The Impact of COVID-19 on Rural and Tribal Water and Wastewater Systems

MASSACHUSETTS

FINDINGS FROM THE RCAP NETWORK NATIONAL COMMUNITY SURVEY

14% of all MA respondents cannot sustain losses for more than a year of current financial conditions

Challenges faced because of financial conditions:
- Paying bills
- Maintaining their system
- Delays/limitations to capital improvement

Has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted your system’s financial position, or do you anticipate negative impacts?
- 43% : Yes
- 0% : No
- 57% : Not sure

FINANCIAL VIABILITY
How long respondents can continue to pay for all system expenses under the current financial circumstances due to COVID-19:

- N/A: Already could not cover all costs
- Less than 2 months
- 2 to 6 months
- 7 to 12 months
- More than a year
- Don’t know/too early to tell
- Don’t want to answer

100% of respondents were small systems (n = 6)

≈ 1,119 residents
Average system size of respondent

FACILITIES TYPE:
57% water | 29% both
14% wastewater

1-2: Average full-time staff size
Many supplement with part-time, contract or volunteer staff

Two respondents in central MA serve the same community, but provide different services (one provides water and one wastewater). They show up as only one point.

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About the survey: In early May, the RCAP Network surveyed communities to understand the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural and tribal water and wastewater systems. Results are from systems the RCAP Network serves and are not representative of all small systems. These results, however, provide an important snapshot of rural and tribal experiences so policymakers can make informed decisions on how to address these issues during COVID-19 recovery.