



WARD RESEARCH
I N C O R P O R A T E D

Understanding Resident Perceptions of the Board of Water Supply

Prepared for:



Board of Water Supply

July 2019

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

To track measures of satisfaction and other key metrics related to perceptions of the Board of Water Supply and the fulfillment of its mission

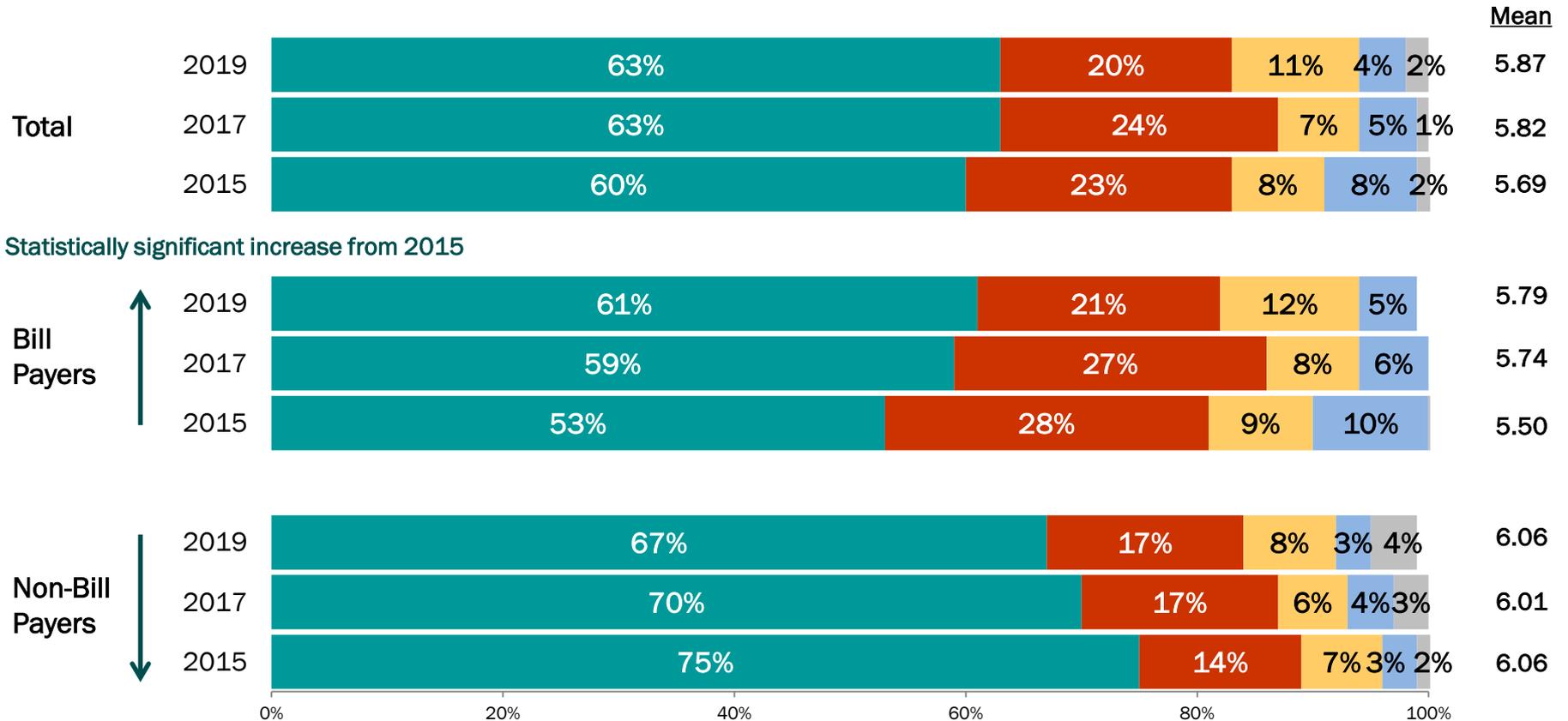
METHODOLOGY

- Telephone survey
- April 1-22, 2019
- n=682 Oahu residents
- +/-3.6% maximum sampling error
- 3rd wave (2015, 2017) of tracking study

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE BWS

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the Board of Water Supply?
1=EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED; 7=EXTREMELY SATISFIED

■ Strong Satisfaction (6-7 rating) ■ Moderate Satisfaction (5 rating) ■ Low Satisfaction (4 rating) ■ Dissatisfaction (1-3 rating) ■ Don't know



TRACKING SATISFACTION WITH ATTRIBUTES

STRONG SATISFACTION: 6-7 RATING	2015	2017	2019
Providing water to customers	82%	83%	85%
Ability to provide dependable water	82%	78%	81%
Reliable service	76%	78%	79%
Quality of water	72%	73%	75%
Ability to provide safe water	77%	73%	74%
Water pressure	72%	69%	71%
Taste of water	70%	70%	69%
Courtesy of employees	63%	67%	68%
Overall professionalism of employees	63%	66%	66%
Overall customer service	62%	67%	64%
Format and presentation of the bill (bill payers only)	56%	58%	63%
Fast response to trouble calls	50%	58%	62%

Denotes statistically significant increase from 2015

TRACKING SATISFACTION WITH ATTRIBUTES

STRONG SATISFACTION: 6-7 RATING	2015	2017	2019
Accurate billing (bill payers only)	55%	60%	60%
Accessibility of employees	56%	56%	59%
Employees following through with what they say	54%	58%	58%
Accuracy of employees	57%	58%	58%
Efficiency of employees	58%	58%	58%
Repairing, maintaining, and replacing Oahu's water delivery system	54%	53%	53%
Informing residents how to conserve water and keep bills lower	52%	54%	53%
Protecting, managing, and sustaining Oahu's water resources	56%	54%	51%
Condition of Oahu's water delivery system	52%	48%	49%
Ability to keep water rates affordable	44%	48%	40%
Fairness of water rates	37%	45%	37%
Things they do to reach out to residents	31%	33%	32%

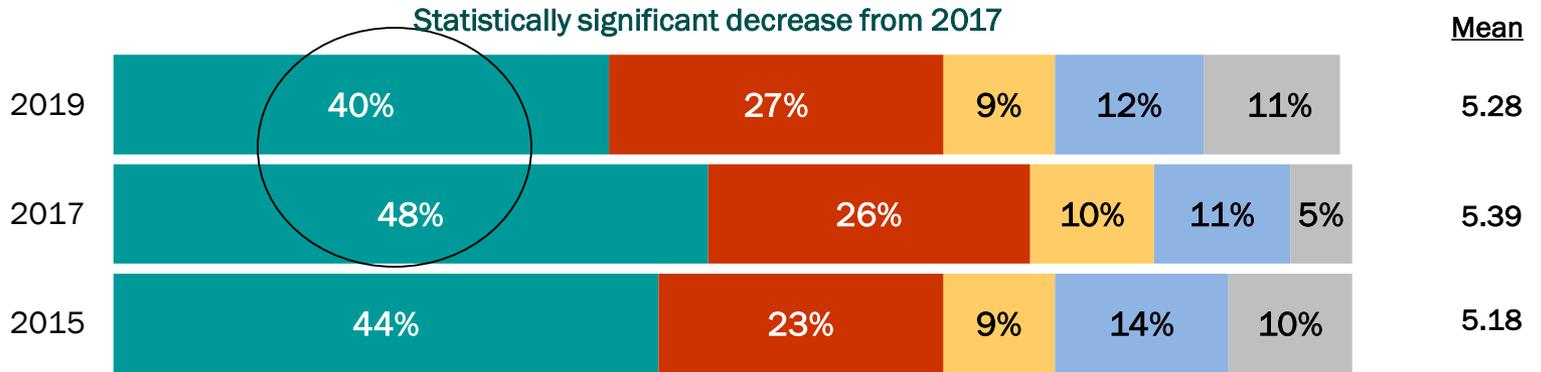
Denotes statistically significant decrease from 2017

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RATES

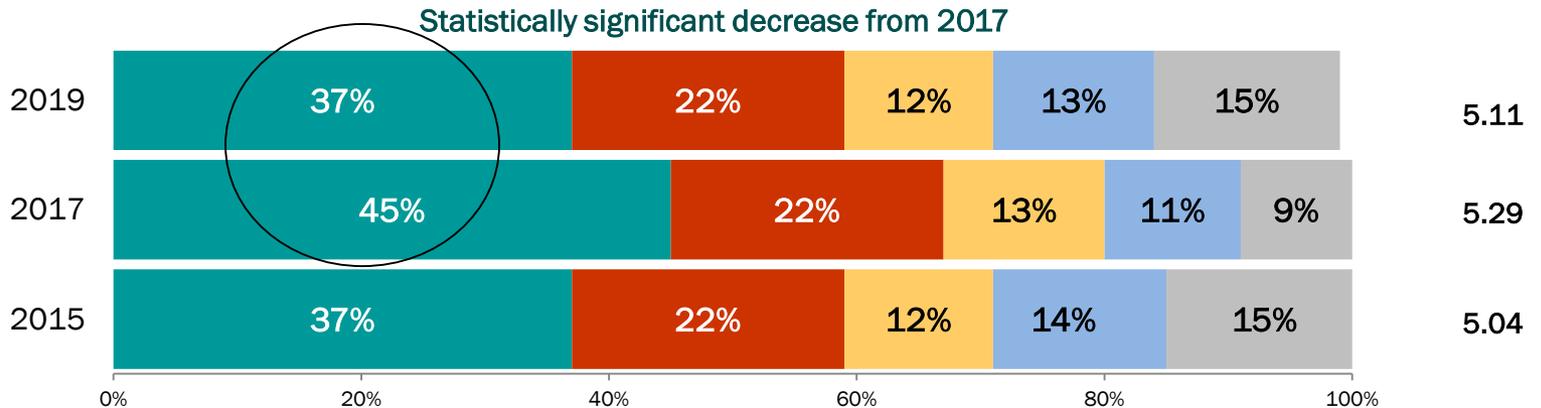
How satisfied are you with:
1=EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED; 7=EXTREMELY SATISFIED

■ Strong Satisfaction (6-7 rating) ■ Moderate Satisfaction (5 rating) ■ Low Satisfaction (4 rating) ■ Dissatisfaction (1-3 rating) ■ Don't know

BWS's ability to keep water rates affordable



Fairness of water rates



PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE AFFORDABILITY OF WATER SERVICE

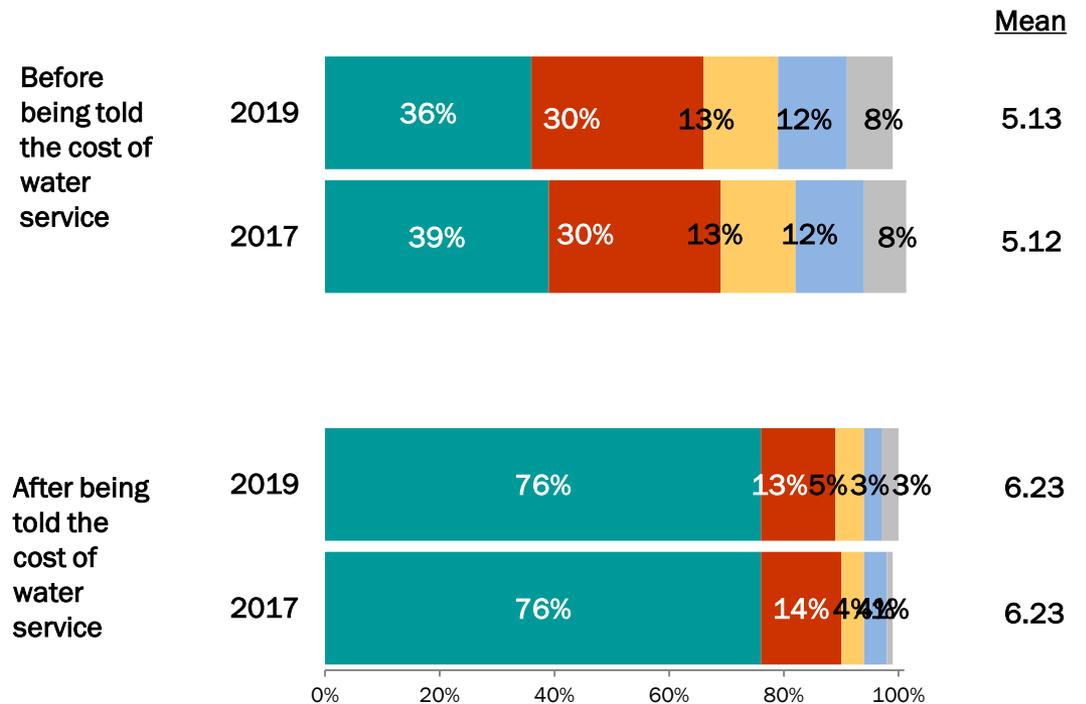
On average, how much per gallon do you think the Board of Water Supply charges for residential water services?

- \$1 or more
- 50 cents
- 25 cents
- 10 cents
- 5 cents
- 1 cent
- Don't know



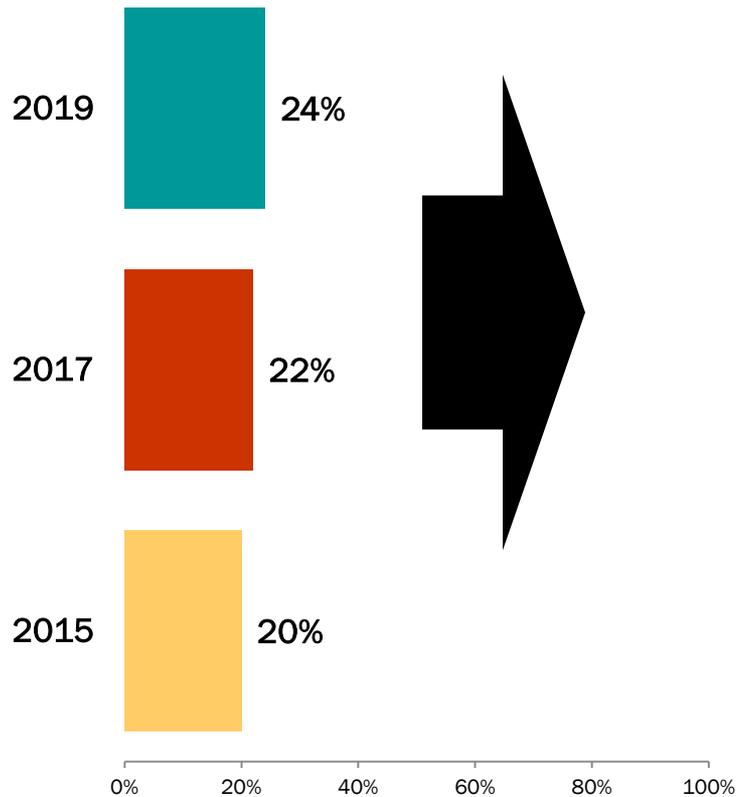
How affordable would you say your water service is?

- Very affordable (6-7 rating)
- Somewhat not affordable (4 rating)
- Don't know
- Moderately affordable (5 rating)
- Not affordable (1-3 rating)

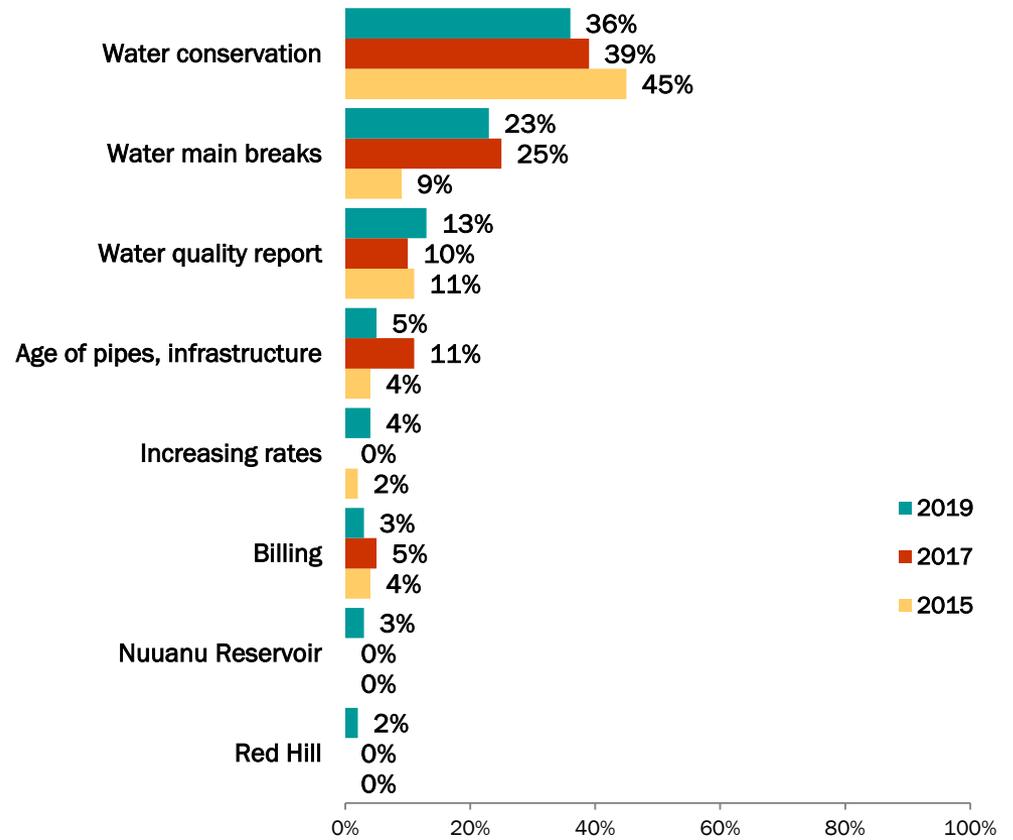


MESSAGE RECALL, FROM THE BWS

In the past 6 months, do you remember seeing or hearing any messages from the Board of Water Supply?

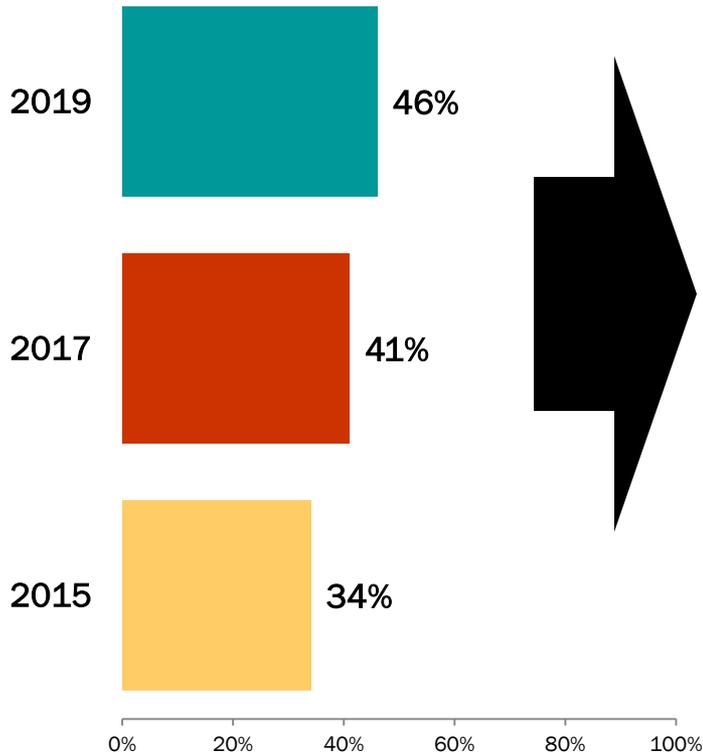


What do you remember seeing or hearing?
Top Responses

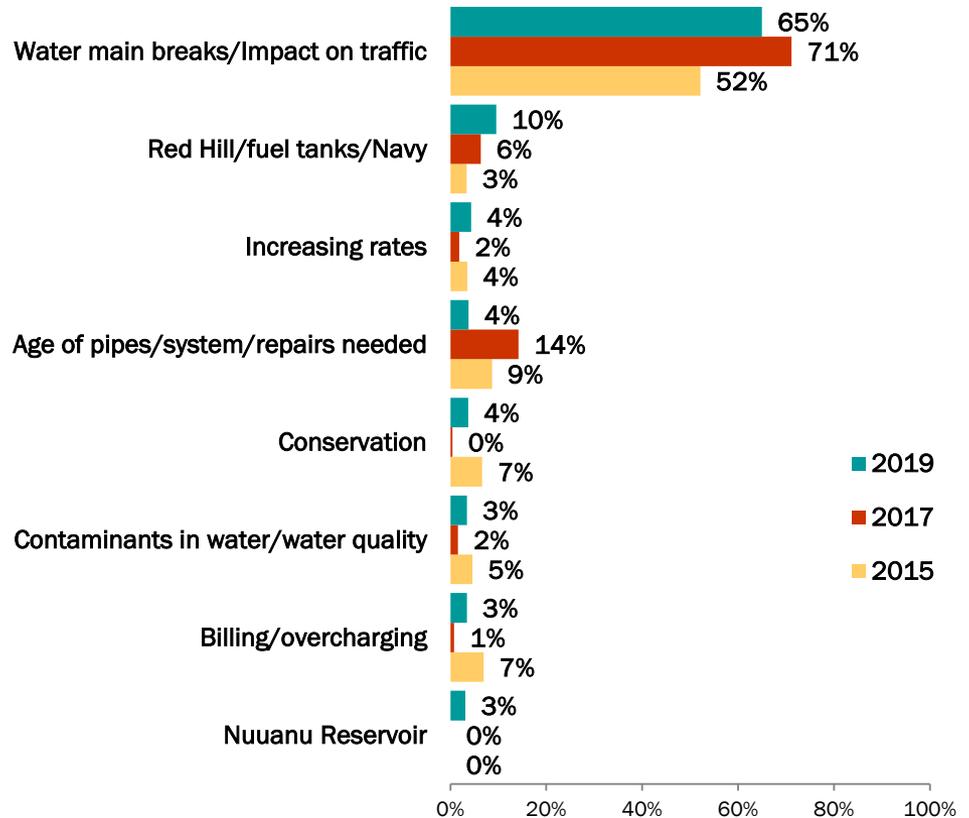


NEWS RECALL, ABOUT THE BWS

And in the past 6 months, do you remember seeing or hearing any stories in the news concerning the Board of Water Supply?

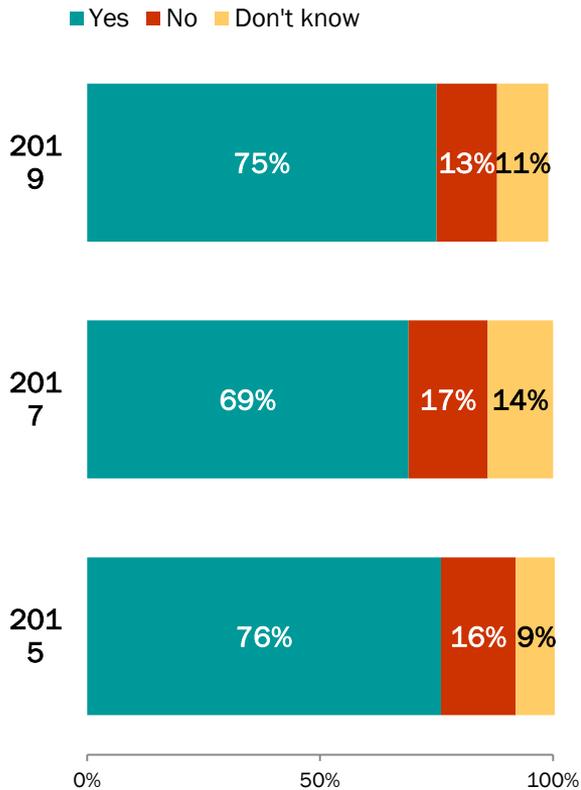


What do you remember seeing or hearing?
Top Responses

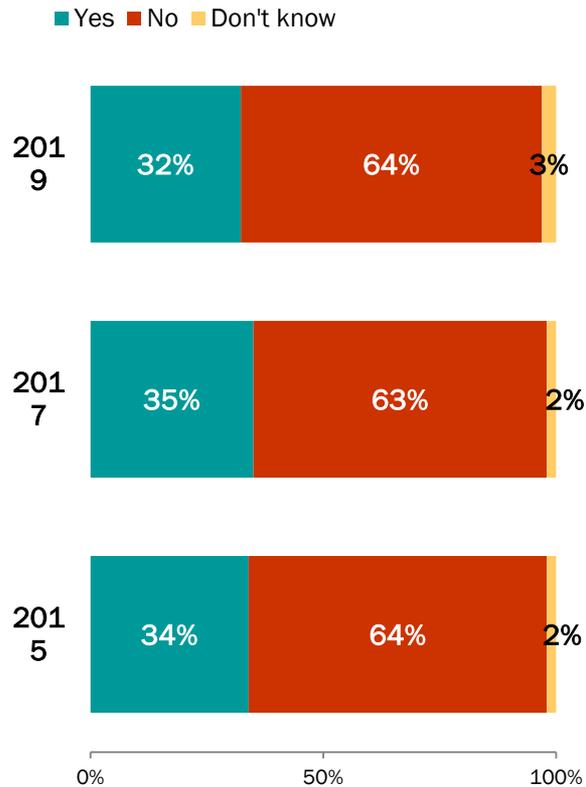


DIFFERENTIATING WATER FROM SEWER – BILL PAYERS ONLY

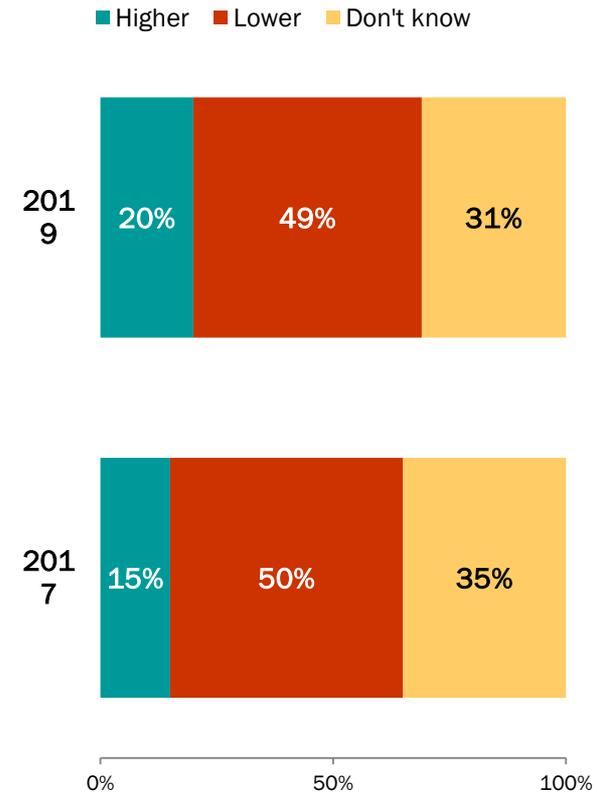
Is your water bill combined with your sewer bill?



Do you know that your water and sewer charges are from two different agencies?



Are your water charges higher or lower than your sewer charges?



ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- BWS still among the most trusted sources of information about freshwater issues on Oahu, along with scientists
- Little to no change in awareness of BWS's programs and activities since baseline measure; awareness is again highest for "repair and maintenance of the water system"
- Very few bill payers have contacted the BWS either about a bill (although, the proportion did increase) or something else in the past 6 months; more than half of those who did indicated strong satisfaction with how the communication was handled
- Levels of satisfaction with overall customer service provided by the BWS, as well as levels of satisfaction with BWS employees largely unchanged from past years

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Continued strong satisfaction with BWS, but note the downward trend in satisfaction among non-bill payers; bill payer satisfaction, however, is trending up
- Levels of satisfaction with attributes tested are fairly static compared to past years
- Two differences (declines) in levels of satisfaction from 2017 are statistically significant, both for attributes relating to rates: fairness of rates and ability of the BWS to keep rates down
- Recall of news stories about BWS and messages from the BWS ticked up, including about the rate increases and Red Hill fuel tanks, but those were far from being the stories or messages recalled most often
- Water service is still perceived to be more expensive than it actually is, including among bill payers
- Conclusions: Customers slow to recall news about rate increases but, based on ratings for attributes regarding rates, increase is affecting perceptions of – but not overall satisfaction with – the BWS

QUESTIONS