

On March 18, 2021, Governor Jay Inslee extended his [utility shut off and disconnection moratorium until July 31, 2021](#). We are working together with Washington State Department of Commerce and the Governor’s office to gather necessary information from utilities to help communicate their needs and the needs of their ratepayers. As a result, the Department of Health surveyed 2,217 drinking water systems represented by 1,770 individual entities. We will use the insights from this survey to inform the community need and the collective financial need of our state’s water systems. This data will also be available to use in directing federal funds.

Table 1: Survey Responses by Ownership

Total (Connections)	City/Town, or County (14)	Special Purpose District (38)	HOA/Private (44)	Investor (9)
66 (< 1000)	5	14	36	9
30 (1,001-15,000)	7	15	8	0
11 (> 15,000)	2	9	0	0

General Findings

- The survey contains responses from 105 entities, which represent 241 water systems and over 542,000 residential accounts that serve a residential population of over 1.3 million. This represents approximately 12 percent of the state’s water systems and 20 percent of the residential population.
- Of the 105 responses, 72 entities reported twice the number of accounts in arrears over 60 days, compared to the same billing period in 2019.
- Eight entities provide only 2021 monetary value due to billing system limitations.
- The median monetary value in arrears over 60 days was \$13,822 in 2021, as compared to \$6,675 in 2019.

Table 2: Impacts on Residential Drinking Water Accounts Before and After COVID-19

Water System Size	Number of Residential Accounts	Accounts in arrears over 60 days 2021	Accounts in arrears over 60 days 2019	Accounts eligible for shut off 2021	Accounts eligible for shut off 2019
< 1000	14,642	830	398	807	453
1000-15,000	176,745	6,041	3,124	5,545	2,079
> 15,000	350,488	8,443	3,355	7,992	2,715
TOTAL	541,875	15,314	6,877	14,344	5,247

Availability of data

- Approximately 15 percent of responding entities were unable to respond to questions relating to monetary and number of accounts due to billing software restrictions or because of billing practices. Many Associations and private entities do not bill separately for water.
- Approximately 24 percent of responding entities were unable to provide data from 2019.
- The median number of accounts in arrears over 60 days in 2021 was 39 compared to 15 in 2019. This is a 160 percent increase over the same period prior to the pandemic.

Table 3: Monetary Impacts comparison 2021 and 2019

Water System types	Number of Residential Accounts	Accounts in arrears over 60 days 2021	Accounts in arrears over 60 days 2019	\$ in arrears over 60 days 2021	\$ in arrears over 60 days 2019
Association/Private	70,454	2,263	1,000	\$404,453	\$204,052
City/Town	86,095	2,815	1,463	\$1,065,857	\$221,950
Investor	1,170	74	37	\$9,734	\$4,835
Special Purpose Districts	385,156	10,162	4,374	\$5,225,070	\$2,384,617
Total	541,875	15,314	6,877	\$6,705,114	\$2,815,454

Available Customer Assistance

- Of the 105 responses 49 entities provided the number of accounts that received financial assistance directly from the utility, enrolled in a payment plan or received assistance from a third-party organization in the past 12 months.
- Of the 105 responses 10 entities responded that they could not provide the requested data about assistance due to their billing system.
- Of the 105 responses 49 entities responded that they don't track customer who receive assistance from a third-party organization.

Table 4: Number of accounts that received financial assistance.

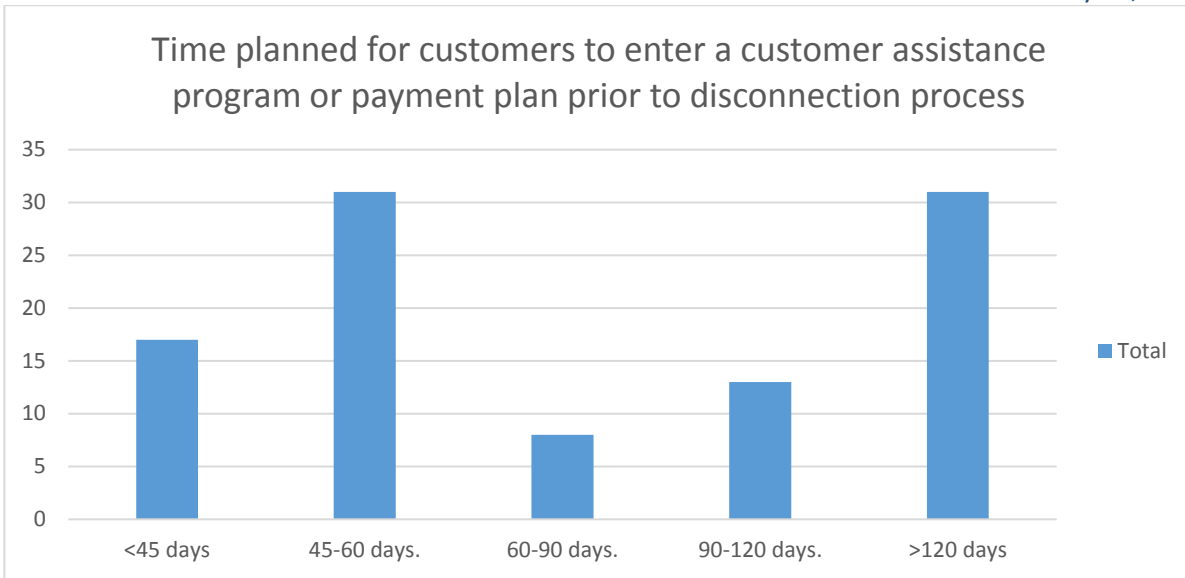
Category (Total Accounts)	Accounts	Entity Type	Number of Entities
Directly from utility (donations, CARES funding, etc) (1286)	49	Association/Private	3
	365	City/Towns	5
	68	Investor	4
	804	Special Purpose District	8
Enrolled in Payment Plans (650)	10	Association/Private	6
	246	City/Towns	6
	1	Investor	1
	393	Special Purpose District	23
from a third-party organization (86)	4	Association	2
	17	City/Towns	4
	1	Investor	1
	64	Special Purpose District	7
Don't Tract or Unable to respond due to billing software (49)		Association/Private	27
		City/Towns	8
		Investor	0
		Special Purpose District	22

Utilities Post – Moratorium disconnection plans

- One hundred entities responded that they planned to provide their customers at least 45 days to enter a customer assistance program or payment plan before they resume disconnection processes. Nineteen Special Purpose Districts plan to give their customers > 120 days. Most City/Towns and Investors plan to give their customer 45-60 days.

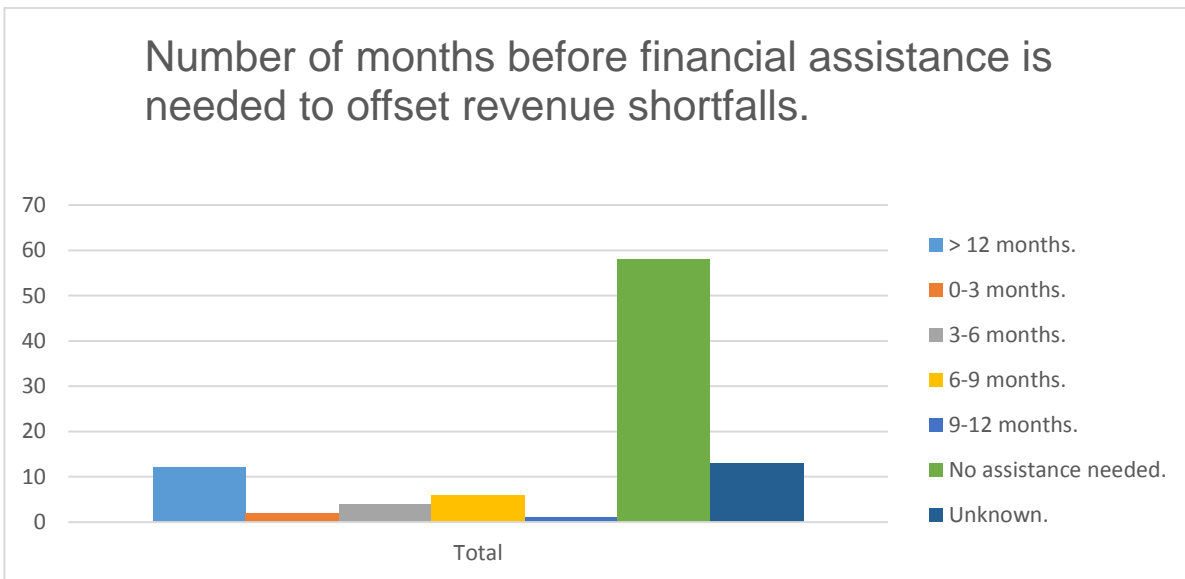
Utility Moratorium Survey April 2021

May 31, 2021



Utility Impacts

- Of the 96 entities that responded, 29 Associations/Private entities and 19 Special Purpose Districts stated they did not need any assistance to offset financial impacts.



Utility Impacts

- Of the 81 entities responded that they have taken some type of action to offset revenue shortfalls. Sixteen Association/private entities stated they had no noticeable impacts from COVID. Other entities shared that they are still evaluating the impacts, struggled to assist customers, used up reserves, didn't fill positions that were vacate through attrition, and evaluating the need to increase rates in the future.

Table 5: Utility Actions to offset revenue shortfalls

Actions	Associations/ Private	City/Towns	Investors	Special Purpose District	Total Responses
Reduced Critical Infrastructure	5	2	0	9	16
Delayed Critical Infrastructure over 2 years	3	3	0	9	15
Staff Layoffs	1	2	0	1	4
Limit or defer maintenance	5	2	0	11	8
Reduced employee benefits	1	1	0	1	3
Raise rates	5	4	3	11	23
Adjust quantity of cash on hand	5	3	1	3	12
No Action taken	16	1	1	6	24