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

VIRGINIA

21 respondents

91% of respondents were small systems

≈ 2,783 residents

Average system size of respondent

FACILITIES TYPE:

48% water | 52% both
0% wastewater

4-5: Average full-time staff size

Many supplement with part-time, contract or volunteer staff

Has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted your system’s financial position, or do you anticipate negative impacts?

43% : Yes

28.5% : No

28.5% : 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

29% of all VA respondents cannot sustain losses for more than six months of current financial conditions

Challenges faced because of financial conditions:

• Maintaining their system

• Paying back existing debt

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.

$2,000

VA small system respondent median monthly revenue decrease (n = 7)

The Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP), the Southeast RCAP, provides accessible and affordable water and wastewater facilities, promotes community development, and helps residents become fully self-sufficient. SERCAP’s staff administer long-term technical assistance to Water/Wastewater Utilities, Rural Communities, Public Service Authorities, and Planning District Commissions in order to improve compliance, efficiency, capacity, and long-term sustainability. Visit sercap.org for more info.