

BCWWA's Mission & Goals

Safeguard public health Water users, regulators, and elected officials make informed decisions and the environmen about water services BC/Yukon has a competent and sustainable water sector workforce BC/Yukon has an influential and cohesive network of water practitioners Leadership and innovation is fostered within the water community

Concerns About Aging Infrastructure & Public Complacency



» 40%

Percentage of BC residents served by water mains that are more than 50 years old (Source: Environment Canada, 2011)

» 67%

Percentage of British Columbians who are uncertain about where their drinking water comes from

(Source: Ipsos Reid survey, 2016)





Research Objectives



- » Are BC communities financially well positioned to meet the need for investment in water and wastewater infrastructure?
- » Where do financial gaps exist?

Methodology





Evidence to support investment in infrastructure renewal



- » \$13 Billion unfunded liability in BC
- » Rates do not cover full cost of services
- » Insufficient reserve savings
- » Smaller communities have greater financial gaps



Are Users Willing to Pay?

\$175 per month

\$122 per month

Believe they currently pay for water & sewer services

BC residents are willing to pay \$90 per month for clean, safe tap water

BC residents are willing to pay \$85 per month for sewer services

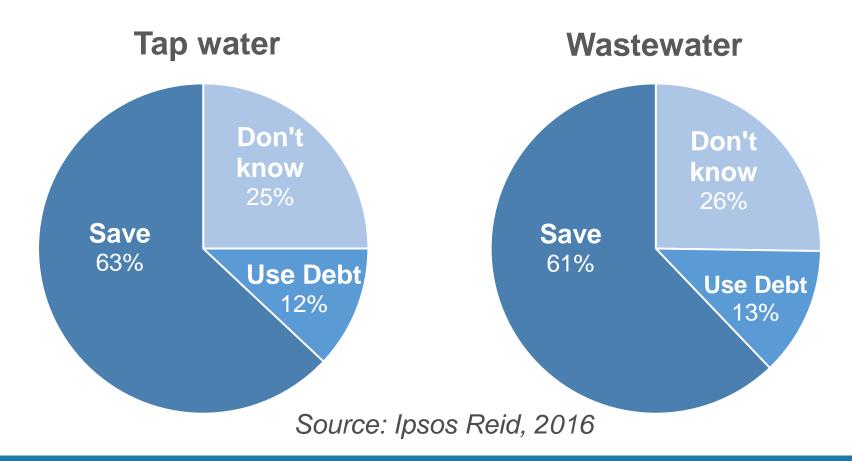
\$42 per month

Currently pay for water & sewer services



Use Savings, Not Debt

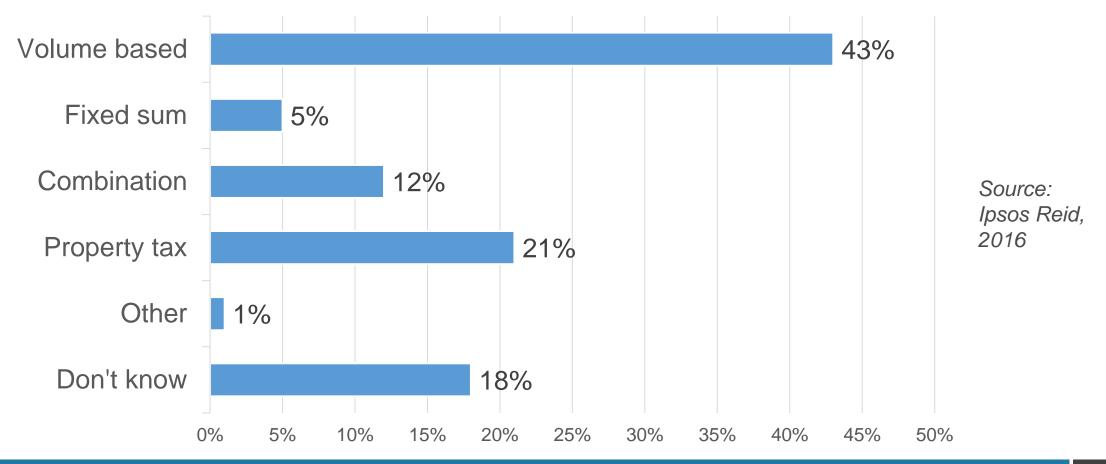
How would you prefer to pay for upgrades or replacement costs for the systems that supply tap water to your home / remove sewage and wastewater from your home?





Users believe volume-based pricing best reflects value of water services

Which one of the following methods would be best to help consumers understand the relationship between the cost to provide water services and the price you pay for water?





Communications Plan



- Are BC municipalities financially well positioned?
- Are water and wastewater rates recovering the full cost of service, including infrastructure renewal and replacement?
- How much investment is needed to sustain our water and wastewater infrastructure?
- Are municipalities financially ready for unexpected costs or failures?

Reliable water, sewer, and storm water systems are essential to public health, a clean environment, and a strong economy. But these essential systems may be at risk – aging infrastructure, growth, strengthened regulations, seismic risk, and climate change are driving the need for significant upgrades and re-investment in the pipes, pumps, and equipment that are used to treat, deliver, and remove water safely for our homes and businesses. At the same time, fiscal restraint and public complacency impede the ability of local governments and water utilities to secure the financial resources required to sustain our water infrastructure assets.

The BC Water & Waste Association (BCWWA), together with Urban Systems, has recently assessed the financial capacity of British Columbia's local governments to maintain, renew and replace our existing water and wastewater infrastructure.

Financial sustainability is a key principle for safeguarding water, sewer, and storm water systems so that they continue to protect public health and the erwironment, and contribute to economic development. It means having adequate funds to pay for the current cost of operating and maintaining our water and wastewater systems, and proactively planning to ensure there will be funds to eventually renew and replace systems as they come to the end of their useful life.





» Key messages to elected officials:

- Benchmark your community to the results
- Adjust water & sewer rates to cover the full cost of service
- Adopt asset management processes
- Rank water & wastewater renewal as top priorities for capital investment

Full report: www.bcwwa.org



Communications Plan



» Key messages to public:

- There is no substitute
- Investment in water systems protects our health, environment, and quality of life
- Together, we can conserve, protect, and support our systems

www.valueofwater.ca



Lessons Learned for Successful Engagement

» Define the "issue"

What problem are you trying to solve?

» Be clear about your audience

Who do you need to influence?

» Define the information needed

- What does your audience need to know?
- What data already exists? Where are the gaps?

» Gather and analyse the data

What does it mean for your audience?

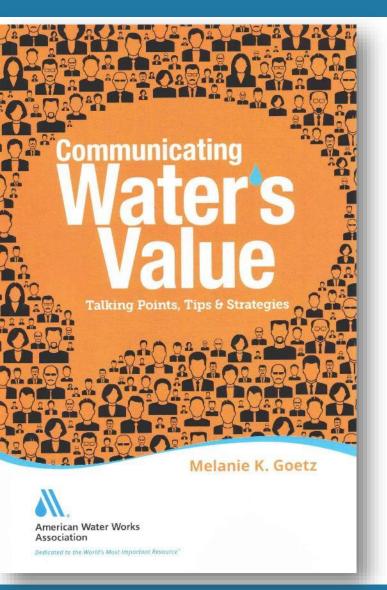
» Have a communications plan

- Simple key messages, tailored for the audience(s)
- Use multiple channels, influencers





Conclusion



- » Utilities are in the business of providing water and sewer services
- » Need to be able to explain the "value proposition" to customers
 - What they are paying for
 - Why our product is important to them
- » Data can help us to understand public perceptions and influence decisions





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