

2020 Utility Rate Survey

In November/December 2020, the Iowa League of Cities surveyed city membership and other municipal utility providers to collect local utility rate data. This extensive survey covered residential and commercial water, wastewater, stormwater, garbage, recycling and more. It also asked about recent local utility infrastructure improvements, debts and COVID-19 impacts. Thank you to each person who spent time assisting with and contributing to the success of this biennial survey.

General Analysis: Acknowledging that the open survey style can include data error, staff has conducted the analysis below with attempts to control for errors and data irregularities to the extent reasonable by observation/judgment. These include omitting data that could not be analyzed and that appeared to be anomalies. As noted above, no changes have been made in the spreadsheet results, only within the analysis below in comparison to the 2018 responses.

365 cities or
local municipal utility
organizations completed
this survey.



315 survey takers
reported having a
municipal-owned utility
and therefore completed
the survey as applicable to
their community.

156 of the responding
communities also completed the
last such survey in 2018.



The 2020 survey added questions asking about recent utility infrastructure improvements and the anticipated or observed impact of COVID-19, the remainder of the survey was the same. As such, some comparisons could be made in terms of rates over the two-year period. Likewise, for the 2022 survey, we hope to expand upon a history of data available.

This analysis is intentionally general in nature, in part due to the limited data for certain categories to compare, and in part due to potential data error. For example, many communities changed their rate structure; related data would not be included in this year's compilation. Contact us if you would like additional information.

Link to Raw Survey Results



All of the data included in the Utility Rate Survey results (*excel sheet*) is raw data reported by participating communities and has not been altered.

All of analysis below relates to communities that reported a flat fee structure. Note that many communities' rates remained unchanged, and are included in the averages below. For data related to tiered or other rate structures (noting the number of ways that communities structure rates), see the excel sheet with raw data.

Residential Water



\$1.00-1.50

Average increases for those using a flat fee structure were in the range of \$1.00-1.50 to the flat fee.

Commercial Water



\$1.00-2.00

Average increases for those using a flat fee structure were in the range of \$1.00-1.50 to the flat fee.

Residential and Commercial Stormwater



\$0.50

Average increases and decreases varied for stormwater but mostly averaged less than \$0.50.

Garbage



\$0.50

Average increases for those with a flat garbage fee were in the range of \$0.50.

Recycling



\$1.00

Average increases for those with a flat recycling fee were in the range of \$1.00.

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Extension and Outreach
Community and Economic Development



This survey is in partnership with the Community and Economic Development Program of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

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