

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



CALIFORNIA



17 respondents

88% of respondents were small systems (n = 16)
≈ 5,016 residents
 Average system size of respondent

FACILITIES TYPE:
65% water | **29%** both
6% 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?
41% : Yes
24% : No
35% : 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

18% of all CA respondents cannot sustain losses for more than six months of current financial conditions

43% of small systems indicated they experienced a **decrease in revenues**, comparing April 2019 to April 2020 (n = 7)

\$1,250
 CA small system respondent median monthly revenue decrease (n = 3)

- Challenges faced because of financial conditions:
- Paying bills
 - Paying staff
 - Maintaining their system
 - Paying for chemicals
 - Compliance

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.



The Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), the Western RCAP, provides training, technical and financial resources and advocacy so Western rural communities can achieve their goals and visions. RCAC works with rural water, wastewater and solid waste systems to make them sustainable. Their environmental services are directed to small, low-income communities in rural areas and Indian Country to ensure that they comply with state and federal regulations. Visit rcac.org for more info.