# **RESULTS SUMMARY: WHAT WE LEARNED**

In 2014, Madison Water Utility will oversee a variety of major public works initiatives totaling more than \$26 million. It's vital for our community to have a role in these projects, to become informed and engaged by getting detailed information and giving feedback directly to our engineers, and to become invested in our mission to provide safe, clean water to every family in Madison.

To make that happen, we have been reaching out to community members across the city, listening to their ideas about how to get people from all socioeconomic and generational groups involved in major Water Utility projects. Our first ever Public Participation Survey was widely distributed in December -- posted on our website, social media and neighborhood list serves, emailed to hundreds of customers, and sent to every alder in the city to share with their constituents.

More than 340 community members filled out the survey to help guide the development of a revised Public Participation Process. Here's what we learned:

#### SHOW WE'RE LISTENING

People don't just want to give feedback. They want to make sure their voices are heard:

"...it's a total approach and mindset that involves really listening to folks and acknowledging their comments without judgment, whether online or face-to-face."

"Being given meaningful information and asked for input that truly makes a difference in what happens."

"...ask questions, get answers, and feel that my concerns and comments are heard and will be taken seriously."

As we put together a new Public Participation Plan, we must build in a way to consistently show how public input has impacted a given project. From the selection of a site, to facility design, to landscaping – any element of a project affected by community feedback should be noted.

#### MAKE IT EASY TO BE INVOLVED

Our current Public Participation Process relies heavily on in-person meetings, but the survey responses clearly show that meetings may not be a particularly effective way to get people involved and engaged in a project. In fact, they can push people away:

"Attending meetings shouldn't have to be an all-consuming hobby in order to have your opinions matter."

"I hate meetings. Sorry!"

Our revised Public Participation Process should recognize that because of family obligations, work schedules, or just the hectic pace of everyday life, many people are unable to attend meetings. We can make the process easier by allowing people to access information and give feedback according to their own schedules.

Most respondents want to get information and give feedback via email:

"Use email and surveys instead of meetings."

"It's tough to have the time to go to meetings, e-mail is always best."

"I would prefer to not attend a meeting. Send educational information via email."

"Going to a meeting is more time consuming than reading and responding online."

A new Public Participation Process should take advantage of the City's current email list system. Customers could choose to receive emails regarding projects happing in the parts of Madison where they live: West Side, East Side, Isthmus, North Side, or South Side. Customers could opt into or out of the project email system at any time.

#### THE PUBLIC IS UNFAMILIAR WITH OUR CURRENT CAP PROCESS

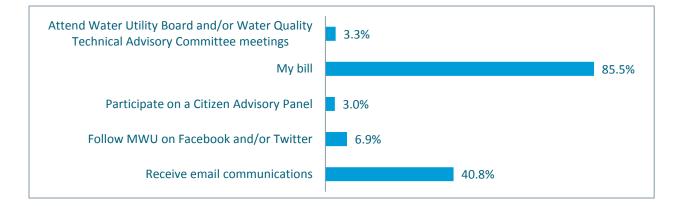
Most respondents are completely unaware of our Citizen Advisory Panels (CAPs), the process by which we currently get most of our public input on projects. Some former CAP members did take the survey, but only half of them were satisfied with the CAP experience.

Our revised Public Participation Plan should make being on a Citizen Advisory Panel more accessible and less cumbersome and time-consuming. By scheduling fewer meetings and working to create a continuous dialogue about projects via email and our website, we can to transition to CAPs that are larger, more nimble and engaged, and include citizens from all socioeconomic and generational groups.

## COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

#### QUESTION 1

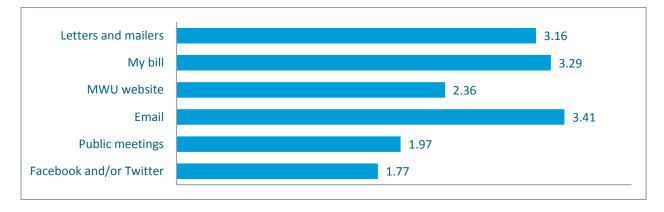
HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY CONNECTED WITH THE MADISON WATER UTILITY (MWU)? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)



#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

Mailed reports (6), MWU postings to neighborhood listservs (3), City employee (3), Alder (3), Other meetings (3), Previous CAP participant (2), MWU website (2), NOTA (2), Husband (2), UW/MWU Projects, Collected water samples for testing, Pipes come into my house

# QUESTION 2 WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS FOR YOU TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM US?



Rating scale from "Not at all effective" (1) to "Very Effective" (4)

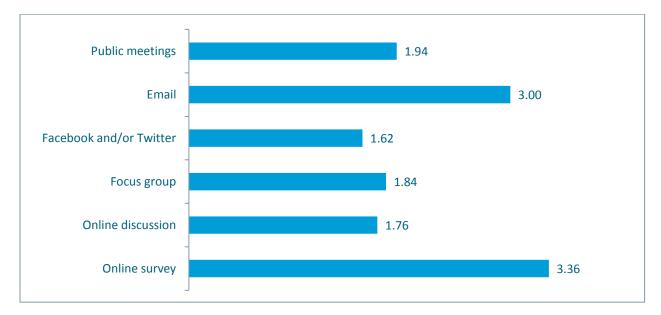
## SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

Local media (5), I do not receive a bill (3), Texts (2), calls to my cell, website, neighborhood publications and newspapers, Don't waste paper on mailers..., Social Media (networking), It's tough to have the time to go to meetings...,I don't just want to "receive information from you"..., none

## QUESTION 3

# WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS FOR YOU TO GIVE US FEEDBACK AND INPUT? HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO USE THE FOLLOWING?

Rating scale from "Not at all likely" (1) to "Very likely" (4)



#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

Telephone (2), Alder, Public access TV, Mailing, Unlikely to use things that come electronically..., I do not usually give out my email..., Satellite stations such as libraries or other public places..., Water utility ombudsman, Telephone, Survey in my bill, survey should be anonymous, Water utility ignores citizens

# QUESTION 4

## WHAT DOES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEAN TO YOU?

210 responses were received to this question. Please refer to the appendix for the complete responses.

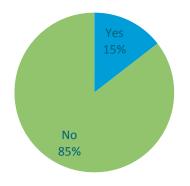
#### SUMMARY OF RECURRING THEMES IN RESPONSES:

Receiving public feedback and input (86), Public is listened to/heard/has a voice (43), Providing information/education (42), Input is truly considered/influences outcomes and decisions (33), Public involvement in decision-making (22), Public meetings (11), Two-way discussion/dialogue (10), Providing multiple forums or opportunities (10), Responding to public's ideas and questions (8), Surveys (7), It's just lip service/ for show (5), Outreach/communication (5), Transparency of public input and decisions (4), Public involvement from very beginning (4), Citizen Advisory Panels/CAPs (3), Timely/up-to-date information (3), Should be easy/convenient (3)

## **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

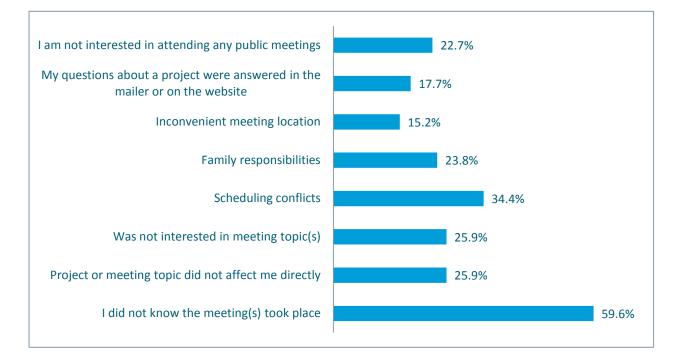
# QUESTION 5

HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED A MWU PUBLIC MEETING FOR A PROJECT?



#### QUESTION 6

IF NOT, WHAT HAS PREVENTED YOU FROM ATTENDING A PUBLIC MEETING? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

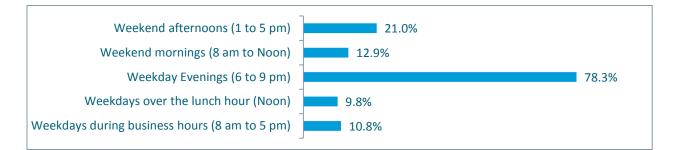


## SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

New to Madison area (3), Time (3), Childcare, Transportation, Introvert, Hate meetings, Abused by public works board, No use for the MWU, Uncertain of value, Don't recall recent meetings in neighborhood

# QUESTION 7

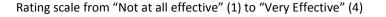
#### IN GENERAL, WHAT TIME OF DAY WOULD YOU PREFER TO ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING?

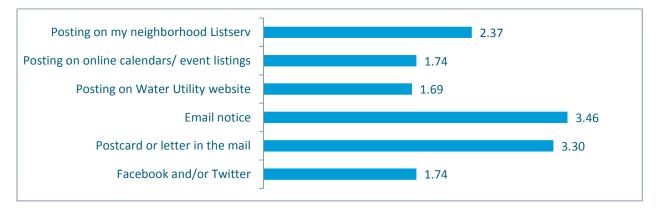


#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

None (6), Prefer email and surveys to attending meetings (4), Not interested in attending meetings (4), No best time (2), Makes no difference (2), Schedule varies (2), N/A (2), Evenings 5-7 pm or Saturday mornings, Wed or thursday between 3 - 5, Definitely not weekends, Live stream meetings, Whenever there is greater public participation, Would rather not need to

# QUESTION 8 WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO NOTIFY YOU ABOUT AN UPCOMING MEETING OR EVENT?





#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

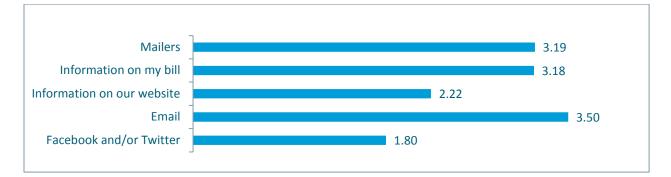
Newspaper (4), Notice in Isthmus, Signs at key neighborhood hotspots, City email, Depends on how much I pay attention to FB and the H20 website, Definitely not Facebook and Twitter, Most of us are overwhelmed with all communications..., Postcard not a letter, Text, SMS, Neighborhood newspapers, Please do not, Radio spots, Not looking at MWU website unless there is an issue..., N/A

**PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS** 

#### QUESTION 9

IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS, WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO KEEP YOU INFORMED ABOUT A PROJECT THAT INTERESTS YOU?

Rating scale from "Not at all effective" (1) to "Very Effective" (4)

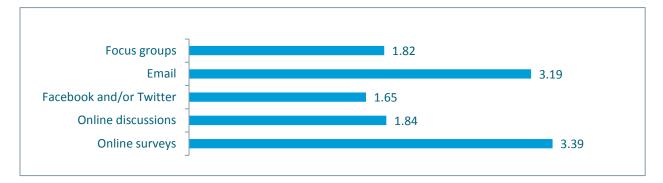


#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

Newspapers (2), Mailers are a waste of money, Community newspaper, If I'm interested, Facebook would be good..., Projects do not interest me, In general i can attend public meetings, Livestream the meeting, N/A

# QUESTION 10 IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS, WHICH AVENUES ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO USE TO GIVE US INPUT ON A PROJECT?

Rating scale from "Not at all likely" (1) to "Very likely" (4)



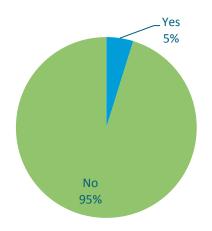
#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

Letter (4), Alder (3), phone call (2), Direct communication with MWU staff (2), Mailed surveys, Utility not interested in input, Directions on accessing online surveys should be included in mailer or with bill, Talk to the people digging in the street, In general I can attend public meetings, If online surveys are anonymized

#### **CITIZEN ADVISORY PANELS**

# QUESTION 11

HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED ON A MWU CITIZEN ADVISORY PANEL (CAP)?



#### IF SO, WHICH ONE(S)?

Well 15 (3), Eastside Water Supply Project (3), Well 7 (2), Arbor Hills Booster Station, Glenway Reservoir, Paterson St. Operations Center, Whitney Way pump station, Water Utility CAP

# QUESTION 12 (CAP PARTICIPANTS ONLY) WHY DID YOU JOIN A CAP?

14 Responses:

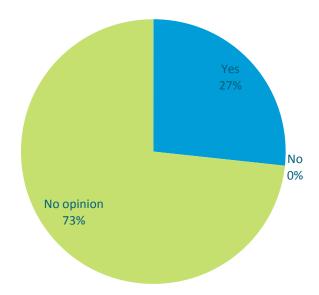
- Felt a civic responsibility to participate.
- Wanted to be involved as the alder for the area.
- Concern about the well in my neighborhood. Interest in the issues of democratic stewardship and management of resources.
- I live in the area.
- To be involved with a proposed project in my neighborhood.
- Ability to assist in improving project stakeholder process, and outcome.
- Technical expertise/insight
- to make sure the utility paid attention the the issues important to me
- present proposed project is in my neighborhood
- Learn about projects near me of of interest to me. Provide input.
- Because I wanted to have input into the process and water decisions
- Believe strongly in participating in processes that affect where I live.
- Concerned about the VOCs and the solution to improve the water quality related to the VOCs in well 15.
- To give input.

Answer Options	Completely unsatisfied (1)	Somewhat unsatisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Completely satisfied (5)	Rating Average
Overall CA process	<b>P</b> 2	4	1	3	6	3.44
Please exp Ex Th se dis me l th Go Se of sp Ba Ju: Co Lo co So	cellent job of arriving a e Well 15 CAP process eking of information wi connection of these C, eaningful and even pot hought the East Side w bod emed longer than it sh some of the participant ent was probably nece d process, took too mu st started. so far, so go bod presentations; too f just lip service; utility in ng periods with no con mmunication stopped. me miscommunication	s was fine but m th regard to sitin APs from the big entially counterp ater supply proje ould have been, ts to obstruct the ssary and unave uch time bod. few citizens. isn't interested in munication. The about notifying	y answers a g a new eas p picture is a productive. ect went rea but necess constructio pidable n public inpu e Utility's pla me in the ba	bove are related stside well and the problem and rel lly well ary I suppose giv n of any new we t an wasn't accept eginning so I did	to Well 7, the di the ESWS Project anders the work leaders the work leaders the political r ven the political r and for any reaso	t. Overall the ess motivations n. The time e and
• ve Time	ry highly structured wit	in no room for se	erious input	to be considered 7	I. 5	3.93
commitme	nt					
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<ul> <li>Ev</li> <li>It v</li> <li>fin</li> <li>Se</li> <li>Ju:</li> <li>If I</li> <li>Bu</li> <li>So</li> <li>Ev</li> </ul>	ening meeting were he vas a big project that re e e above st started. so far so goo thought the utility were t when we're dismisse me miscommunication ening hours were fine	equired a lot of ti od e really intereste d as "wing nuts,' a about notifying	me d in my inpu ' it gets frust me in the be	trating eginning so I did	not finish the pro	oject
Number of	0	4	3	4	4	3.53
<ul> <li>Ou</li> <li>To</li> <li>Mo</li> <li>Inst</li> </ul>		red to be involve mprove outcome	е	ne old participar	nts" as are usuall	y involved

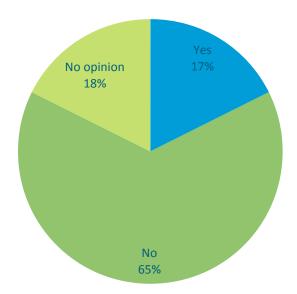
Answer Options	Completely unsatisfied (1)	Somewhat unsatisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Completely satisfied (5)	Rating Average
Diversity of	1	3	5	1	4	3.29
CAP members						
Please explain:						
	wise was even sp	lit.				
	nix of neighbors ar					
	diversity					
	icipants color; onl	v one in novertv	and she wa	s discounted: on	ly middle class e	hatequina
	ants listened to by					addated
Frequency of	0	4	2	2	6	3.71
meetings	·		_	-	· ·	017.1
Please explain:						
	necessary.					
	jular meetings we	re needed				
	iny meetings, the		too slowly			
Too free						
Quality of	2	3	2	1	7	3.53
meeting	2	Ũ	2		,	0.00
discussions						
Please explain:						
	od discussions &	informative.				
	tants and facilitato		h			
	emed to re-hash ol			ad		
	nt forum for the sh				little drawn out s	ometimes
	ault of the staff - ve			voo, annough a		omotimoo
	e views of certain			to the organize	rs white middle	class
	ed, and already su					
	rs marginalized!					
MWU staff	3	2	1	1	7	3.50
response(s) to						
CAP input						
Please explain:						
Resider	nts questions & co	ncerns were ad	dressed.			
• Ok						
Very we	ell balanced in terr	ms of time spent	t and respon	se to concerns		
	ll just do what it w				ck down on it.	
	ot defensive when					
	ality of Meetings a			Je la		
Water Utility	3	2	4	2	3	3.00
Board						
response(s) to						
CAP input						
Please explain:						
-	Project was succ	essfully comple	ted.			
	e awhile before I g			oiect participatio	on misrepresente	ed, in terms
	roject having "vet					
	members - I've ne					
	d option or a text					
Fine						
	nmunicated to CA	$D(N/\Lambda 2)$				

- Not communicated to CAP (N/A?)
- see above
- The staff only wanted to hear from supporters. I assume the WUB is the same.

# QUESTION 14 (CAP PARTICIPANTS ONLY) SHOULD THE CAP PROCESS BE MANAGED TO A BUDGET?



QUESTION 15 (CAP PARTICIPANTS ONLY) SHOULD CAP PARTICIPATION BE LIMITED TO THOSE WHO LIVE OR WORK IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD(S) AFFECTED BY A PROJECT?



# QUESTION 16 (CAP PARTICIPANTS ONLY) WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE COMPONENTS OF THE CAP PROCESS?

#### All Responses:

- Resident involvement in project decision making.
- People know things that staff don't know and have both particular, local knowledge to contribute and bring a sense of community values.
- Neighborhood input, discussing different perspectives and ideas
- "1) Stakeholder perceptions and local information not otherwise available to staff. 2) Inclusion of public in decisions."
- Sharing perspective and generating respect for opposing viewpoints towards consensus/problemsolving/communty support
- Citizen education
- Don't know yet. theoretically discussion of problems/issues/project quality, etc.
- Presentations from consultants, MWU staff
- The chance to get input from the very knowledgeable and competent public. But when we see MWU is not interested in our input, it gets frustrating
- I liked being educated to issues that affected my life and learning that the MWU was proposing good solutions.
- Education.
- Not sure. Seemed useless exercise to me.

# QUESTION 17 (CAP PARTICIPANTS ONLY) WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE CAP PROCESS?

#### All Responses:

- Publicize it more in the media as a way for citizens to become involved. Be sure to have an open house upon a project's completion. Highlight the success/results of the Well15 CAP.
- There needs be a larger discussion about the overall picture. But where there are particular neighborhood concerns, people need to be able to weigh in on the options great example is the Lakeview Hill Water Tower. Done deal. Huge capital budget item. People pay twice (in the budget and in PILOT) and get no say as to whether we need this or other options. But perhaps if you make it clear that you only want to know what color to paint the water tower, you might get more people or just have them vote on line.
- More streamlined process to move the project ahead to construction.
- Staff CAP facilitation with a professional.
- I think it was very successful, no suggestions.
- Don't know yet just started.
- Better public notice?
- Have a management that cares about what we suggest.
- Some miscommunication about notifying me in the beginning so I did not finish the project.
- MUST include minority and poor representatives otherwise the entire process must be considered flawed and the recommendations discarded. If necessary pay minority and poor people to attend.

# QUESTION 18 (FOR RESPONDENTS WHO NEVER PARTICIPATED IN A CAP) WHAT HAS PREVENTED YOU FROM PARTICIPATING IN A CITIZEN ADVISORY PANEL (CAP)? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)



#### SUMMARY OF OTHER RESPONSES:

New to the area (7), Not asked/invited (2), Introvert/doesn't like public meetings, Abusive behavior, Assume there are very few seats..., No recruitment that I know of, Live out of town (but own property in town), Don't know enough.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

#### QUESTION 19

# DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING MWU COMMUNICATIONS AND/OR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION?

#### 81 responses were received to this question:

- None (20)
- Thank you (5)
- I prefer not to see glossy mailings with colors. Please try to be cost effective if you decide to do USPS mailings.
- Keep up the good work!!
- The public is not going to be chasing issues. The MWU is going to need to get the information out to keep the public informed. (I feel that the public should be getting after issues and keeping you on your toes but I don't think that's going to happen until something really important impacts the public)
- Isn't \$70 per year a lot for this new insurance?
- Would like to know more about upcoming changes in billing
- All I care about water is: is it safe, and is it affordable. I would only attend a meeting if I felt the water wasn't safe or I couldn't afford the water.
- The chair of the utility is doing great work finding a middle ground and ways to proceed.
- I am frustrated by the fact that government entities have for the most part turned the public input process into meaningless busywork sessions that really have little chance of engaging even a small portion of the public because everyone who has attended a meeting in the past and tried to provide input now knows what a waste of time this process has become. The government body then goes forward with the plans that the consultant has prepared with very little in changes due to the concerns raised by the few concerned members of the public who stubbornly attended the public input sessions. They were the few who decided to participate even though most of them knew it would probably be a waste of time. The government entity and the consultant already knew what they wanted the outcome to be so they designed the public input process to be meaningless busywork sessions because the law says they need to involve the public in making decisions that directly affect the public. The public input process has become so specialized that consultants must be going to college to get degrees in how to con and manipulate the public and get away with it.
- Fancy meter was a terrible waste of money. Also too noisy.
- Better explanation of what all the MWU encompasses, what is it responsible for? What does it do? Does citizen input really count? If so, how?
- Why would you send this out during the busiest time of year so that most people will not have the time or energy to respond?
- You do a good job with mailers providing info about water issues. I appreciate that.
- Please consider offering childcare during public meetings and transportation options/incentives for folks who may struggle at attend based on those barriers.
- Honestly, I'd like to know why you are bothering with this, and what you think public participation is. Based on my experience over the last few years, I don't think it matter what people think.

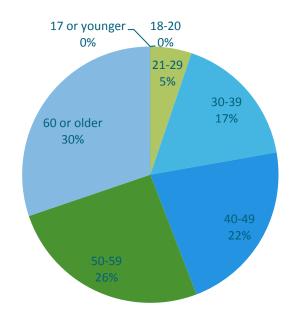
- Please continue to use mailers as your primary source of getting information out to people. I also prefer to get such information thorough my neighborhood listserv. You should never use Facebook or Twitter to get information out to people, I do not trust those as good sources of information.
- Attending meetings shouldn't have to be an all consuming hobby in order to have your opinions matter.
- Nice of you to ask for input. I do have time for brief surveys like this one. If there was some big (potentially costly) issue that was going to affect my property or property tax, I might participate in a public meeting, if it was in my neighborhood library at a convenient time.
- I would like to see more community involvement/input into any major cost increases or billing changes to the water service Madison residents receive. I think the press conferences and things of the sort that I saw during the phase in of the wireless meters was pretty poor and MWU didn't do a very good job of 'selling' the incentive and minimalizing the supposed risks of the radio waves, etc....
- The story about the reservoir renovation was surprisingly fascinating, and writing it on the website was a great thing--I bet it got a lot of shares and interest. Well, I hope so. Keep up the good work on that! A community is stronger when it understands its infrastructure and history!
- Please communications in Spanish.
- The bill or mailers should be preferenced as a means to communicate with MWU users.
- Public participation is important to get citizen input and to get information out to the community.
- Keep up the good work and initiative improving customer relations.
- Like the free tap water outreach. great idea. great way to get your info out...at races, farmers market etc
- I've complained about the over-chlorination of our water on the near Isthmus for a while now and nobody's followed through for an inspection, or even offered to come out to check our pipes, taps or supply into our bldg on Wilson St. at Park Central!!
- You contacted me once to tell my my water usage was considerably down. Ironic! You tell us to reduce water usage and when we do; you say, you aren't making enough money, so you will have to raise our rates. What a kick in the teeth!
- Seeing that our water bills only came 2x a year, I was probably more apt to read through the entire thing and notice things like meetings, boards, committees etc.--I am not sure how efficient that will be once we go to billing monthly--maybe I am different, but I don't think many of us read through all of the fine lines on our bills--we see the charge and if we agree with it, we go ahead and pay it. We probably will not look through much of anything else on it. Opportunities to be posted in newspaper (in print or online) may be helpful in getting people to become aware--I do for some reason read through almost every inch of the printed paper when I receive it---especially on Saturday and Sundays.
- Info with bills is key; otherwise most people won't pay attention or ever learn about issues or meetings.
- Thanks for asking for feedback on the CAP.
- Thanks for sending this and having CAPS. I think too few people understand the problems and limits we have with clean fresh water, even in Madison.
- I'd like to see the WU more vigorously defend its policies from attacks of the likes of Larry Kaufmann and others who would like to privatize all utilities and governmental functions.
- Good work
- Please sponsor public hearing on the pros and cons of water fluoridation of drinking water. I believe that its is an important issue that could use some public education and participation.
- Just make sure i am on the cap mailing list and get all info on cap meetings, project news etc.
- I don't follow the Utility on Facebook or Twitter, and wouldn't want to on a long term basis (too much to keep up with as it is), so I'd have to be prompted to check a website or FB page by some other means (email, neighborhood assn, etc)

- Yes, what is the Citizen Advisory Panel?
- Why would I participate? For what?
- I look forward to learning of participation opportunities!
- My H2O bill has increased 20% since the new meters were installed. :-(
- Thank you for being so interested in keeping local residents informed and caring about what we think!
- Act 10 /Act32 could have better explained as to why politicians decided the city is now prevented from performing construction lateral work. Is Service Line Warranties of America a union shop?
- Overall I am satisfied with MWU communications.
- What topics and areas of decision making and operations does public participation influence? What does the water utility do besides maintain pipes and pumps?
- In general, the newsletters that I receive in my email box answer most of my questions.
- I have gotten conflicting information about when the monthly billing would start.
- Follow NEPA/WEPA, PI is a continuous process through all stages of a project.
- MWU needs to scale back its unaffordable expansion plans. We all need to cut back on our water use; building new, unnecessary wells is a waste of everyone's money.
- Please keep educating the public. Access to great quality drinking water is so important. People take potable water for granted.
- Don't use "MWU." It's pretty meaningless to most of us.
- The Utility had a tough time explaining why they needed more capacity when water consumption was falling. The overall impression that the Utility creates is "We know what's best. Please agree, thank us, or shut up and leave us alone." Perhaps a Public Relations Director should be hired?
- Figure out how to give me water I can drink from my tap instead of purchase from a store instead of sending out surveys on how to communicate with me.
- It's great that you're soliciting input!
- I think overall the MWU is doing a good job involving residents in their water utility.
- The only good communication that I know about from MWU is the email notifications.
- How about a roving booth/truck that goes to the farmers market, shopping malls, and community events? It could be used for both providing education/information and for receiving feedback and input. Go to the customer, don't expect them to come to you.
- Very disappointed. The water utility apparently only listens to views in support of staff and Board, is not actually interested in other concerns.
- I love your Facebook and Twitter page. Your posts are timely, interesting and often witty. Kudos! It may not feel like it to you, but so many local governments are striving to achieve your level of success.

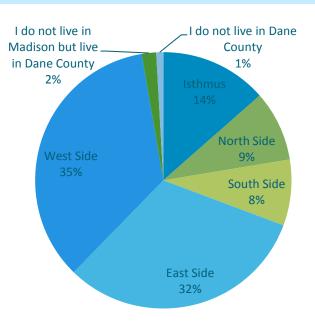
## ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

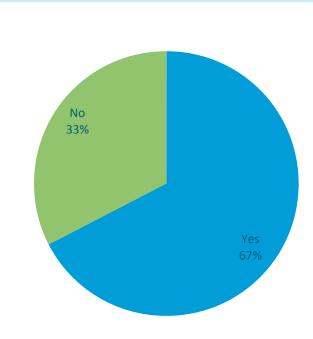
# QUESTION 20

WHAT CATEGORY BELOW INCLUDES YOUR AGE?



# QUESTION 21 IN WHAT PART OF MADISON DO YOU LIVE?

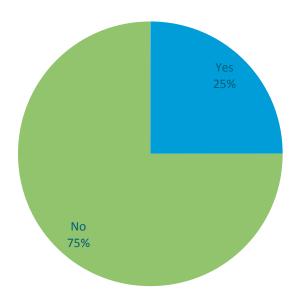




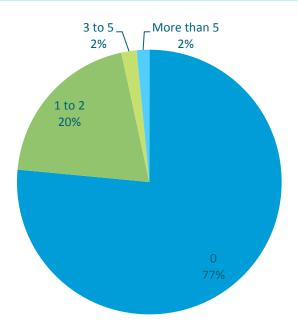
QUESTION 23 ARE YOU ON TWITTER?

QUESTION 22

ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK?



# QUESTION 24 APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY TIMES WITHIN THE LAST YEAR HAVE YOU PROVIDED MWU INPUT ON ISSUES?



QUESTION 25 WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE EMAIL UPDATES AS WE DRAFT AN UPDATED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS?

