnet for the fridge as a reminder.
- Clarification on soil types and how to tell them apart.
- An online calculator for sprinklers and easy for the customers to put in how many plants, type of plants and how much water, or irrigation they might need.
- Cost and saving analysis option.
- If has pots or plants in raised beds that need to be watered more- what category should those be in.
- Dual language info- Spanish.
- Color coding plants in different guides and colors for each category to help the customer know how much to water and what time of day to do so.

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

Event Date	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
11/10/2020			6.67% (2 participants)	93.33% (28 participants)	30
11/12/2020			20% (7 participants)	80% (28 participants)	35
11/14/2020			11.11% (3 participants)	88.89% (24 participants)	27

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

Event Date	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
11/10/2020			3.33% (1 participant)	96.67% (29 participants)	30
11/12/2020			8.57% (3 participants)	91.43% (32 participants)	35
11/14/2020			3.70% (1 participant)	96.30% (26 participants)	27

Q3: I would participate in this type of meeting again

Event Date	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
11/10/2020				100% (30 participants)	30
11/12/2020		5.71% (2 participants)	11.43% (4 participants)	82.86% (29 participants)	35
11/14/2020			7.41% (2 participants)	92.59% (25 participants)	27

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

Event Date	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
11/10/2020			3.33% (1 participant)	96.67% (29 participants)	30
11/12/2020			17.14% (6 participants)	82.86% (29 participants)	35
11/14/2020		3.70% (1 participant)	7.41% (2 participants)	88.89% (24 participants)	27

Q5: I learned something about water conservation in Albuquerque

Event Date	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
11/10/2020		6.25% (2 participants)	13.33% (4 participants)	80% (24 participants)	30
11/12/2020			34.29% (12 participants)	65.71% (23 participants)	35
11/14/2020			18.52% (5 participants)	81.48% (22 participants)	27

Open Ended Survey Responses

11/10/2020 Conversation

- Good to see other people interested in our world's future.
- Very organized and informative meeting.
- Did learn items about water usage no aware of.
- It was great that the water authority was truly interested in our opinions.
- I'm looking forward to seeing what comes of tonight's meeting!
- I really enjoyed being able to give my input on the issues at hand.
- Amazing use of zoom. More productive than in person fun to participate then see results later thank you.
- Well-run meeting, and the breakouts were effective in getting everyone's participation, at least for my group, but it sounds like all the groups had robust discussion. Many of us are pretty

Zoomed out, but I was surprised that an hour and a half flew by as quickly as this one did. Well done!

- I didn't know that the water authority had a Facebook site. I will find it and follow it.
- Excellent presentation! Looking forward to getting some advice!
- To the facilitators - I appreciate being told what great groups we all were - but it's unnecessary, in my opinion. Also, a pet peeve, but could we all learn we to say xeriscape, not zeroscape? :-)
- Loved this meeting. It was very well-organized, well-run, informative, casual while maintaining professionalism, and fun to attend. This was the best zoom call I've attended. The facilitators were delightful and made for a great safe space that got everyone talking and sharing. I learned a lot from the other attendees in the small groups, so loved the breakout session format. Thank you so much!
- I am impressed with the outreach that the Water Authority undertakes. I appreciate the effort and enthusiasm, and how necessary it is in light of our dwindling precipitation.
- Thank you for your hard work!
- Very well organized and practical. Looking forward to seeing the guidebook! Thank you.
- I really enjoyed the meeting and it's nice that you are asking for our input.
- It was very informative. I learned new things about water conservation.
- This was a great Zoom meeting. I learned a lot and feel like it was very well managed.
- This was a fantastically run meeting with relevant and pertinent information for a home owner. While the aim of the meeting was getting customer feedback, I still learned a lot about steps I can take to help my yard. I appreciate the Water Authority taking the time to run these calls.
- Wow exceeded expectations. Felt the groups were not the most diverse (a lot of my younger friends leave the water running all the time, how are we going to reach these apartment dwellers?). Seems interior water use was not focused on but is still significant (in my experience)
- Thank for the great information that you have shared to me.
- Super excited about upcoming guide book.
- I Learned some things I did not know.
- I would appreciate easy access to this information. Whether it is sent in email format with my bill or in the mail.
- Have neighborhood associations assist.
- This was a very well-run call! Seriously.
- Well run meeting – kudos to all!

11/12/2020 Conversation

- I thought that the facilitators that were used really helped to engage everyone, I was impressed by that. An unpopular idea I did not bring up in the group is: maybe the price of water needs

to go up? If it's truly a limited resource that humankind will DIE without, why is it priced so low (likely artificially low/ subsidized even)? People can water wastefully and with total abandon because the price of water per gallon is actually the Low part of the bill!

- I do think it is a great idea to revamp watering by the numbers and making it more educational.
- I learned that ABCWUA has varied resources available to me. There should be a way to get this information to customers that pull their bills on line.
- I was expecting more people!
- Good use of time. Well run.
- Well run, nice change of pace, informative
- Well done.
- The meeting was very well organized. The small group sizes were nice as they allowed everyone time to share input. I think it would be nice to also have a follow up survey for participants who would like to give additional input. From my experience, this allows different personality types more equitable input. Some people need time to think and reflect on questions to give their best answers! Over all really great and well executed! I hope you got lots of great input from these meetings. It was enjoyable to attend :)
- I loved the format and the ability to give input. This is an engaging process.
- In a water conservation effort, the city should be setting the example by following their own guidelines. Watering during certain times or during the hottest part of the day.
- You always do an excellent job with these sessions. Have attended twice before. I learn and contribute and am so proud of ABCWUA. Keep up the great work!!
- I'm going to request an irrigation and landscaping consultation this February to help me develop a water budget and determine how long, deep and much to water the old established trees on my property. Thank you.
- I liked that the facilitators at the end shared the comments given by their groups, as it brought up a lot of ideas I (and my group) hadn't thought about. Our group mentioned having the guide in Spanish and/or other languages, which wasn't reported out at the end.
- N/A Thanks for allowing me to participate! I'd love to save some money to make helping adjustments in the future.
- I don't know how to fix this, but for info inserted into a paper bill or sent with electronic bill, it might be the recipient's SPOUSE that wants the conservation info and would put it to use. My husband gets the electronic bill, so I don't even know what comes with it.
- This was the best Zoom session I've participated in. I can see why someone came back for a second session- I'd attend every week just for fun! Thanks!
- Good use of videos and poll questions. This was a good alternative to meeting in person. Breakout discussion was good but lacked the activities of past meetings.
- Even with a small topic focus it still seemed things were rushed at times. However, I see no way around that when multiple folks are being heard other than a much longer session. Good job with facilitators being able to keep participants on track and focused.
- Well done. I felt that our input was well received and I learned some things that I didn't know.
- Good discussions.
- I am not sure that hearing from each of the moderators at the end was very helpful.

- Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate. I learned from the presenters and my customer peers and felt like I was able to contribute in a positive way to our local community. I will definitely be contacting Richard Perce for a consultation!
- Thank you so much!
- I learned a lot. Thank you so much!
- Very well done.
- Good Job!
- Most helpful were all the links to more information.
- Good meeting. I liked the format and I really liked the incentives. It will be great when we can do this again in person.
- Thanks so much for sponsoring the conversation!
- Looking forward to an expert consultation come Spring.
- Good use of the time. Thanks.
- Very nice, moderator and experts so sweet. xo

11/14/2020 Conversation

- Thank you for the opportunity- I learned a great deal and appreciate all that the Water authority is doing for ABQ.
- Meeting well done -- congrats! A comment (extrinsic) regarding several mentions of water bill increases (concerns) in my group (by those taking conservation steps), however, potentially, an additional factor may be possible increases in solid waste and/or wastewater charges that contribute to the 'water bill' ... dunno ... just a thought ... thx
- Will you please consult with ornithologists and entomologists before making eradication of non-xeriscape yards a goal? After 15 years of observation of a xeriscape front yard and a Bermuda grass back yard, I have found that the grass and weeds are an important habitat and food source for birds, insects, butterflies, and bees. Ornithologists established long ago that some city lots need to be let go to seed for the birds. Attention is especially needed now that we have lost 50% of the small bird population. They play a significant part in the ecosystem, besides being a joy to listen to and to watch. Thank you very much for your continuing work!
- I wonder if any effort will be offset by Facebook's server farm
- The breakout time could have been extended, as we weren't able to express all our thoughts in the short sessions.
- I really appreciate the Water Authority having this program available to customers. You did a great job transitioning to a virtual environment.
- Looking forward to the new guide ...
- I really appreciated WUA's interest in improving the outreach to customers about water conservation. Elizabeth was a great facilitator, and the breakout session format was good (although, it seems our group didn't get to all the discussion questions before having to go back to the main group). I also appreciated being able to offer my 2-cents, since I've struggled with the water by the numbers initiative because of the type of landscaping that I have. I am dying to get rid of my lawn, but the cost is prohibitive at this time, and I haven't been able to

figure out what to do with that space once I do take out the lawn (I learned I'm not the only one with this issue!). I look forward to seeing what comes of the inputs everyone shared today. Thank you!

- Does the water authority have an advisory board? This could be useful in determining what the authority communicates to its customers.
- I learn different knowledge and the smart equipment in this meeting. I have a lot of good ideas from different participants.
- I encountered some technical difficulties in participating, maybe because I was using the browser version of Zoom and not the downloaded version. I wish that I could have seen the other participants. But I really enjoyed the presentations, the opportunity to share my ideas, and the opportunity to hear the ideas of others.
- I am so impressed with the way our Water Authority listens to the community and includes us in decision making through these meetings.
- I appreciated learning about WUA resources I didn't know about before.
- I really appreciate the opportunity to participate, as well as all that you are doing to educate the community and preserve our aquifer. Thank you!
- Great job presenting today!
- Absolutely Wonderful!!!!
- This is a great program. We should have this kind online meeting often in the future!
- The break-out sessions seemed too short to get to have a real conversation about the topics. Not everyone was able to share completely.
- Thank you for the information!
- Good job!
- Great meeting!
- Thank you for the opportunity to participate. Keep up the good work!
- Great discussion. Really enjoyed tips on watering yard and plants.
- Great info!
- Enjoyable session! Thank you

Customer Conversations

November 10, 12 & 14, 2020



***Watering
Recommendations***



The Focus



HOW MUCH DO I WATER MY PLANTS? SUMMER (JUNE TO AUGUST)

Plant Type	TREES
How Much?	212 GALLONS PER TIME
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

Plant Type	TREES
How Much?	212 GALLONS PER TIME
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

HOW LONG TO WATER YOUR PLANT WITH A HOSE SUMMER (JUNE TO AUGUST)

Plant Type	TREES
How Long?	70 MINUTES
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

Plant Type	SHRUBS
How Long?	7 MINUTES
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

Plant Type	FLOWERING PLANTS
How Long?	1 MINUTE
How Often?	2-3 TIMES PER WEEK

Plant Type	DESERT ACCENTS
How Long?	2 MINUTES
How Often?	2-3 TIMES PER MONTH

Plant Type	GROUNDCOVER
How Long?	4 MINUTES
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

Plant Type	GRASS: ORNAMENTAL
How Long?	1 MINUTE
How Often?	1-2 TIMES PER WEEK

Plant Type	VINES
How Long?	19 MINUTES
How Often?	1 TIME PER WEEK

HOW LONG TO WATER YOUR LANDSCAPE WATERING TO THE PLANTS NEEDS 1 SUMMER (JUNE TO AUGUST)

Watering Demand	MEDIUM WATERING DEMAND DRIP ZONE	How Long? 76 MINUTES	Matches Medium Water Plants in the Xeriscaping Guide. This schedule is designed for a drip zone made up of mostly shrubs and perennials, maybe with a few smaller or native trees. It applies for a Wildscape and some Xeriscapes.
Watering Demand	LOW WATERING DEMAND DRIP ZONE	How Long? 100 MINUTES	Matches Low Water Plants in the Xeriscaping Guide. This schedule is designed made up of mostly perennials with a few shrubs and maybe one small, or native tree. It could also include a few desert accents like yuccas or hesperaloes. It applies for a Wildscape and some Xeriscapes.
Watering Demand	RAIN WATER WATERING DEMAND DRIP ZONE	How Long? 60 MINUTES	Matches Rain Water Plants in the Xeriscaping Guide. This schedule is designed for a drip zone made up of mostly desert accents and a few native, rain water, perennials. It applies for some Xeriscapes and Gravelscapes. We recommend not using this irrigation zone on Rain Water Plants after they are established (1-3 years), depending on rainfall during the season.

These drip zone recommendations are designed as a "rule of thumb" for you to start with. They are not designed to give you the exact answer for your yard, but instead a solid foundation to start with. You may find that your medium water plants are planted in full sun and need a little extra water, or your soil has heavy clay and you may not have to water as often. We included the gallons per hour (gph) we used to calculate the timing. Your system may be different but you can use these recommendations as a starting point.

HOW LONG TO WATER YOUR GRASS USING A HOSE SUMMER (JUNE TO AUGUST)

Watering Demand	COOL SEASON TURF	How Long? 7 MINUTES	How Often? 3-5 TIMES PER WEEK
Watering Demand	WARM SEASON TURF	How Long? 14 MINUTES	How Often? 2-3 TIMES PER WEEK

Recruitment



**VIRTUAL
Customer
Conversations**

**ONLINE DISCUSSION
FORUMS**

\$25 Grubhub gift card
for all participants! Prize drawings
at all three sessions: customized
professional landscape designs, rain
barrels, smart irrigation controllers,
and nursery gift certificates!

**DON'T MISS
YOUR CHANCE TO
WEIGH IN ON —**

**WATERING RECOMMENDATIONS:
Beyond By the Numbers!**

Dates and times:
Tuesday Nov. 10, 6:00 p.m.
Thursday Nov. 12, 4:00 p.m.
Saturday Nov. 14, 10:00 a.m.

Space is limited — advance registration required!

Sign Up Today!

Sessions Are Just 90 Minutes; Registration Deadline Oct. 30

<https://tinyurl.com/505Waters>

Water Authority customers only

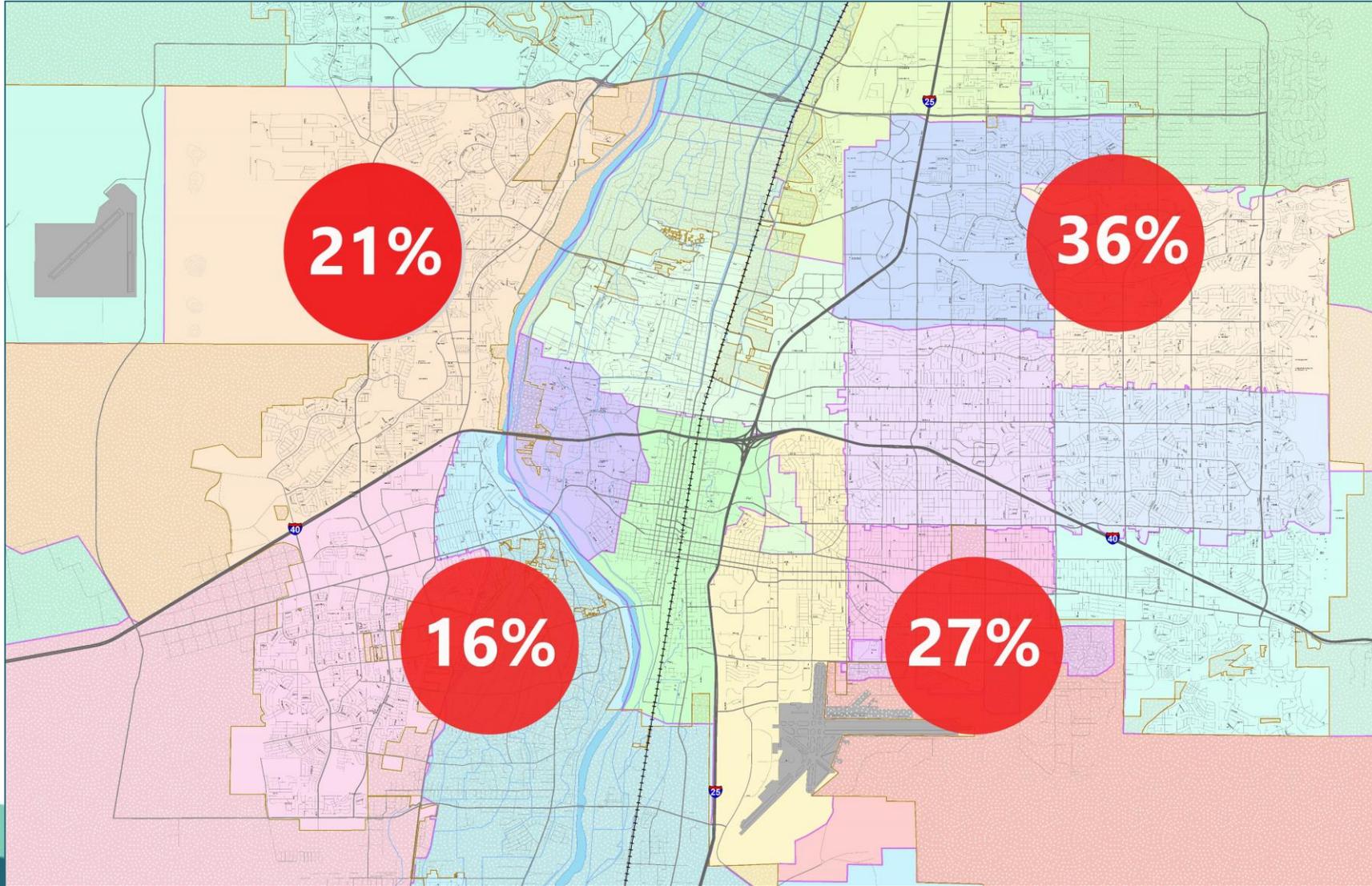


Virtual Sessions: Registration and Participation

TUESDAY EVENING:	30
THURSDAY LATE AFTERNOON:	35
<u>SATURDAY MORNING:</u>	<u>27</u>

TOTAL IN ATTENDANCE: 92

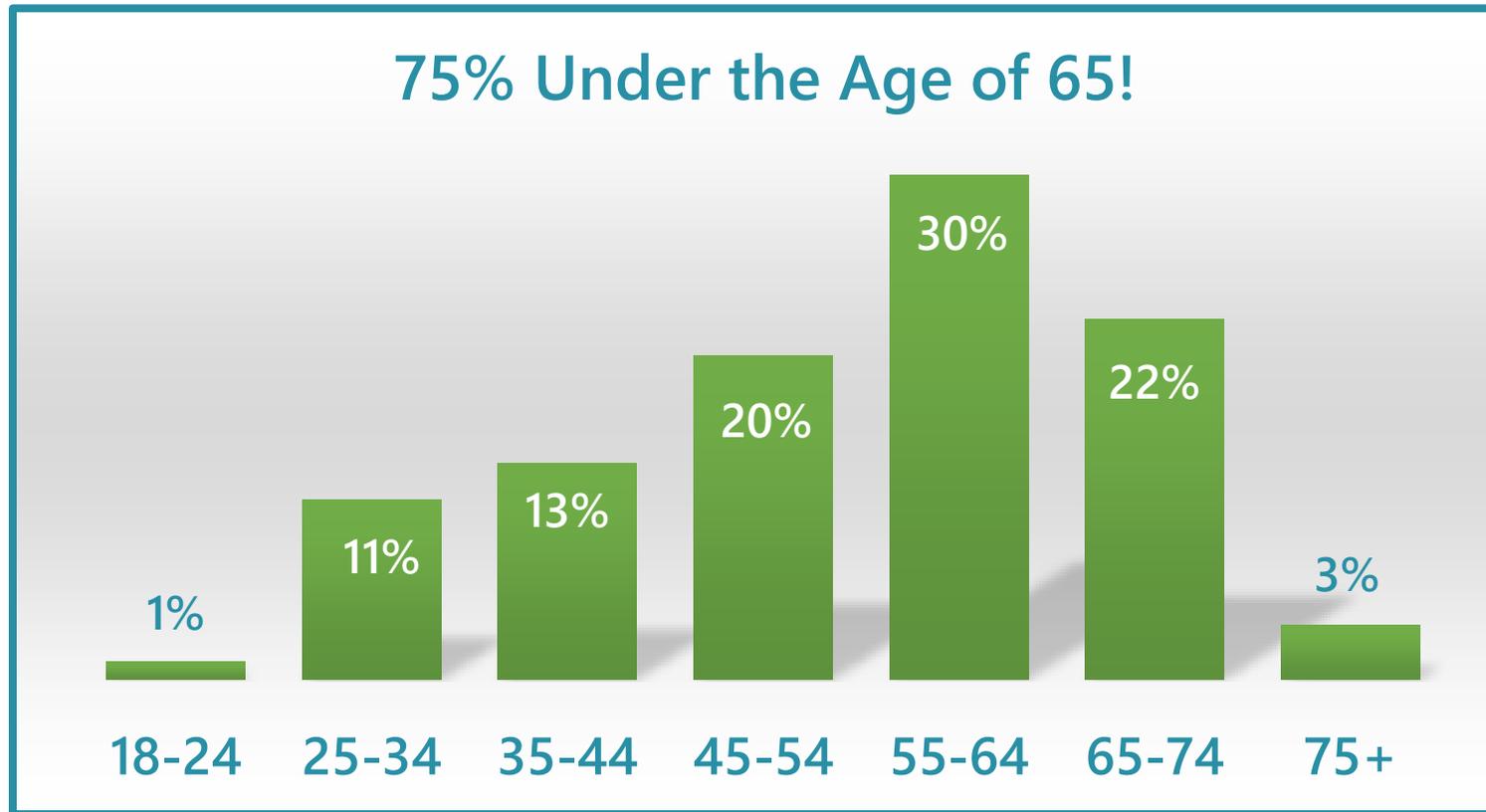
TOTAL REGISTRATIONS:	209
PERCENT NO-SHOWS:	56%



Participants by Quadrant

NW	21% (19)
NE	36% (33)
SW	16% (15)
SE	27% (25)

Participants by Age

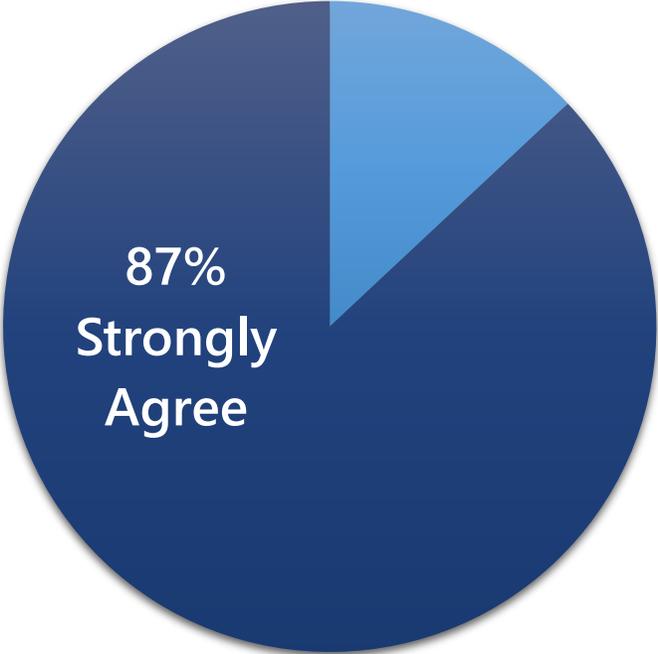


Key Takeaways

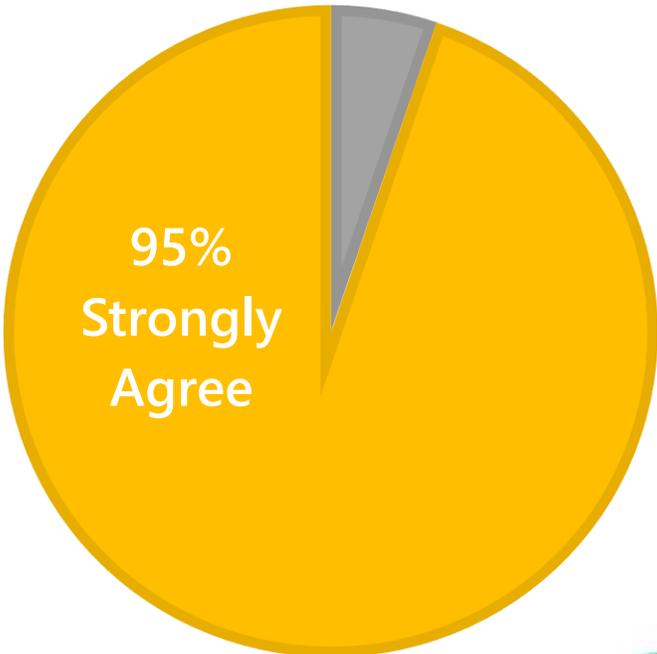


Evaluation Responses

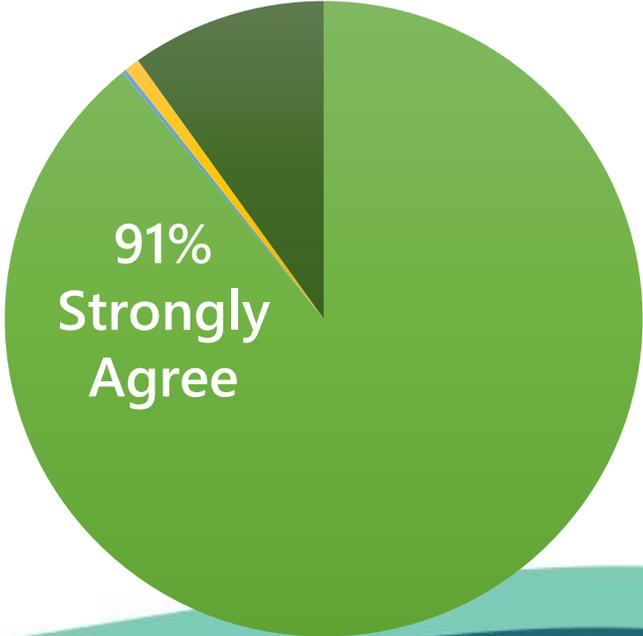
MY TIME WAS WELL-SPENT



MY INPUT WAS VALUED



I'D DO THIS AGAIN



Questions?

