

GLWA SCORECARD 2024

*Prepared by Bridgeport Consulting,
Third Party Member Outreach Facilitators for GLWA*

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Table of Contents

page

3

Key Takeaways

page

4

Survey Overview

page

9

Overall Satisfaction

page

10

Strengths

page

12

Data Trends

page

19

Comments

Key Takeaways

The Top 5 Things You Need to Know

1. Overall satisfaction stays steady at 90%
2. Participation increased over 40% from previous survey's response rate (2022)
3. Many scores *improved* slightly, particularly satisfaction with GLWA service areas
4. Key strengths: communication, the Member Outreach Program, GLWA's responsive and knowledgeable team members, and Water Quality
5. Comments and scores highlight concerns about increasing system costs and a gap in understanding of charges

Survey Overview

[Background - 5](#)

[Respondent Demographics - 6](#)

[Participation - 7](#)

Background

History & Rating Scale

The Scorecard uses a 4-point rating scale:

4 ... Very Satisfied/Strongly Agree

3 ... Satisfied/Agree

2 ... Dissatisfied/Disagree

1 ... Very Dissatisfied/Strongly Disagree

This Year's Changes

The original GLWA Member Outreach Scorecard was developed at the recommendation of the Water Management Best Practices Work Group, approved by the One Water Partnership, and deployed for the first time in Fall 2017. The instrument has been adapted over time; for example, the question gauging “overall satisfaction” was added in 2019.

In 2022, due to declining response rates and year-over-years stability of results, the Scorecard moved to an every-other-year cadence. No Scorecard was deployed in 2023.

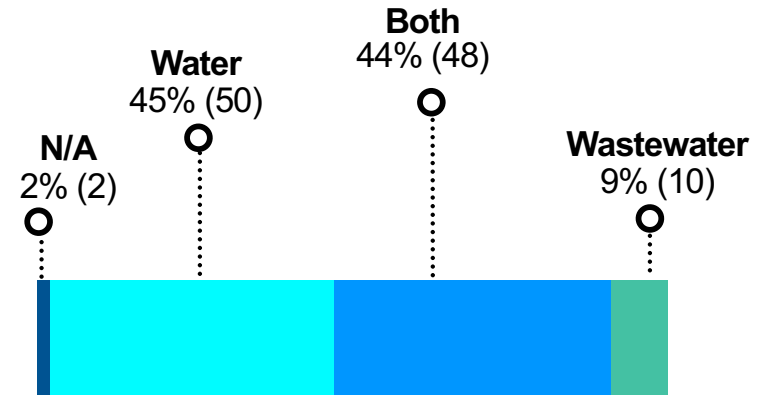
1. The survey instrument was streamlined slightly to lower barriers to participation and sharpen the survey’s focus.

One additional opportunity to provide open-ended comments was provided at the end of the survey to capture feedback unrelated to specific questions.

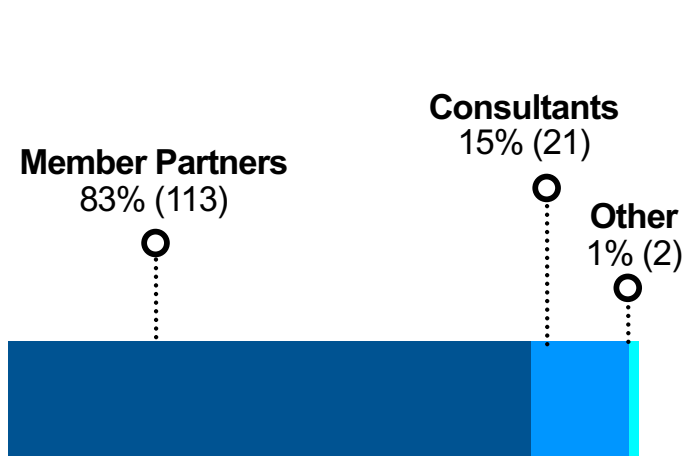
2. The 2024 Scorecard was deployed to almost twice as many members as in 2022 due to the use of an expanded Member Outreach contact database.

Respondent Demographics

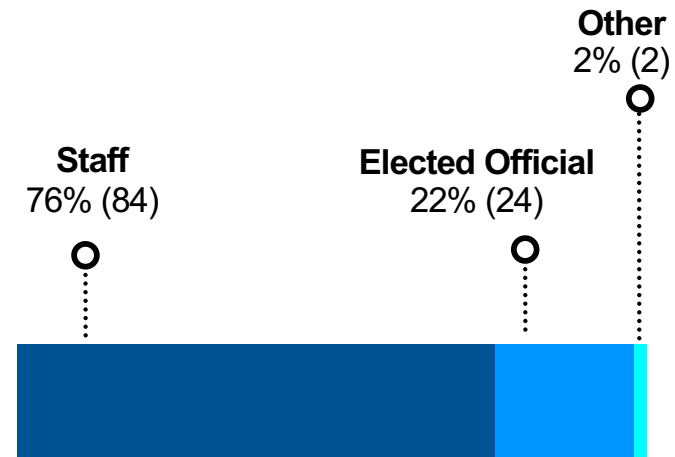
This year's Scorecard experienced an approximately 42% increase in response rate from the 2022 Scorecard, matching the average response rate of early years of the survey (~135 respondents). The Scorecard is only deployed to members, not GLWA team members or Directors. Responses were collected between September 4 – 27, 2024.



Member Type



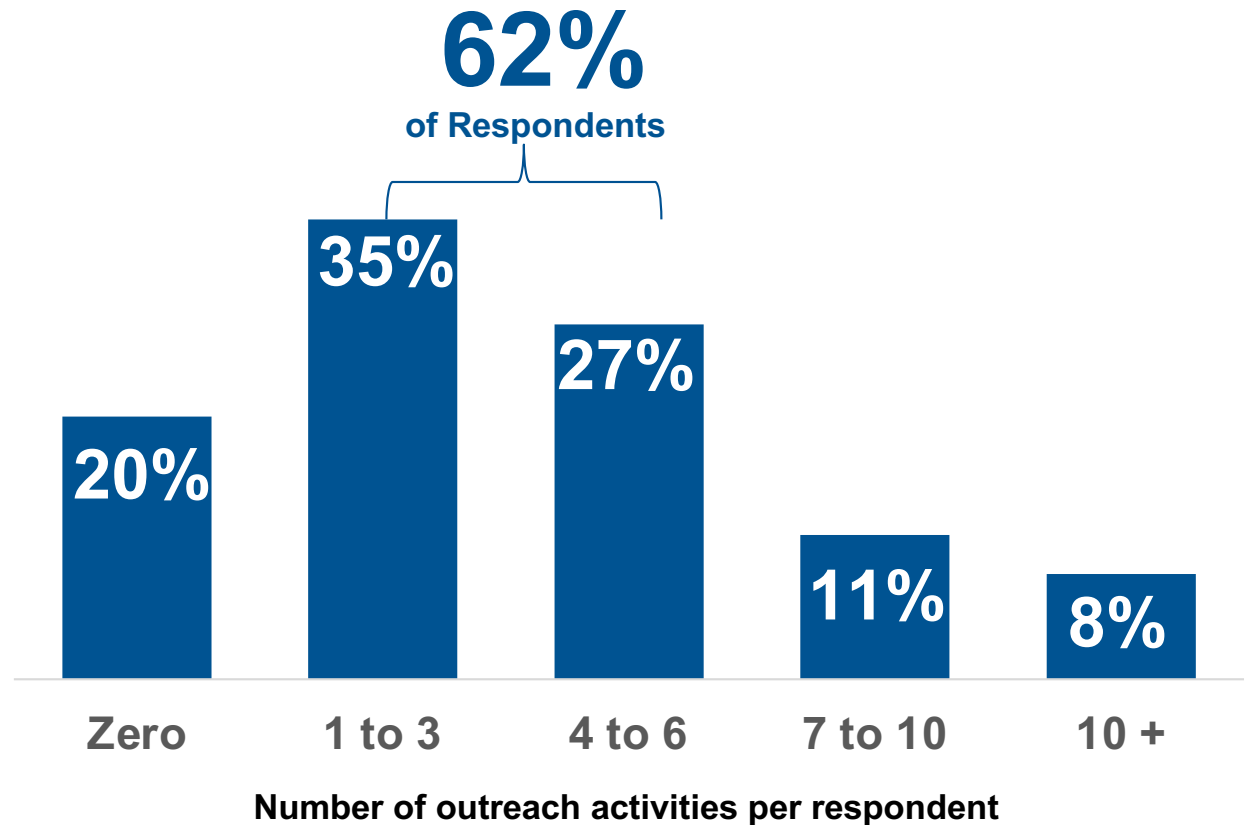
136 Respondents



Role in Organization

Participation In Outreach Activities

Twenty-four respondents (20%) did not participate in an outreach activity in 2024, more than double the percentage of respondents in the 2022 survey. The largest percentage of respondents (35%) participated in 1-3 meetings in the past 12 months, followed by the 27% who participated in four to six meetings.



The Results

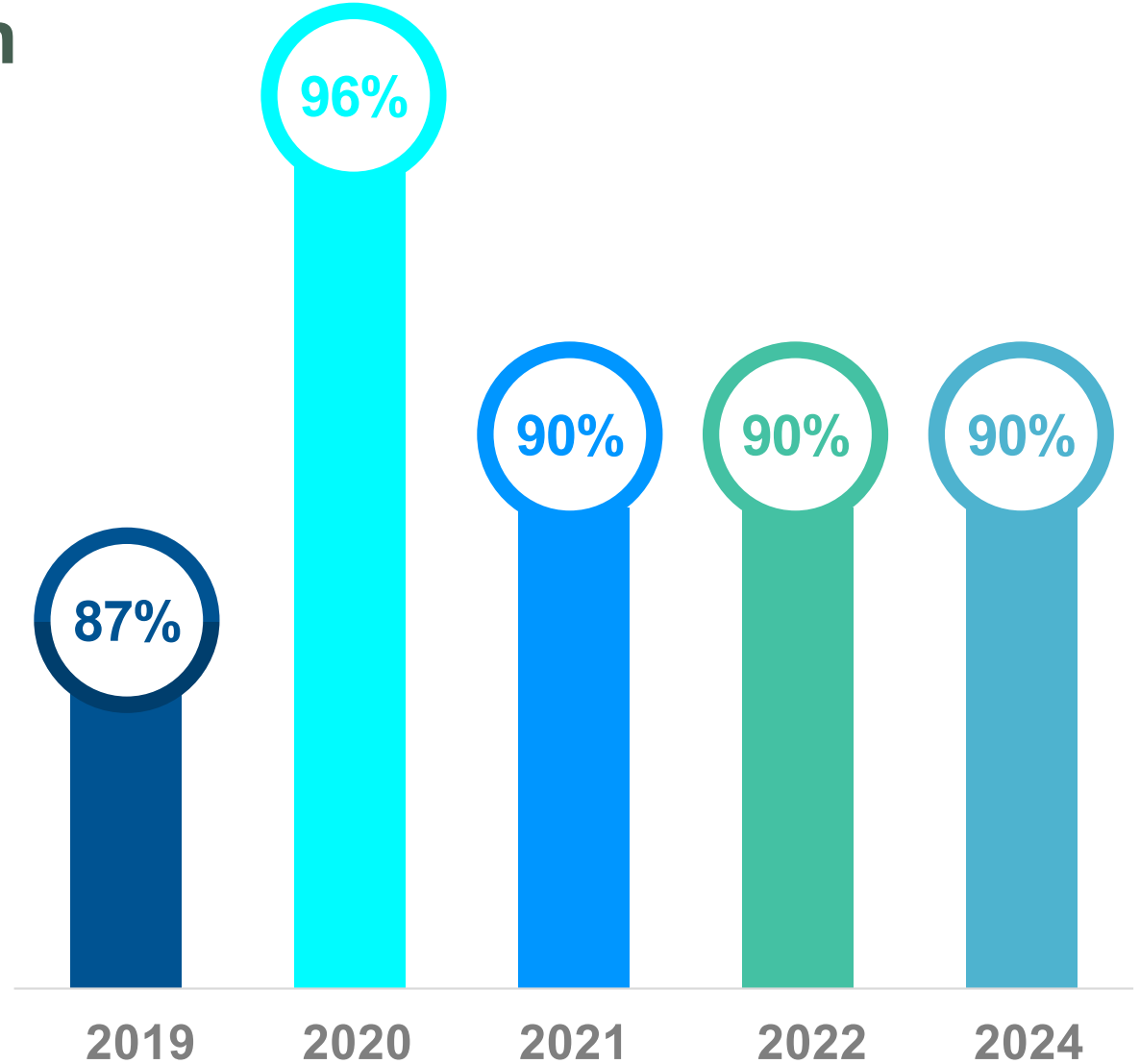
[Overall Satisfaction - 9](#)

[Data Trends - 10](#)

[Comments - 17](#)

Overall Satisfaction

The question regarding overall satisfaction with GLWA continues to align with a positive perception. As in the 2021 and 2022 surveys, nearly **90% of respondents** scored this question positively, selecting either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied.”



Margin of error = +/-8%

Data Trends

[GLWA Team Members - 11](#)

[Member Outreach - 12](#)

[Charges - 13](#)

[Collaboration - 14](#)

[Communication - 15](#)

[GLWA Service Areas - 16](#)

Data Trends

GLWA Team Members

In general, GLWA Team Members I interact with...

Scorecard responses use a 4-point rating scale:

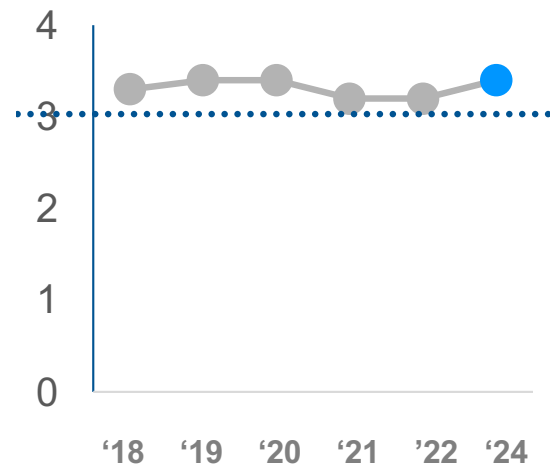
4 ... Very Satisfied/Strongly Agree

3 ... Satisfied/Agree

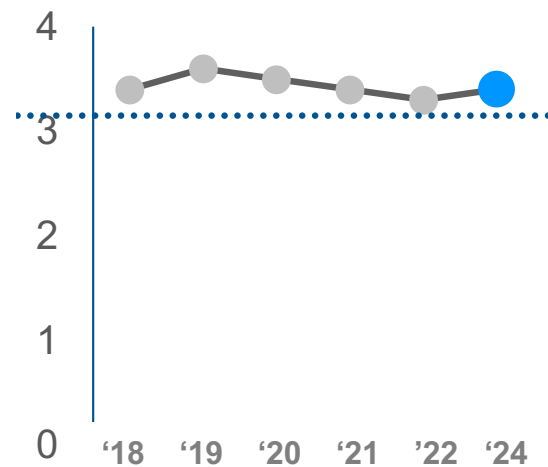
2 ... Dissatisfied/Disagree

1 ... Very Dissatisfied/Strongly Disagree

Are responsive to member needs



Are knowledgeable

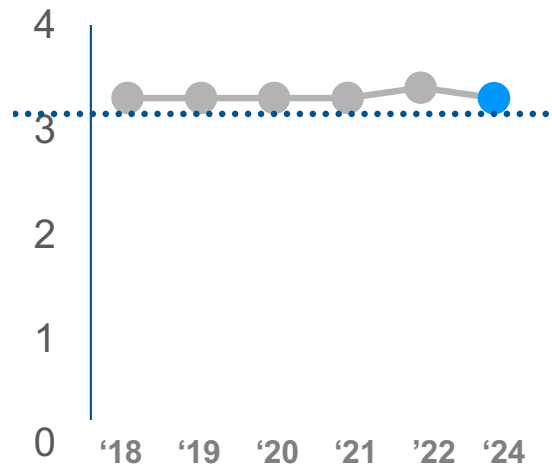


Data Trends

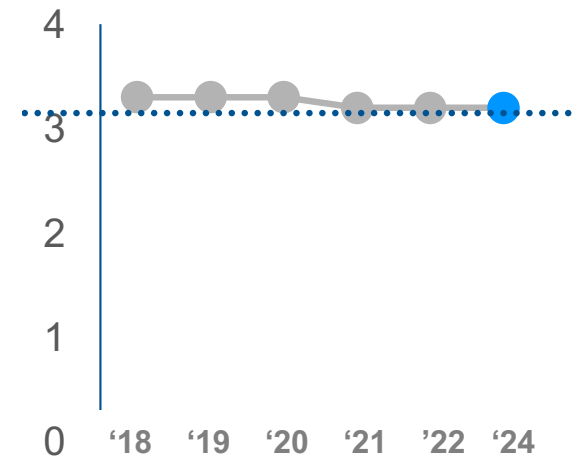
Member Outreach

In the Member Outreach Program...

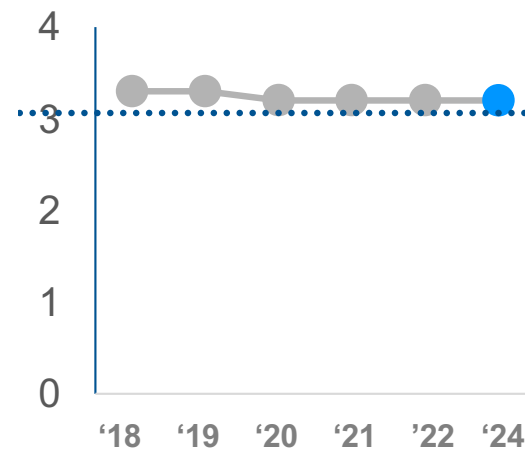
Meetings provide valuable information



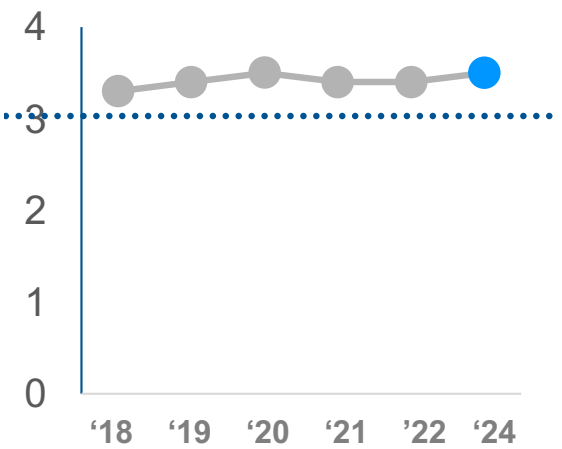
I feel my voice is heard



The One Water Co-Chairs represent the interests of the members



The third-party facilitators (Bridgeport Consulting) engage members effectively

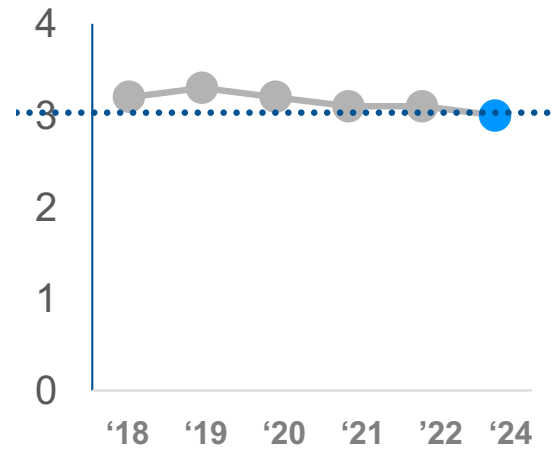


Data Trends

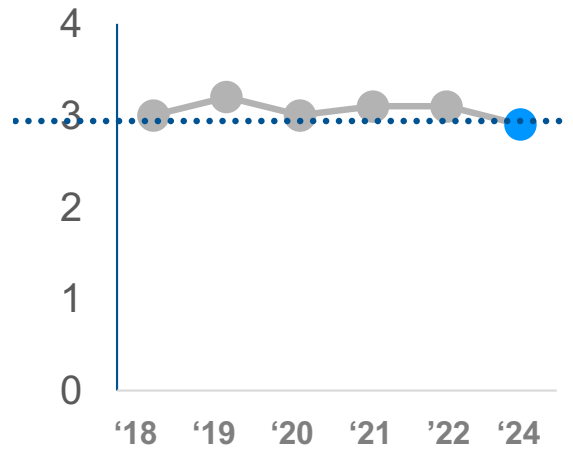
Charges

Regarding water and wastewater charges...

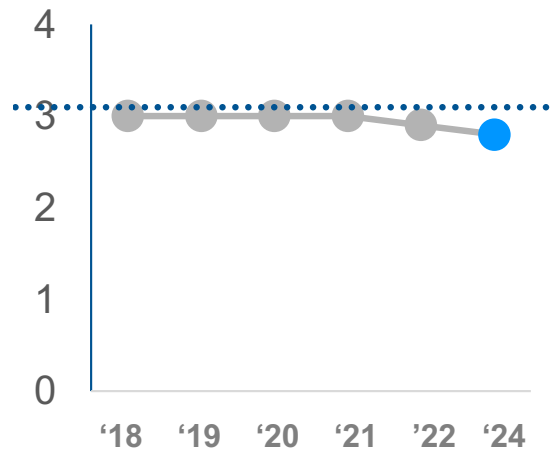
The methodology process includes effective member engagement



The methodology aligns with the overall vision for the region



I understand the GLWA charges methodology

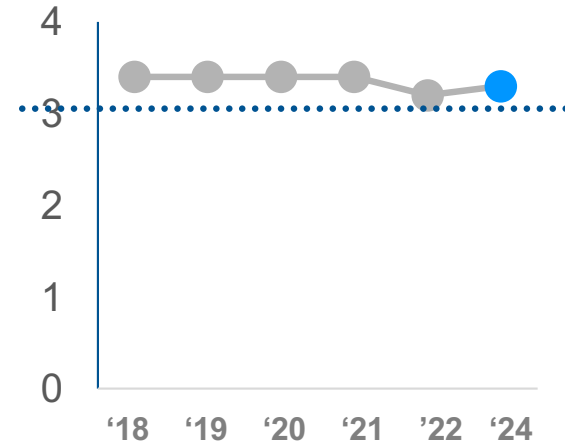


Data Trends

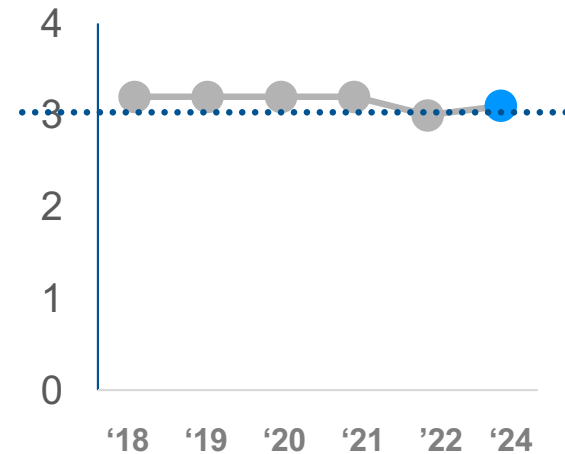
Collaboration

Regarding GLWA's collaboration efforts...

GLWA provides a good platform for regional collaboration



GLWA is a valuable resource to my community for joint problem solving and/or leveraging opportunities

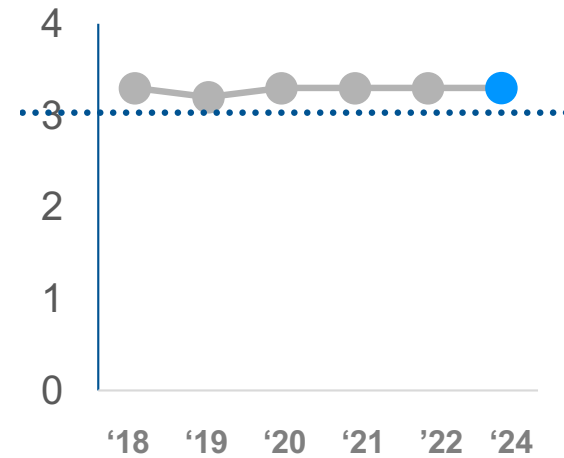


Data Trends

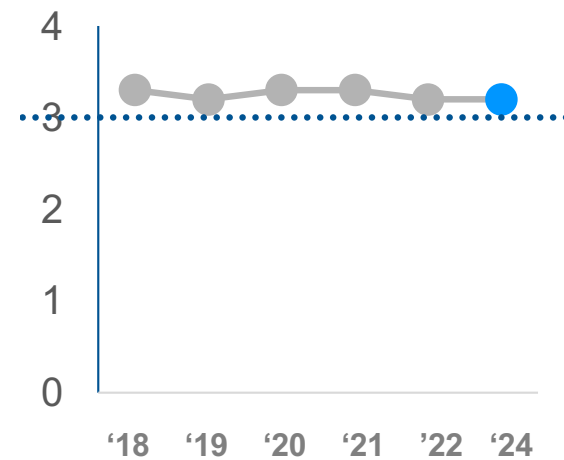
Communication

Regarding GLWA information and communication efforts...

Communication about emergency issues



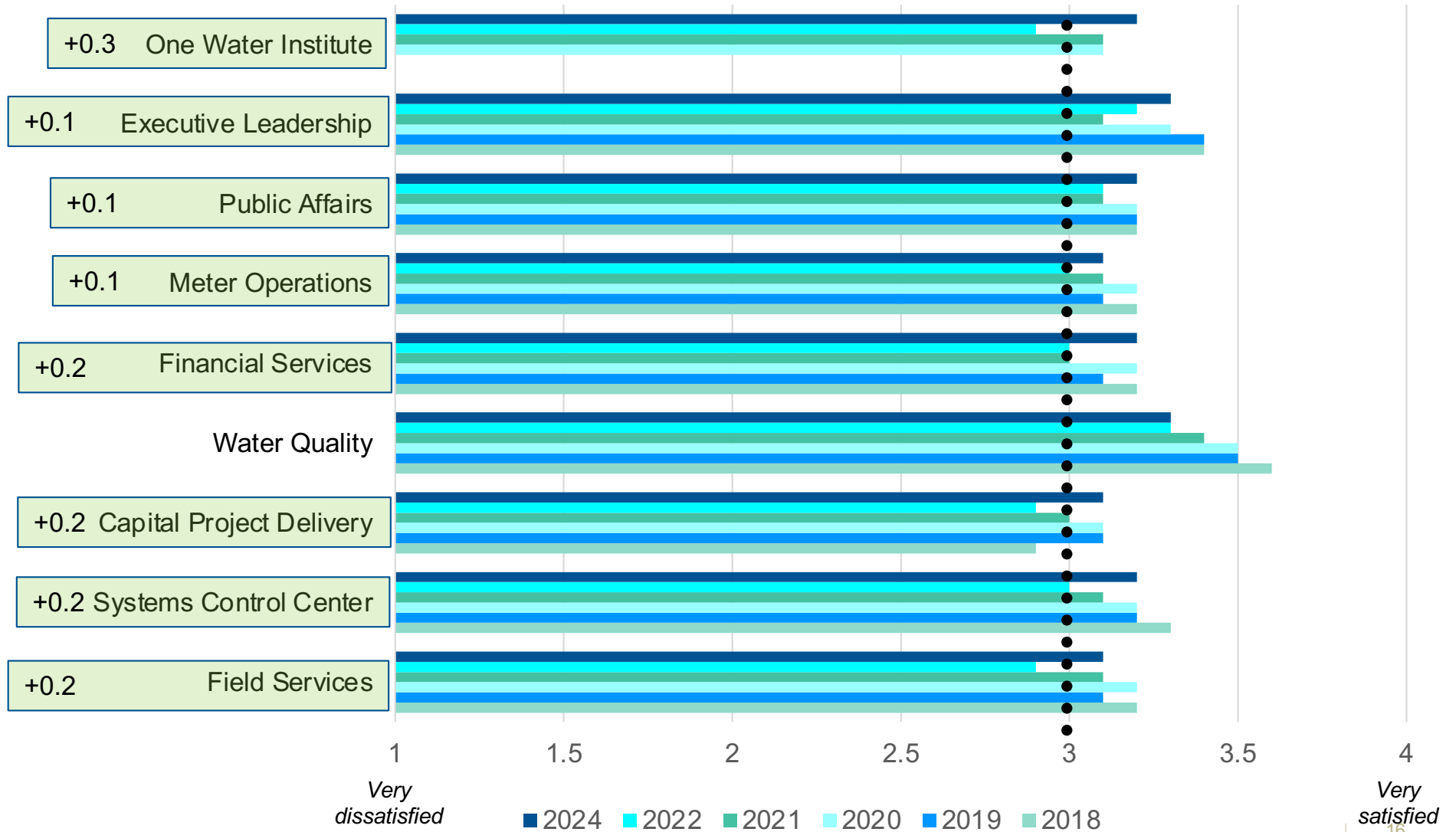
Communication about non-emergency issues



Data Trends

GLWA Service Areas

How satisfied are you with the following GLWA service areas...



Comments

After most questions, respondents were invited to elaborate on their responses. Comments provided by respondents have been included verbatim.

[Overall Satisfaction - 18](#)

[GLWA Team Members - 21](#)

[Member Outreach - 22](#)

[Charges - 23](#)

[Collaboration - 25](#)

[Service Areas – 26](#)

[Communication – 27](#)

[Additional Comments - 28](#)

Comments

What is the one factor that most influenced your response [to the overall satisfaction question]?



The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

1. Level of Outreach effort.
2. Consistency of good service.
3. investments into current infrastructure.
4. Water quality and service.
5. Good communication with member partners and consultants.
6. Reliability.
7. The rate roll-out process is very detailed and informative. I also sat on the Water rate review subcommittee, and there was significant effort in education.

8. I think GLWA does a great job with water treatment, delivery, and actively engaging member communities. That said, I feel that some of the official messaging, such as "water of unquestionable quality," could be more approachable. While the message is well-intended, a slogan that encourages discussion and information exchange might bring more people into the conversation to support GLWA. With a change in messaging tone, I might select "very satisfied."

9. The ongoing communication and educational engagement sessions.

10. Well run meeting

11. Kind, knowledgeable people who listen.

12. Good communication

13. Robust member outreach program

14. Overall service is fine. Would like to see more interaction with community DPW dept in regional wastewater solutions - discussions etc.

15. The organization makes earnest efforts to be accessible and collaborative.

16. Communication is good

17. Pressure fluctuations, causing high spikes

18. Communication

19. My ability to communicate with GLWA management staff.

20. transparent communication / service provided

21. as a community, we have ZERO control over rates and decisions made by GLWA

22. Anticipated accuracy of timing of RFP's listed in the GLWA Pipeline, and duration to make a selection once an RFP closed.

Comments

Continued: What is the one factor that most influenced your response [to the overall satisfaction question]?



The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

23. The fact that GLWA reaches out to the member partners with various meetings and informational emails.

24. GLWA's outreach to the member partners

25. Esther! She samples the water in our DPW Yard and is very knowledgeable and helpful.

26. Pressure spikes

27. Water quality

28. The response to our issue with our PRV, and the GLWA team helping us to resolve the issue.

Also, the communication with us regarding the 36" condition assessment as well as the 120" water main break, was great.

29. Feeling included in decisions that impact my level of service and revenue requirement

30. Communication

31. Communication

32. cost of service

33. Service

34. Communication with members and community involvement in project updates is very helpful.

35. Communication

36. Disciplined approach to environmental progress.

37. Ability of communication

38. Training

39. Management team

40. Staff has been responsive and helpful on the projects we are working on

41. Response to questions we have regarding service

42. Quality and competence of staff at all levels of the organization.

43. well organized, seeks input from others

44. Provide direction and make decisions in a timely manner.

45. Correspondence is always very informative. The entity is doing a great job of communication.

46. Would like to see a consistent technician sampling our water. Would like to have a person who can contact me directly when an issue is observed with our water quality.

47. open communication

Comments

Continued: What is the one factor that most influenced your response [to the overall satisfaction question]?



The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

48. GLWA is generally responsive to issues that arise within its systems, but can sometimes appear to prioritize organizational financial protection instead of system operations.

49. Communication

50. Email or phone call response. Sometimes i don't hear back for a week or two. Sometimes never get a call back

51. Knowledge being shared.

52. Professionalism, responsiveness and willingness to help.

53. Its a well run organization that listens to its members.

54. GLWA is providing good communication to member communities



The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "Dissatisfied" or "Very Very Dissatisfied".

1. Communication

2. Cost

3. lack of transparency of water rate calculation. need to simplify rate structure

4. The THREE year project on Meadowbrook Road and their disregard for residents and businesses in the area.

5. Rates



The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "N/A" or "I Don't Know"

1. Not sure.
2. While GLWA does many good things for their customers, I think the financial focus tends to overshadow some of the positive things they are doing

Comments

GLWA Team Members I interact with are responsive; are knowledgeable

1. Very responsive staff.
2. GLWA staff that I have interaction with are always knowledgeable.
3. I haven't had any interaction with GLWA.
4. very knowledgeable about issues.
5. Strong and competent staff
6. Most are knowledgeable in their specific subject, but many do not understand the GLWA contracts and general conditions of the contract.
7. Very helpful

8. Biren Saparia, Todd King, Pete Fromm, and Tom Hall have been responsive and knowledgeable and helpful on several operational issues and improvements.

9. Great team to work with

10. Most members interacting with us are prompt and knowledgeable, though there are a few exceptions.

11. *[Negative comment redacted for inappropriate language.]*

12. Not Answering or returning calls and emails promptly is why response is low

13. Never had a problem with any team member, they are always professional and knowledgeable and i appreciate that about them.

14. From the Director on down through the organization, the GLWA Team has been responsive and knowledgeable.

15. I am disappointed nearly every time I interact with the Great Lakes Water Authority. If I could claim ownership of this quasi-governmental contraption I would express embarrassment especially with the Board. Eventually the Great Lakes Water Authority will be broken up. It has been modelled after such splinter groups like the Western Wayne Communities and the Michigan Utility Commission - ineffective, unscientific, expensive and misleading.

Comments

In the Member Outreach Program... meetings provide valuable information; my voice is heard; Co-Chairs represent the interests of the members; third party facilitators engage members effectively

1. Bridgeport does an excellent job, while GLWA has come to grips with actively listening to its members and consultant's input.
2. I am elected official and not directly engaged with by GLWA
3. I am not a fan of the ice breakers - let's get the business done.
4. Bridgeport Consulting are amazing facilitators
5. N/A for Cochair representation of members as we are not a member.
6. Bridgeport does a nice job hosting the events.
7. Bridgeport Consulting is the best. I struggle to imagine what my responses would be if they weren't around moving things forward.
8. I have never had a question answered. I think that about says it all.

Comments

Regarding water and wastewater charges.....*[see slide 14 for the full text of the question]*

1. Still room to provide better instruction of explaining the rate recipe/calculation (simplification).

2. Additional bureaucracy costs do not align with (seemingly) original plan statements made prior to the transition from DWSD.

3. I think more consideration should be given regarding the fixed and variable charges to customers. As a community, we cannot charge a high fixed to residents, and when system usage is lower than expected during the year, it is difficult to absorb when the outgoing expense does not get reduced correspondingly.

4. Elected official not directly engaged

5. There should be annual refresher classes on their methodology.

6. I have not really been exposed to it.

7. I never liked the phrase charges. They are the rates. Rate times usage equals charges.

8. I'm still making sure I fully understand the methodology

9. I have no involvement in the charging process

10. super complex. Can figure it out, but need refresher every year.

11. I understand the basic bucket concept. However it would be nice to have a deeper dive into the actual calculations and shares, showing the logic.

12. I have not engaged regarding Water and Wastewater Charges or associated methodologies.

13. The methodology is like how a credit score is calculated. There is always some 'reason' but no one really understands it. I fundamentally disagree with the 'pie' method, if usage is down then sorry so is your revenue. GM and Ford don't get to say 'we're making 2 billion on car sales, so if we don't sell enough everyone has to put in more money', that is ludicrous, manage your budget correctly like the other utility companies do. MPSC should have more say.

14. The general charge methodology is clear, but the data developed and utilized for the methodology seems proprietary and unclear.

15. Does anyone 'strongly agree' that they understand the GLWA charges methodology? Maybe only Bart.

Comments

Continued...Regarding water and wastewater charges.....[see slide 14 for the full text of the question]

16. I live in the City of Wayne. It was made clear that because there are two valves or some other engineering item in the city that it is impossible to be able to determine the charges accurately. Seriously - that was the answer.

17. Feel the sewer rate methodology disadvantages older communities that built the original system due to systems designed for combined sewers.

Comments

Regarding GLWA's collaboration efforts...

1. GLWA always listens to its member communities, while looking for opportunities to inform and empower its customers.
2. Not sure what you include in this statement
3. Elected Official not directly engaged.
4. As an Eastside member, an important issue in the future will be the Fox Creek Drain hopefully transitioning from Wayne Co to GLWA. We look forward to working with GLWA and the other Eastside members to get this accomplished.
5. I feel glwa could be a place to collaborate but i feel there is not much collaboration (this might not be a bad thing though).
6. Makes individual contact to initiate communication on challenging issues early and honestly works to ensure a collaborative effort towards a resolution. This is in part to Sue's leadership.
7. Collaboration is a significant outcome of GLWA's practices
8. Regional collaboration is a good idea, but, after 20 years of it and the creation of numerous 'regional commissions', groups, boards, and 'Authorities' the approach has been expensive, confusing and had held back development and progress.

Comments

How satisfied are you with the following GLWA service areas?...*[See Slide 17 for all service areas referenced in question]*

1. Waiting on a meter repair/replace
2. No communication when crews are in master meter vaults.
3. Elected Official not directly engaged
4. I'm actually more neutral about water quality and public affairs. I only selected dissatisfied because I'm not feeling satisfied right now and neutral was not an option.
5. Not really exposed to One Water Institute.
6. Appreciate GLWA's SCC, Field Services, & Sampling quick response with phone calls and emails. Invaluable.
7. I've been trying for weeks to use this asset. However the last response i had was a new password login that didn't work. GLWA said they would get back to me. Still waiting now for weeks.
8. A very professionally run organization.
9. One Water Institute? You do know what DPTV has a 'One Detroit' initiative, don't you? What is the 'One Water Institute'. I'm laughing so hard ...oh, my goodness.

Comments

How satisfied are you with GLWA's communication efforts in emergency situations; in non-emergency situations?

1. Elected Official not directly engaged.

2. I feel like the tone of communications could be more inclusive and transparent, and include more data and background for people who want to understand more.

3. Appreciate the beforehand wastewater/flood control group meetings when a large wet-weather event is predicted.

4. Emergency issues are always difficult. It gets better each time.

5. Certainly has improved from prior years

6. I haven't heard any response by call. We used to get calls when they were working in our city, but now nothing.

7. Appreciate the personal calls before large storms to assess efforts and resources.

8. I'm not seeing any worthwhile communication. I can't recall when I received any even when it was being sent.

9. Much improved since 2021.

Comments

Any other comments, questions or concerns?

1. GLWA has done an excellent job in standing up the Authority and furthering its outreach efforts. Be proud of your achievement GLWA!
2. Not at this time.
3. More outreach to local government elected officials
4. No
5. None
6. I love providing service to GLWA. One of the best clients we have ever had.

7. I would appreciate virtual options for all meetings since I am unable to dedicate the time to travel due to responsibilities at the office. I know that certain meetings will no longer be offered virtually.

8. No

9. We constantly hear, why is water so expensive. Somehow, the messaging is not getting out to the masses about the enormous undertaking GLWA has to provide clean water. Although the issues in Flint made some understand that we should never skimp on something as important as clean drinking water, but sadly some still perpetuate that water should be less expensive since they don't fully understand everything that goes into it.

10. N/C

11. GLWA needs an entire public relations overhaul! Their lack of empathy for residents and the communities they serve is a disgrace.

12. Communication and responses need to improve.

13. Doing a great job but trying to control rates can be a challenge.

Comments

Continued: Any other comments, questions or concerns?

14. The Great Lakes Water Authority is a nice idea. There has been no effective separation from the past poor performance to the present. I'll leave you with this - the Lower Branch of the Rouge smells like sewage because the sewer lines were buried along side it as a cost savings operation in the 1950's and 1960's. The lift stations and EQ basins are eyesores, out of date, dangerous and ineffective. There are still federal warnings in place about coming in contact with that filthy water which is loaded with biologicals, lead, organic mercury and other problems. Yet - 'Friends of the Rouge' is encouraging people to kayak in it. Think about it. Talk about it at a meeting. Come to the Charter Township of Canton and the City of Wayne and I will show you the outflows, the sewer lines and more. How is it I know all this? Thanks for the Survey. Have a nice day.