



Customer Assistance Program Survey

The Tualatin Valley Water District (TVWD) created a survey of water and wastewater utilities to assist in the evaluation of its existing customer assistance program. TVWD is interested in understanding what other utilities are doing to assist customers with paying their water and wastewater bills.

Many utilities assist customers that have difficulty paying their utility bills. These programs vary widely and are referred to by many different names. One example is a low-income rate that helps customers afford their water bills. For convenience, we have grouped these various programs under the heading of "customer assistance programs", or CAPs. Although these programs may have various names at different utilities, we are referring to those programs that directly assist customers in need.

This document provides the raw information gathered from the survey. Attachment A is a summary of the results. Attachment B includes the detailed answers from each respondent. TVWD is in the process of creating a report that summarizes the findings of the survey. When complete TVWD will share that report as well.

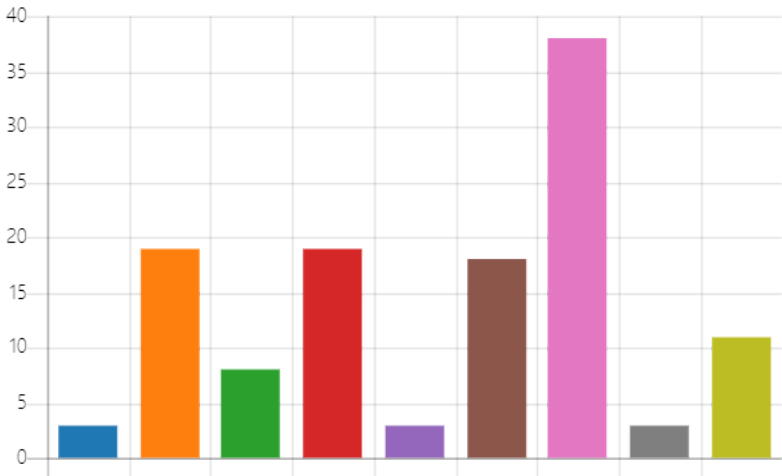
Attachment A

Summary of Survey Results

Customer Assistance Program Questionnaire

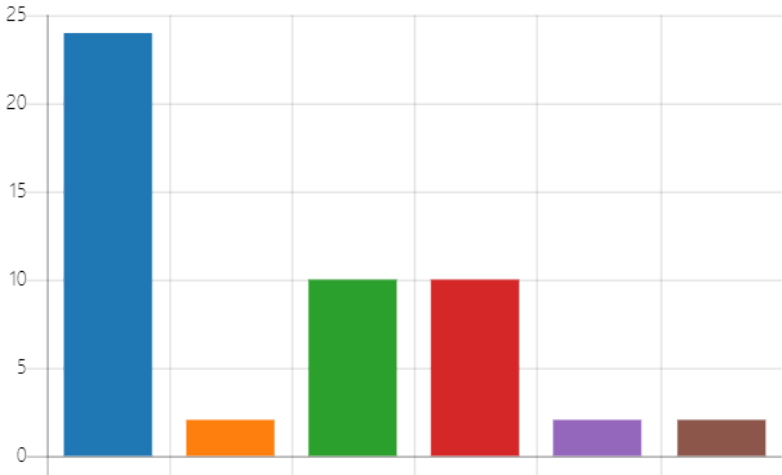
1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

Low-income rates. These are s...	3
Low-income discounts. For wa...	19
Lifeline rates. This is a low-cos...	8
Crisis assistance program. A te...	19
Arrearage forgiveness. The for...	3
Penalty forgiveness. The forgiv...	18
Payment plans. A negotiated ...	38
None.	3
Other	11



2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

Yes.	24
No, but we are currently plann...	2
No, but we are considering th...	10
We currently have no plans to ...	10
We don't currently have a cust...	2
Other	2



3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

38

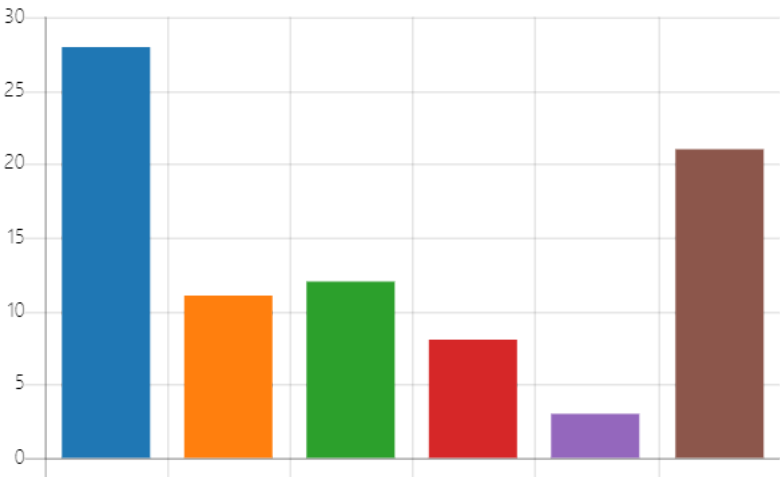
Responses

Latest Responses

"Temporary suspension of shut-offs due to non-payment; waiving late ..."
"We offer customers both payment extensions and long-term payment..."

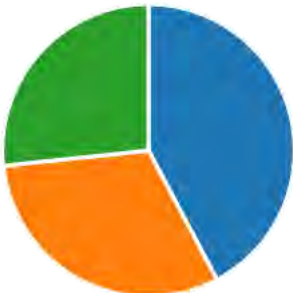
4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Low-income customers	28
Disabled customers	11
Senior citizens	12
Disabled veterans	8
Veterans	3
Other	21



5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

We established our own eligib...	19
We adopted the eligibility crit...	14
Other	12



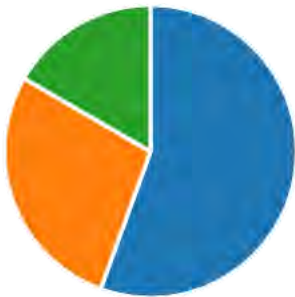
6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Our utility staff.	16
Another government-based s...	8
A non-governmental organiza...	13
Other	8



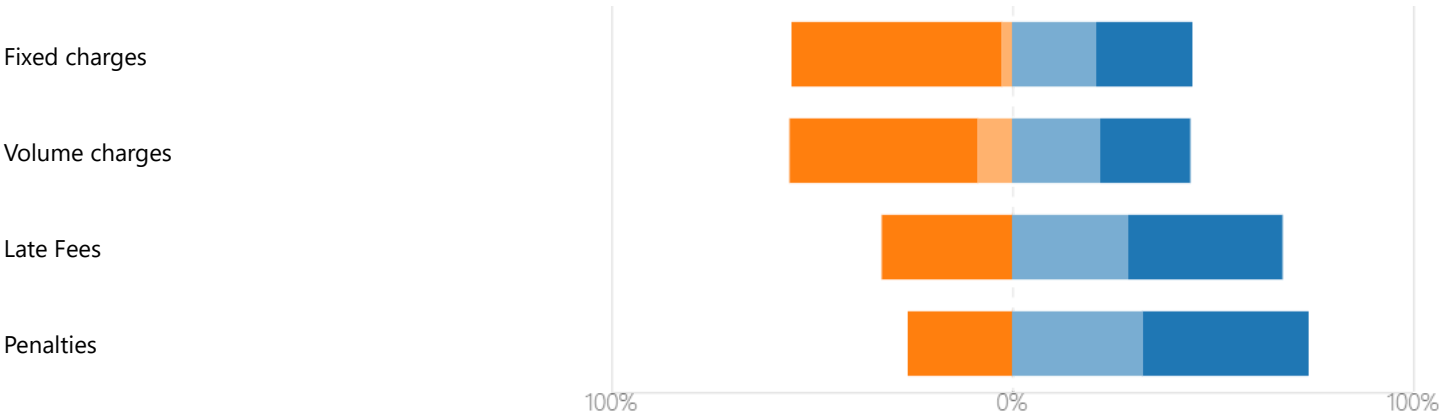
7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Single-family residential	40
Multifamily residential	20
Other	12



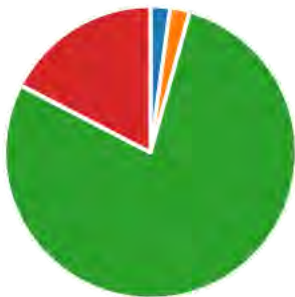
8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
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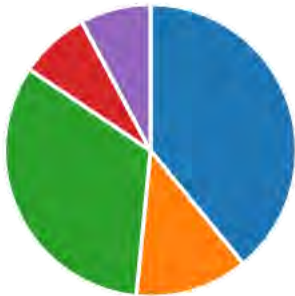
9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

Once per year.	1
Once for the life of the account.	1
We don't allow arrearage forgi...	36
Other	8



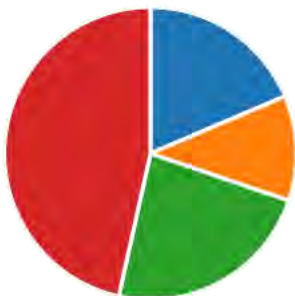
10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

<div></div> Late payment.	25
<div></div> Interest on unpaid balances.	8
<div></div> Fees for disconnection and re...	21
<div></div> Charges for checks returned f...	5
<div></div> Other	5



11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgiven a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

<div></div> Once per year.	8
<div></div> Once for the life of the account.	5
<div></div> We don't allow penalty forgive...	10
<div></div> Other	20



12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

<div></div> No limit.	2
<div></div> Once per year.	17
<div></div> Once for the life of the account.	2
<div></div> We don't allow penalty forgive...	8
<div></div> Other	11



13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

32
Responses

Latest Responses
"Low income (for past 30-days, ie, lost job, lost wages) customer experi...

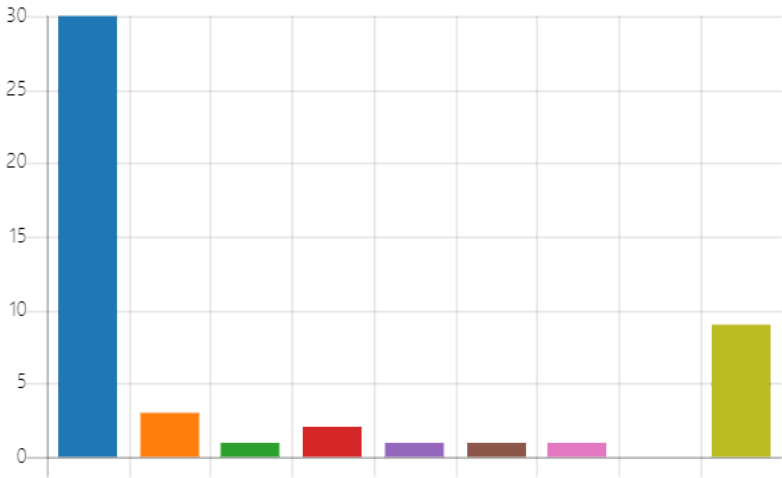
14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

32
Responses

Latest Responses
"Forgiveness of up to 4-months of basic utility charges"

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

All customers regardless of class	30
Single-family residential	3
Multifamily residential	1
Commercial	2
Industrial	1
Institutional	1
Irrigation	1
Wholesale	0
Other	9



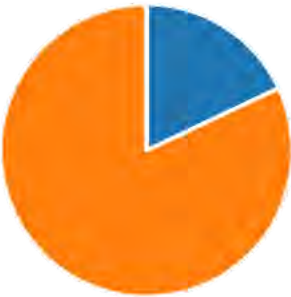
16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

Fixed charges	20
Consumption charges	21
Late fees	7
Penalties	5
Other	11



17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

Yes	9
No	41
Other	0



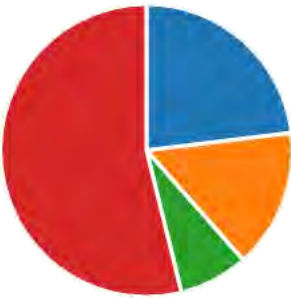
18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

Submit a written form.	3
Call our office.	7
Provide request through a self...	3
Other	6

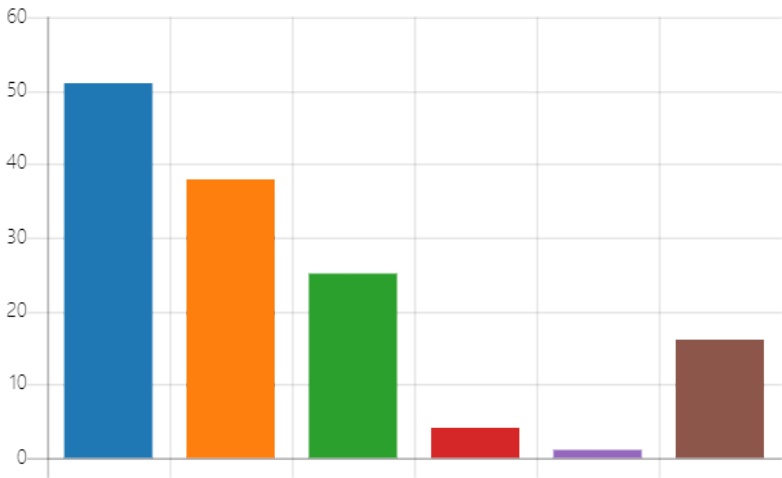
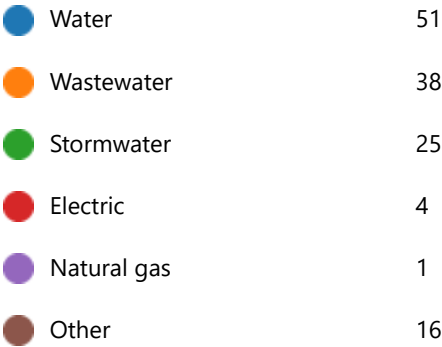


19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

History of reliable payment.	3
Minimum length of service.	2
Maintenance of a deposit.	1
Other	7



20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

51
Responses

Latest Responses
"185000"
"125000"
"175,000"

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

50
Responses

Latest Responses
"40000"
"28000"
"57,000"

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

42
Responses

Latest Responses
"146,000,000"
"63000"
"\$80 million"

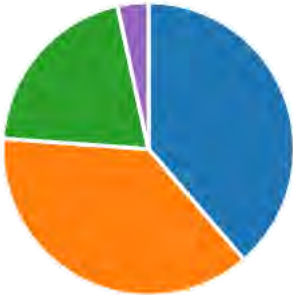
24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

Monthly	39
Bimonthly	17
Quarterly	7
Other	0



25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

Manual meter reads	34
Automated meter reading (A...	33
Advanced Meter Infrastructure...	18
We do not meter usage.	0
Other	3



26. Utility name:

51
Responses

27. Contact's name:

51
Responses

28. Contact's email address:

51
Responses

29. City name:

50
Responses

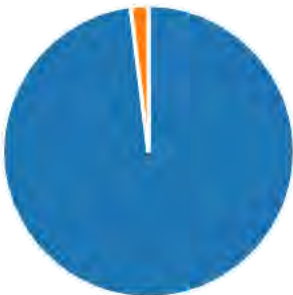
30. State name:

50
Responses

Latest Responses
"WA"
"Michigan"
"California"

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

● Yes	50
● No	1



32. How did you learn about this survey?

I received an email directly.	14
Someone in my organization f...	12
Either I or someone in my org...	3
Other	6



Attachment B

Detailed Responses from Survey Participants

Respondent 1

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

relaxing the qualification documentation requirements during this period recognizing that people may have just lost their jobs and don't have documentation on income.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

up to \$500 on water/sewer/stormwater bill

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ all but wholesale

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☒ Submit a written form.☒ Call our office.☒ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



no

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



bills and collect for v

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

about 500,000 retail

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

about 180,000 accounts

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$200 million - water service

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☐ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 2

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Payment plans

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Looking to establish a fund for low income and those financially impacted by COVID both business and residential

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

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- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

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6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

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- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

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- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

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Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

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☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

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☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water☒ Wastewater☒ Stormwater☐ Electric☐ Natural gas☒ Streetlight

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$38,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

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☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 3

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☒ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Our Council will approve these changes on 4/9/2020. Austin Water will contribute an additional \$5.0M to our Plus One payment assistance program, for a total of \$5.5M for this fiscal year. Austin Water will also reduce our residential Customer Assistance Program water and wastewater rates by 10% in blocks 1-3 on water and 1-2 on wastewater. These will be effective 4/10/2020 through 9/30/2020.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.



We had a one-time †

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐

Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

☐

Once per year.

☐

Once for the life of the account.

☐

We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☒

As described above.

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

☐

No limit.

☐

Once per year.

☐

Once for the life of the account.

☐

We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☒

Not sure. would hav

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Payment of outstanding bills, usually 1-2 months only.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☒ Single-family residential

☒ Multifamily residential

☒ Commercial

☒ Industrial

☒ Institutional

☒ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☒ [REDACTED] has a C

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☒ Call our office.
- ☒ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☒ History of reliable payment.

☒ Minimum length of service. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☒ Stormwater

☒ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$575 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 4

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

• We currently determine eligibility based on the last 30 days of income but this is not relevant to customers who may have been laid-off, furloughed, etc. We are temporarily not considering their previous income, instead customers are self-identifying as COVID-19 affected. • We currently request proof of employment or changes to employment. We will continue to ask but are temporarily waiving this as requirement. We realize that some businesses shut down abruptly and customers may or may not be able to obtain documentation of their employment status. This includes unemployment benefit documentation since it may be difficult to obtain due to their backlog. • For customers whose household income has been impacted but remains over our current income guidelines, we are allowing them to temporarily participate in our program at our discretion. We will request verification of employment status but it will not be required. Customers will be allowed to self-identify as COVID-19 affected. • Since the reduction in employment is temporary, all COVID-19 customers will be given a Tier 1 discount. If there is a current balance, the customer will be required to make a copayment and a crisis voucher will be applied up to \$500.00. The third bullet refers to customers who were a two person income but due to COVID-19, they're down to only one. The one income may still exceed our income guidelines but they will be allowed to participate in the program for three months in order to ease the impact of loss wages.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☒ Veterans
- ☒

Anyone is eligible. It

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

Other

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

Both staff and [REDACTED]

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

☒ Single-family residential

☒ Multifamily residential

☐ Other

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

☐ Once per year.

☐ Once for the life of the account.

☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.

☐ Other

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

loss of job, medical bills, divorce

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

No shut off or late fees, interest free extended payment arrangements, at the end of 12 months if paid as agreed they get 50% off the balance remaining or \$300 whichever is less.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

- ☒ All customers regardless of class
- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional☐ Irrigation☐ Wholesale☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges☒ Consumption charges☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.
- ☐ Minimum length of service.
- ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
- ☐
-

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

- ☐ I received an email directly.
- ☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.
- ☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.
- ☐

Other

Respondent 5

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☒ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☒

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

420,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

150,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$120M

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☐ Yes

☒ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☐

Respondent 6

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

we are now crediting customers their bill amount (up to \$132) if they call and say they have lost their job or have a reduction in hours due to Covid-19

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☒ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Anyone who meets the guidelines set forth with Human Solutions. They go by poverty rates so if the household fits into the rates, they qualify.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

They can have a one time \$132 payment or a \$22 discount on all bills for a period of one year.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

over 50,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

13,583

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

8,628,330

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

Oregon

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 7

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☒ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒ Solid Waste

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

500,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

98,500

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$85,700,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 8

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

For all retail customers (residential, comm./ind.): Suspended all service terminations for non-payment Suspended all late fees and service termination charges

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

N/A

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

N/A

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☒ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water☒ Wastewater☒ Stormwater☐ Electric☐ Natural gas☒ Public safety fee, ISF

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

12,000 water

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

3,938 as of 01/01//20

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

water: \$1.8M/year rate revenue only

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☒ Currently 15% of cus

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:



27. Contact's name:



28. Contact's email address:



29. City name:



30. State name:

OR

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?



Yes



No

32. How did you learn about this survey?



I received an email directly.



Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.



Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 9

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Customer assistance is limited by Prop 218 in CA, so can't make changes.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☒ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes☐ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☒ automatic for all SFF

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☒ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒ trash

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

4 million

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

650,000 for wastewater

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$700 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 10

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☒ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Suspended shut offs and expanded our arrearage/penalty forgiveness programs. along with related payment plan options.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ Budgeted write-off

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

50,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

16,500

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$11,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 11

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☒ We sent out reminders

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We currently budget \$5,000 per year - payment to St Vincent DePaul earmarked for our customers, referred by CRW staff. If funding runs out before June 30 we are considering sending the FY 2021 \$5,000 prior to year end. We are on a biennial budget. We may determine a need to increase amount for assistance in the future.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ Crisis program for vulnerable customers

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☒ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ We have made exce|

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

We refer them to St Vincent DePaul for review and they will provide payment of account balance (using our earmarked funding). Bills are generally paid in full but may not include penalties and late fees.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

- ☒ All customers regardless of class
- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial
- ☐ Institutional
- ☐ Irrigation
- ☐ Wholesale
- ☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☒ Not really pulled fro

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

- ☐ Minimum length of service.
- ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
- ☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

47,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

12,764

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$12,500,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 12

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

NA

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

NA

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ Per Prop. 218, only r

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ Per Prop. 218, only r

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☒ NA

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



NA

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



Fees imposed by oth

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

Water - 1.4 million and Wastewater - 685,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

Water - 382,000 customers and Wastewater - 175,000 customers

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

~\$645 million in FY19

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☒ Small subset of AMI

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 13

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Even more relaxed re-payment options/terms. We are currently charging no late fees and water is not being turned off for non-payment.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ We administer our p

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

see note above. We

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

Other

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

Other

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

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12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ Within City residential

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☒ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



none. Deposits are |

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

130,000 including wholesale

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

+30k

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

Could provide info with more informatin on what is needed.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 14

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

So far we are not charging late fees or turning off water. We also provided extra funds to the Crisis assistance program.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Financial hardship: loss or reduction of income, unexpected expense such as car repair, more family members moving into the home without added income, medical expenses

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Residents with a City bill in their name can get a credit applied to their utility bill. Residents of multifamily structures would have a check cut to the utility company on their behalf.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☒ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☒ History of reliable payment.

☒ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☒ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☒ road maintenance &

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

25,635

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

6,782

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☐

Respondent 15

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☒ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Looking to provide short term assistance rather than just our normal yearly program.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

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9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

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12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

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The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

Of 8000(ish) customers, historically 100-150 apply and meet the criteria for assistance

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

8000ish

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☐

Respondent 16

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We may increase funding for customer assistance due to Covid 19.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☒ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

It is based on eligibi

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

Other

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

Other

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgiven a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Don't have penalty c

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Depending on the si

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Any inability to pay. We don't ask, often the customer tells us.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

All assistance is handled through Community Action. They tell us what the customer is eligible for. We try to get eligible customers caught up and current. So, we provide as much as needed to get customer current until our budgeted funding runs out.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

- ☐ All customers regardless of class
- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial
- ☐ Institutional
- ☐ Irrigation
- ☐ Wholesale
- ☒ Assistance is provided

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☒ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☒ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

Approx 96,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

24,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

20,600,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

Oregon

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?



Yes



No

32. How did you learn about this survey?



I received an email directly.



Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.



Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 17

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Denver Water stopped turning off customers for delinquency in early March as a result of COVID-19.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

One time, up to \$300 credit to the customer account

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1.5 Million

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

@250,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$306M

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 18

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

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- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

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- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☒

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- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

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- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

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☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ Sep surcharge on bil

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☒ n/a

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



n/a

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1M

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

234,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

25M

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

CA

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 19

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Still under discussion

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

clean water 3000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

1350

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

30. State name:

Oregon

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☐

Other

Respondent 20

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ All it is a one time as

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

\$250 one time applied to the outstanding bill but the customer needs to have a plan for the remaining balance before it is applied

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☒ Late fees

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1.8 million

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

480,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

337,805,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

OR

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 21

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We are letting customer pay what they can and informing them that the totals will continue to mount, so please pay what they can to minimize the impact when this is all over.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Based on situational

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

NA

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

NA

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale



NA

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ NA

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☒ NA

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



NA

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



Solid Waste

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

235,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

245,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

3.8mm

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:



27. Contact's name:



28. Contact's email address:



29. City name:



30. State name:

 TX

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

Respondent 22

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☒ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

1 time credit of \$100 on bill

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

400,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

155,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$164,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

Respondent 23

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

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12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$253,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

Texas

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 24

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Request for Board Resolution for the following: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by The Southeast Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority on this 16th day of April 2020 as follows: 1. The Authority hereby suspends the practice of water service shut offs as a result of non-payment of bills; and 2. The Authority hereby suspends the accruing of interest and penalties on currently past due bills and shall forbear from imposing such interest and penalty charges on bills that may become past due during the period that this suspension remains in effect; and 3. The Authority shall seek to accommodate customer hardships on a caseby- case basis through the implementation of payment plans for current and future outstanding balances that may accrue or continue to accrue during the period of this crisis. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the suspension of these collection practices and the implementation of these efforts to accommodate those impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until further or otherwise resolved by the Authority.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers

- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans



5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.



We established our own eligibility criteria.



We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.



6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.



Our utility staff.



Another government-based social service agency.



A non-governmental organization that provides social services.



7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.



Single-family residential



Multifamily residential

☐

Other

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

☐

Once per year.

☐

Once for the life of the account.

☒

We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.

☐

Other

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ No recovery of pena

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

62,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

17,500

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

Approximately \$15.5 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

- ☒ I received an email directly.
- ☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.
- ☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.
- ☐

Other

Respondent 25

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
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- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We plan to stop shut-offs during this time for those experiencing COVID19 issues.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
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- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Penalties may be wa

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☒ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

job loss due to COVID19

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

waived late fees,no shut off

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ there's not a direct c

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

9860

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

4600

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$4,700,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

OR

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 26

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We estimate through the winter and due to a flood event, had an extra month of estimating. We are just now coming out of estimating and will have to do major adjustments. We will know more about what changes we will contemplate after we have a month or two dealing with residential and small business non-payment. We are currently directing our customers to areas of federal and state assistance that will aid them in paying their overall utilities.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Between employment, family emergency, etc. Customer has to describe the disruption leading the request and receive department approval.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Up to \$150 utility bill relief (includes water, sewer, storm, street fee, and public service capital replacement fee).

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Fixed charges
- ☒ Consumption charges
- ☒ Late fees
- ☒ Penalties
- ☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☒ Levelized billing is p

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

- Survey of Customer Assistance Program
- ☐ Minimum length of service.
 - ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
 - ☐

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

20,000 for sewer

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

5800 plus two sewer districts

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$12,850,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Received email from

Respondent 27

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

For all customers we have waived late penalty fees.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☒

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ All charges are marg

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

210000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

53000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 28

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☒ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☒ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☒ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☒ Late fees

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☒ Penalties

☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1.3 million

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

430,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$400 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☒ We purchase data fr

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 29

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒ Disabled veteran, de

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We implemented the COVID-19 assistance as an extension of our low income program - if you can show that you or your spouse has lost their job or been hospitalized due to COVID-19 you can receive a \$10 credit to your bill for each service you have with us in Arizona only (this isn't approved for our NM or TX operations at this time). In AZ we offer water and wastewater services, and depending on where someone lives they may have one or both services.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans

☐ Other

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒ based on a multiple

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐ Other

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐ Other

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.

☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

☐ Once per year.

☐ Once for the life of the account.

☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☒ case by case basis

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

☐ No limit.

☐ Once per year.

☒ Once for the life of the account.

☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

For COVID-19 - loss of job by account holder or spouse or hospitalization of account holder or spouse due to COVID-19.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

\$10 off of bill for each service they have with us (water or wastewater or both) for a max of \$20 off per month.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
 - ☐ Consumption charges
 - ☐ Late fees
 - ☐ Penalties
 - ☐
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☒ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

360,000 water and wastewater in AZ and NM

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 30

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Suspended disconnects and late fees Expanded crisis assistance funding and program flexibility Expanding payment plan duration - not yet finalized

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☒ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

CSRs have discretion

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Once per two years

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Loss of job, medical, other catastrophic events as assessed by third party social services organization

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Assistance up to \$300 for bill assistance that can be single bill or partial assistance within the cap over a one year period. Also can provide up to \$600 for water and sewer related property repairs

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ General operating ft

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☒ Reclaimed water

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

300,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

115,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$139M

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 31

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Upon completion of a hardship application, our utility will provide up to \$50 per month of credit. We are water only, so for many customers it will completely cover the monthly bill.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.

☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.

☐ Other

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

☒ Our utility staff.

☐ Another government-based social service agency.

☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.

☐ Other

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☒ All

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

Payment plan only

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Only COVID-19 prog

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Up to \$50 forgiveness for each monthly bill.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ Reserves

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☒ Late fees

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☒ Penalties

☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

150000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

50000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 32

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Disability discount

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We have suspended all delinquent payment lock-offs and have extended payment arrangements. We have also suspended late fees.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

We lien a property fi

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☒ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

None

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☒ Pass through charge

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

325,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

100,000+

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$130M

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 33

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Elimination of the qualifying event that triggers a security deposit. No security deposits are being applied during the crisis.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Survey of Customer Assistance Program			
	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

We don't ask customers for details about events. Payment history is the key factor in determining which customers will receive concessions.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Penalty forgiveness, payment arrangements. In extremely rare situations a security deposit request may be removed, one-time only.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

400,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

151,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☐

Respondent 34

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒ We are exploring otl

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☒ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We are looking at one time assistance, reduced rates, extended payment plans and others.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ We have not decided

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

We are still working

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

We are still working

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

We have not decided

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

We are working on t

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☒

N/A at this time. So

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

We are working on a program, but the type of assistance has not been decided upon at this time.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ We are currently set

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☒ Unsure at this time.

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☒ N/A

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



N/A

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



We bill refuse for se

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1.1 million water customers

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

241,000 water accounts

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

Average of around \$145M for water.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 35

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We have suspended our shut off program for collections. We are waiving late penalties for now.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☒ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

125,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

40,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$24,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

[REDACTED]

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

New York

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program



Respondent 36

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We waived late fees, stopped turn-off for non-pay, and added job loss as a qualifier for limited income assistance. As we begin to return to normal operations in the summer, we plan to allow extended payment plans for residential, and loans for small-medium businesses to get back to current.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ CSA judgment

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

CSAs can give up to \$200 per account per year for extenuating circumstances/crisis

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☒ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.



None

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.



Water



Wastewater



Stormwater



Electric



Natural gas



Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

170,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

95,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 37

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

████████████████████

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We have deferred shut-offs for non-payment of bills

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

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- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

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12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

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15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☒ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

4,000,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

660,000 water customers. We only collect for wastewater. They are a separate city department.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$1.4 billion

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 38

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
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- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☒ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☒ We have not implerr

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Other

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

we do not have a pc

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

We do not have a cr

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☐ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

256,955

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

84,130

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$55,605,175.42

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 39

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Payment Extensions

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Changing from LLSIL to Federal Poverty level. Currently low income discount 50%, considering changing to tiers 25%, 50%, 75% depending on poverty level. Adding emergency relief program to assist individuals who have had a major life event like job loss, car accident, death of main income earner.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ every 3 years

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☒ Part of O&M Budget

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☐ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

Over 730,000 customers

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

235,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$210,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:



27. Contact's name:



28. Contact's email address:



29. City name:



30. State name:

Arizona

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?



Yes



No

32. How did you learn about this survey?



I received an email directly.



Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.



Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 40

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

We contribute funds

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We have suspended collection cuts and loosened eligibility requirements for pay agreements.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☒ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

500,000 population

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

90,000 accounts

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$65 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 41

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ All customers, but h

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☒ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Management discretion

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ 3 in a lifetime.

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Eligible when issued a notice of discontinuance.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

\$125 maximum towards notice of discontinuance.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☒ Yes☐ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☒ Submit a written form.☒ Call our office.☒ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☒ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒ Street Utility and Sewer

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

113,077

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

40,319

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

25.7 million, metered water revenue only

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 42

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We are using penalty and arrearage forgiveness during the crisis.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐ Other

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒ Both staff and the Social Service Agency

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒ Cannot use customer assistance program

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☒

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☒ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☒ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ Not normally allowe

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

Death Short and longterm disability Job loss

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Arrearage forgiveness, penalty waiver, payment plan, and in rare cases, payment delay.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

200,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

67,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

Unsure.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☒ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 43

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒ Senior citizen rates f

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Not disconnecting water service due to non-payment of bills. Not requiring the bill to be paid on-time for the next two billing cycles; waiving late fees and offering payment plans to everyone (generally only those who've had service with City for at least a year can have a payment plan and it's limited to once per year).

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

The current Covid-19 crisis is the first time we have ever had this type of program. So, I would have to say it's widespread loss of income, and a declaration of disaster by the Governor.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

We are not disconnecting customers for nonpayment of bills; we are not charging late fees; we are setting up payment plans as needed. Customers will still be required to pay the bill(s).

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Fixed charges
 - ☐ Consumption charges
 - ☐ Late fees
 - ☐ Penalties
 - ☐

Other
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☒ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☒ Trash and recycling

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

145,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

32,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

I don't know.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

- ☒ I received an email directly.
- ☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.
- ☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.
- ☐

Other

Respondent 44

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Leak Adjustment

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We did not have a payment plan option prior to a response to COVID-19. We may not extend it beyond response to this pandemic. With this, we are not doing shut offs IF they follow the terms we set up with them in their customized deferred payment plan. 50% of bill is do upfront and remainder can be split up into payments over 4 weeks.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☒ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

So far it's anyone during this pandemic.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

See previous answer.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☐
-
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

- ☐ Minimum length of service.
- ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
- ☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

10000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

4500

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

[REDACTED]

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

TX

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 45

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☒

Senior and Veteran l

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Furlough assistance-Allows furloughed customers to temporarily apply and be accepted into our current assistance program with the understanding that they will be removed as soon as their income is restored again.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☒ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☒ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐

Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

☐

Once per year.

☐

Once for the life of the account.

☐

We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☒

We have programs s

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

☐

No limit.

☐

Once per year.

☐

Once for the life of the account.

☐

We don't allow penalty forgiveness.

☒

2 times per year-eve

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

We don't take that into consideration. Once they are income approved for the program, they can use the crisis assistance twice per year as needed.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Assistance (up to twice per yet) up to \$115 in assistance each time-a customer could receive \$230 in assistance each year.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

- ☒ All customers regardless of class
- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial
- ☐ Institutional
- ☐ Irrigation
- ☐ Wholesale
- ☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☒ Late fees
- ☒ Penalties
- ☐
-
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

- ☐ Minimum length of service.
- ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
- ☐

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

1.7 million

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

Texas

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



RogueWater

Respondent 46

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐ Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

payment arrangements, penalty forgiveness

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

170,000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

74,000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☒ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.

☒

Respondent 47

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☒ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ All residential customer

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☒ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

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Crisis Assistance Program

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- ☐ Once per year.
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- ☐

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14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

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☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☐ Late fees☐ Penalties☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes☒ No☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.☐ Call our office.☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.☐ Minimum length of service.☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☐ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

980,080

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

179,329

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$226,000,000

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 48

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☒ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

The utility worked closely with our economic development team to establish an emergency assistance program geared toward commercial customers in particular. Staff identified \$25k water and \$25k reclamation funding to support the temporary, \$50k program. Existing one-time assistance programs will continue to serve SFR customers.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☒ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☒

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☒

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.

☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.



none

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.



Once per year.



Once for the life of the account.



We don't allow penalty forgiveness.



Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.



No limit.



Once per year.



Once for the life of the account.



We don't allow penalty forgiveness.



Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

One-time assistance is available for SFR. Temporary program established for Commercial customers with one-time emergency assistance.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Financial assistance in the form of an account credit.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☒ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☒ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Fixed charges
- ☒ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☐
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☒ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☒ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☒ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

70k

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

35k

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

NA

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☐ I received an email directly.

☒ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 49

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☒ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☒ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐ Other

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

At the beginning of last fall we started assessing our customer assistance programs. We have been left with not a lot of options in relation to rate costs due to state statute that don't allow utilities to discount rates with rate payer funding. We are looking into other avenues, but right now, due to COVID-19, all efforts are funneling toward folx who's water would have been shut off but we are leaving on due to the health crisis.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☒ Anyone. They only n

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☒

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☒ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☐ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Customers can "round up" or give a flat donation on their utilities bill. This money is set aside into a "pot" and distributed to Salvation Army once a year. SA administers the funds throughout the year, usually helping less than 300 families - turning thousands away.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Fixed charges
- ☐ Consumption charges
- ☐ Late fees
- ☐ Penalties
- ☒
-
-

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Submit a written form.
- ☐ Call our office.
- ☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.
- ☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ History of reliable payment.

- ☐ Minimum length of service.
- ☐ Maintenance of a deposit.
- ☐

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☒

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

NA

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 50

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☒ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

We offer customers both payment extensions and long-term payment plans. Our board just adopted a new plan which allows a customer to defer their payment by a month and repay over the following eleven months. This plan will be offered through July. It gives an option to customers who would normally not need payment assistance.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☐ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☐ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

☐ Other

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☒ case-by-case

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐ Other

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☐ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☐ Fixed charges

☐ Consumption charges

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐ Late fees

☐ Penalties

☐ Other

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐ Other

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit. Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☐

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

☒ Water

☒ Wastewater

☐ Stormwater

☐ Electric

☐ Natural gas

☐

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

\$80 million

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☒ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☐ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☒ Manual meter reads

☒ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☐ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

28. Contact's email address:

29. City name:

30. State name:

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?

☒ Yes

☐ No

32. How did you learn about this survey?

☒ I received an email directly.

☐ Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.

☐ Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

Respondent 51

About Your Customer Assistance Program

1. What types of customer assistance programs do you offer? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Low-income rates. These are special rates that apply only to customers that meet certain qualification standards.
- ☐ Low-income discounts. For water bills based on a utility's standard rates, these are discounts applied to the bills of qualifying customers.
- ☐ Lifeline rates. This is a low-cost rate applied to a small first block (or tier) of water. Lifeline rates are available to all customers within the same customer class.
- ☐ Crisis assistance program. A temporary assistance given to customers who experience an unexpected challenge to paying their utility bill.
- ☐ Arrearage forgiveness. The forgiveness of past billed amounts to allow a customer to become current.
- ☐ Penalty forgiveness. The forgiveness of penalty or other fee to allow a customer to become current.
- ☒ Payment plans. A negotiated payment plan that allows customers to become current after the normal due date.
- ☐ None.
- ☐

Other

2. Have you implemented or modified your customer assistance program as a result of the current COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes.

- ☐ No, but we are currently planning to implement or modify our customer assistance program.
- ☒ No, but we are considering the potential impacts that the COVID-19 crisis may have on our community, and customer assistance program discussions may soon follow.
- ☐ We currently have no plans to modify our customer assistance program.
- ☐ We don't currently have a customer assistance program.
- ☐

3. If you have or are planning to modify your customer assistance program, please provide a brief description of the changes you are contemplating.

Administrative Questions

The following questions provide an understanding of how you administer various aspects of your customer assistance program.

4. Which types of customers are eligible for your customer assistance program?
Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Low-income customers
- ☐ Disabled customers
- ☐ Senior citizens
- ☐ Disabled veterans
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐

5. How did you establish the eligibility criteria for your customer assistance program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ We established our own eligibility criteria.
- ☒ We adopted the eligibility criteria for another means-tested program such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"), Medicaid, property tax assistance program, etc.
- ☐

6. Who assesses a customer's eligibility to participate in your program?

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☐ Our utility staff.
- ☒ Another government-based social service agency.
- ☐ A non-governmental organization that provides social services.
- ☐

7. Which customer classes are eligible to participate in your customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

- ☒ Single-family residential
- ☐ Multifamily residential
- ☐

8. How are bills adjusted for those participating in the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

Note: If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip the rest of this section.

	Discount on Bill	Separate Rate Structure	Other	None
Fixed charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late Fees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Penalties	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Arrearage and Penalty Forgiveness

Some customer assistance programs allow customers with arrearages and/or penalties to have those forgiven so the customer can become current. The following questions relate to policies on arrearage and penalty forgiveness.

9. If you have an arrearage forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's arrearage? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☒ We don't allow arrearage forgiveness.
- ☐

10. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, what kinds of penalties can be forgiven? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Late payment.
- ☐ Interest on unpaid balances.
- ☒ Fees for disconnection and reconnection of services.
- ☐ Charges for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.
- ☐

11. If you have a penalty forgiveness policy, under your current policies, how frequently are you authorized to forgive a customer's penalty or penalties? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

Crisis Assistance Program

Although known by differing names, we are using "Crisis Assistance Program" to refer to customer assistance programs that assist customers having a temporary challenge in paying their utility bill. This is unlike a low-income or affordability program that provides permanent relief for customers unable to afford their utility bills. Below are questions related to crisis assistance programs.

12. If you have a crisis assistance program, how frequently can a customer access it? Select all that apply.

- ☐ No limit.
- ☒ Once per year.
- ☐ Once for the life of the account.
- ☐ We don't allow penalty forgiveness.
- ☐

13. What events that occur in a customer's life can qualify that customer to benefit from the crisis assistance program? Please provide examples of qualifying events.

14. Please describe the type of assistance that is provided to a customer that meets the requirements for your crisis assistance program.

Recovery of Program Costs

The following questions describe how the costs of your customer assistance program are recovered. If your utility does not currently have a customer assistance program, please skip to the next section.

15. Which customer classes provide funding to recover the lost revenue or other costs of the customer assistance program? Select all that apply.

☒ All customers regardless of class

☐ Single-family residential

☐ Multifamily residential

☐ Commercial

☐ Industrial

☐ Institutional

☐ Irrigation

☐ Wholesale

☐ Other

16. For those customer classes that provide funding for the customer assistance program, which components of the bill contribute to the funding? Select all that apply.

☒ Fixed charges

☒ Consumption charges

☒ Late fees

Survey of Customer Assistance Program

☒ Penalties

☐

Levelized Billing

The following questions relate to your utility's use of levelized billing. By levelized billing, we're referring to the practice of smoothing charges over time to make it easier for customers to budget. Typically levelized bills reset periodically to allow a customer to "true-up" their bill to reflect actual usage.

17. Does your utility offer levelized billing for customers.

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐

18. How can a customer apply to have a levelized bill? Select all that apply.

☐ Submit a written form.

☐ Call our office.

☐ Provide request through a self-service web site.

☐

19. Does your utility have requirements that a customer must meet to qualify for levelized billing? Select all that apply.

☐ History of reliable payment.

☐ Minimum length of service.

☐ Maintenance of a deposit.

☐ Other

About Your Utility

We would like to collect information about your utility to make comparisons possible.

20. Which utility services are included on your utility bills? Select all that apply.

- ☒ Water
- ☒ Wastewater
- ☒ Stormwater
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Natural gas
- ☐ Other

21. What is the estimated population served by your utility? If the service population varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the population served for the service serving the largest population.

125000

22. How many customer accounts do you serve? If the number of customer accounts varies by the services provided (e.g., water vs. wastewater), please identify the number of customer accounts for the service serving the most accounts.

28000

23. What are your estimated annual revenues for your utility services? Please exclude revenue from activities other than providing utility services to customers. For example, please exclude revenue from such things as connection charges, system development charges, etc.

24. How often do you bill your customers? Select all that apply.

☐ Monthly

☐ Bimonthly

☒ Quarterly

☐ Other

25. How do you meter your customers' usage of your services? Select all that apply.

☐ Manual meter reads

☐ Automated meter reading (AMR)

☒ Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

☐ We do not meter usage.

☐ Other

Contact Information

Please provide your contact information. We would appreciate this information for several reasons. First, we would like to understand how programs vary by differing regions. Also, we would like to combine results should a utility have more than one response. And if you request, we need your contact information to provide the survey results to you.

26. Utility name:

27. Contact's name:

[REDACTED]

28. Contact's email address:

[REDACTED]

29. City name:

[REDACTED]

30. State name:

Michigan

31. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey?



Yes



No

32. How did you learn about this survey?



I received an email directly.



Someone in my organization forwarded an email to me.



Either I or someone in my organization found the link on a social media site.



Other

Survey of Customer Assistance Program