

2010 Lee's Summit *Water Utility Survey Results*

Findings Report

conducted for

Water Utility Department of
Lee's Summit, MO



and

Bartlett & West

by

ETC Institute

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2010 Lee's Summit Water Utilities Survey

Executive Summary Report

Overview and Methodology

ETC Institute administered a survey for the Water Utilities Department of Lee's Summit, Missouri for the first time in September of 2010 with residents of the City. The survey measured the satisfaction with water and sewer services and the importance of several service and pricing options. This survey was conducted as a part of the Lee's Summit Water Utilities Strategic Plan from Bartlett & West.

The four-page survey was mailed to a random selection of 1,500 residents in Lee's Summit who have both water and sewer service supplied by the City. It took an average of 10 to 15 minutes to complete. It was administered by mail or phone to 476 residents. The overall results of the survey have a precision of at least +/-4.5% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains:

- an executive summary of the methodology and major findings
- charts depicting the overall results of the survey
- geocoded maps of many responses to the survey
- tabular data for the overall results to each question on the survey
- a copy of the survey instrument.

Interpretation of "Don't Know" Responses: The percentage of persons who gave "don't know" responses is important because it often reflects the level of understanding of a service. For graphing purposes, the percentage of "don't know" responses has been excluded. The percentage of "don't know" responses for each question is provided in the Tabular Data Section of this report. When the "don't know" responses have been excluded, the text of this report will indicate that the responses have been excluded with the phrase "*who had an opinion.*"

Major Findings

- **Contact and Experience with Water Utilities Department.** Twenty-five percent (25%) of those surveyed had contact with the Water Utilities Department within the last two years. Of those, 54% had contact with office staff, 10% with field staff, and

35% with both. They were then asked to rate their experience on a 5-point scale with 5 being “excellent” and 1 being “poor”. The highest ratings given four issues relating to experience with the staff, based upon the combined percentage of “excellent” and “good” responses from those who had an opinion, were; the courteousness and politeness of staff (90%), staff knowledge (86%), staff responsiveness (85%), and the resolve of the issue (77%).

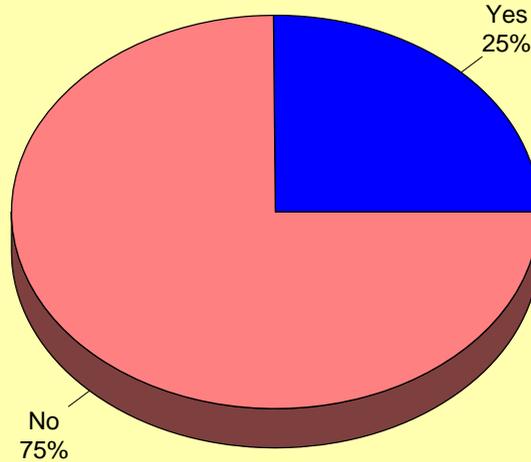
- **Level of Agreement with Several Service Issues.** The highest levels of agreement with several service issues based upon the combined percentage of “strongly agree” and “agree” responses from those who had an opinion, were; water services to my home is reliable (98%), sanitary service for home is reliable (89%), and drinking water is safe (90%). Those service issues that rated lowest in agreement from a total of 17 issues were that the amount charged for water service was reasonable (51%), and that the amount charged for sewer service was reasonable (49%).
- **Service Disconnects.** Those surveyed were asked their opinion about a fair and reasonable time period, beyond the due date, before the City discontinues water services. The question was asked for the purpose of minimizing lost revenue. Eleven percent (11%) felt that 14 days should be the limit, 34% felt that 28 days should be the limit, 33% felt that 42 days should be the limit, and 18% felt that 56 days should be the limit. Four (4%) did not feel that the service should be disconnected for non-payment.
- **Importance of Potential Service Options.** Possible service options were presented to those surveyed to prioritize based on importance. Those surveyed, who had an opinion rated as most important (combination of “very important” and “important”), offering assistance to owners impacted by sewer backups (86%), having the City repair collapsed private sewer laterals in right-of-ways, which is currently the responsibility of the home owner (86%), and offering assistance for customers with emergencies (76%). Of least importance was offering electronic bill delivery (46%).
- **Sewer Back-ups.** Most (88%), had never had a sewer back-up; 6% had experienced one, 2% had experienced two, and 4% had experienced three or more.
- **Insurance Rider for Sanitary Sewer Back-ups.** Nineteen percent (19%) of those surveyed did have a rider on their insurance policy for protection against sanitary sewer back-ups; 30% did not have a rider, and 49% did not know. For 2% of those surveyed, the question was not applicable.
- **Comparative Value of a Variety of Services.** Respondents were asked to rank several services in the order of their value to the respondent. In order of their value (by mean ranking) was water, gas, electricity, sewer, phone, internet provider, and cable tv.

- **Importance of Rate Design Issues Other than Cost.** Those surveyed rated aspects of rate design, other than cost, with the highest mean rating going to the affordability of rates for disadvantaged customers, then rates that are easy to understand, rates that encourage water conservation, incentives as they pertain to water and sanitary sewer to enhance new development, and finally stable and predictable rate increases.

Section 1:
Charts & Graphs

Q1. Have you had ANY contact with the Water Utilities Department staff within the last two years?

by percentage of respondents

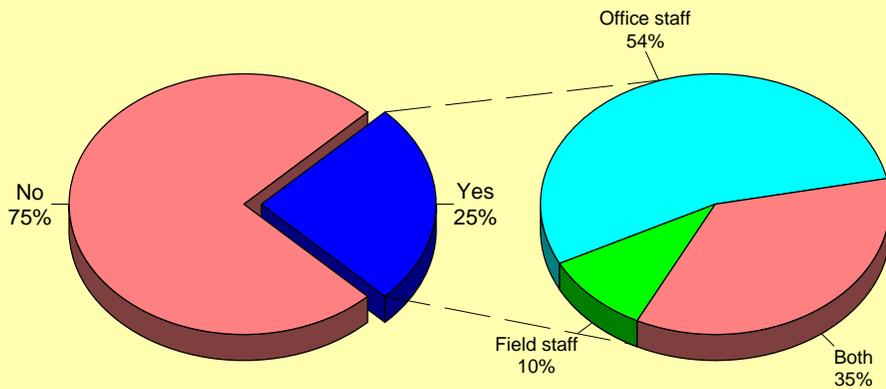


Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q1. Have you had ANY contact with the Water Utilities Department staff within the last two years?

by percentage of respondents

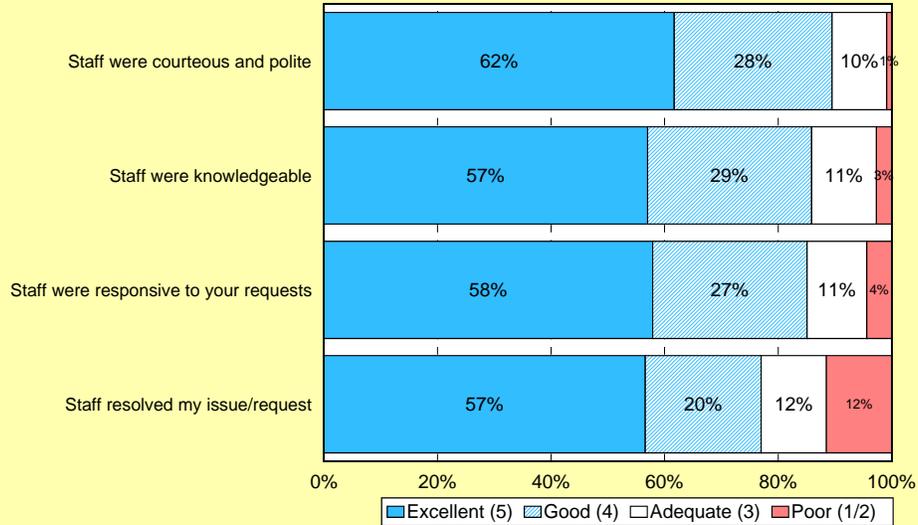
Q1a. If YES: Who was the contact with?



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q1b. How would you rate your experience with the staff?

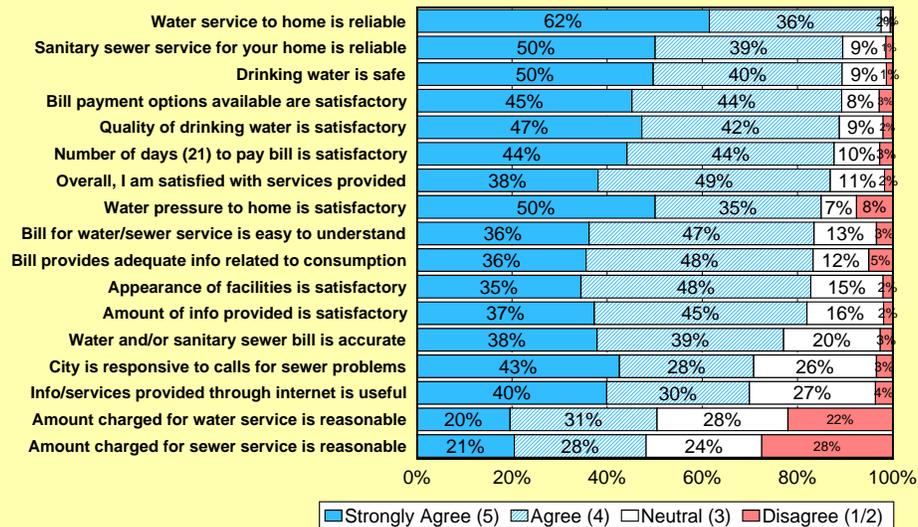
by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q2. Level of Agreement With Each of These Water Utility Services Issues

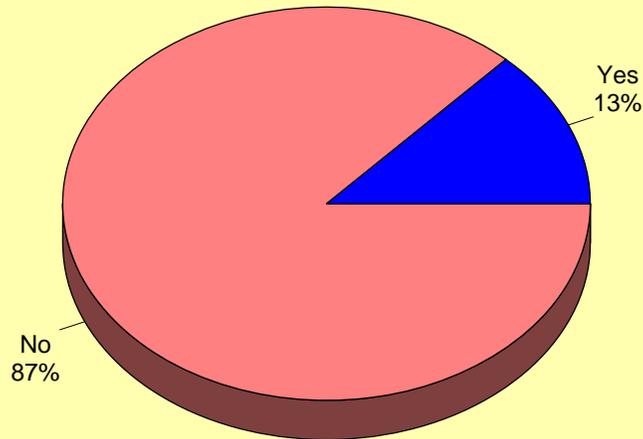
by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q3. Have you ever contacted the City with a complaint about your water or sanitary sewer services?

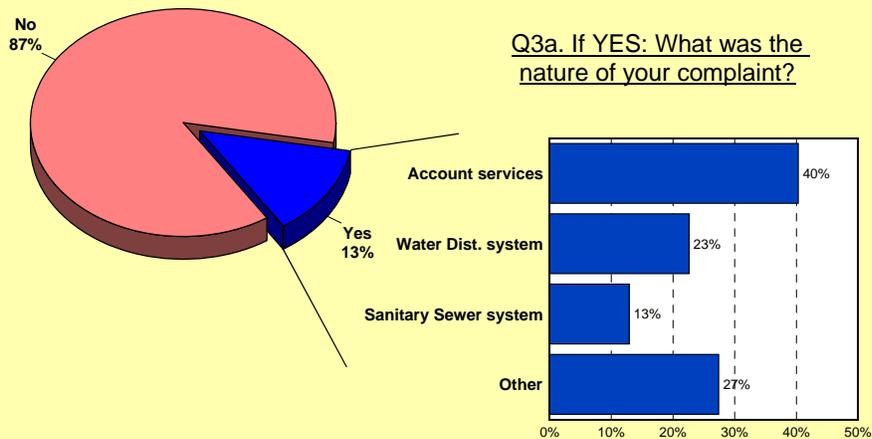
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q3. Have you ever contacted the City with a complaint about your water or sanitary sewer services?

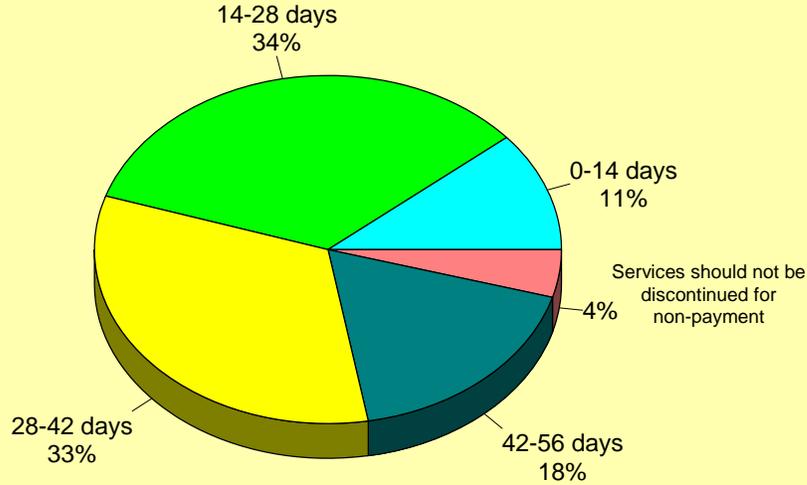
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q4. In order to minimize lost revenue, the City discontinues water services for non-payment. Beyond the Bill Due Date, how much time do you believe is fair and reasonable to allow prior to discontinuing the service?

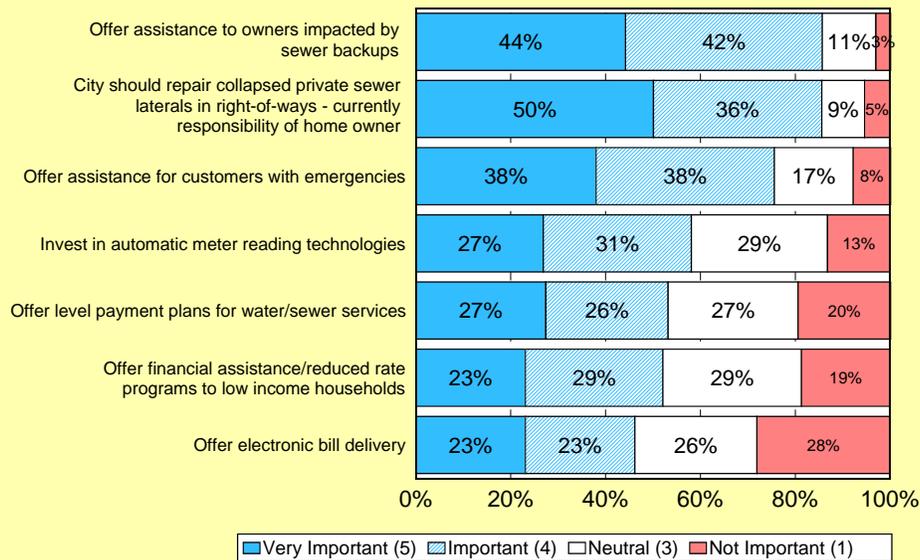
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q6. Importance of Potential Service Options

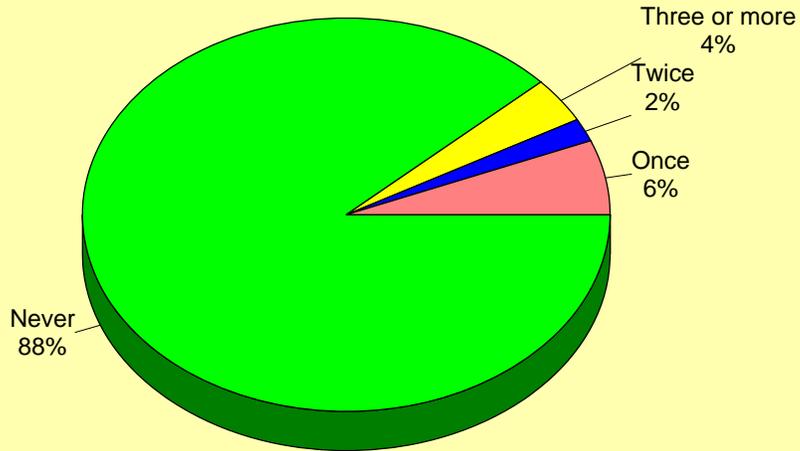
by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 4 on a 4-point scale (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q7. How many times during the past 10 years have you had a problem with sewage from the public sewer system entering your home through floor drains or other plumbing fixtures?

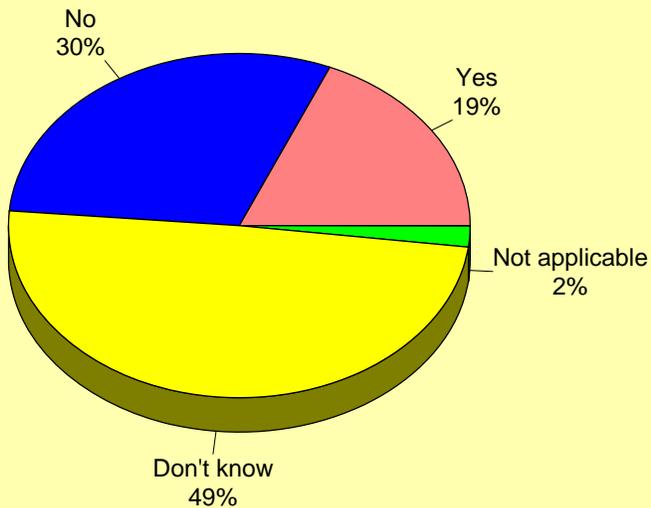
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q8. Do you have a rider on your insurance policy for protection against sanitary sewer backups?

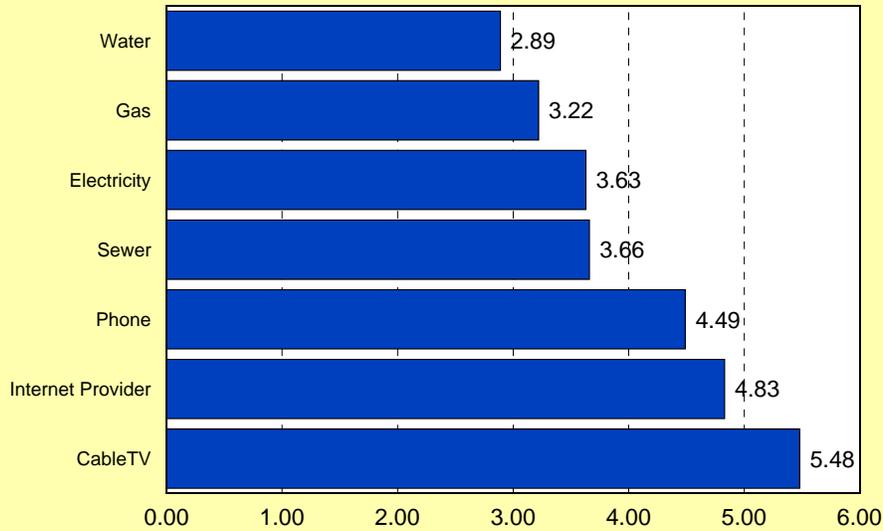
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q9. Which Utilities/Companies Respondents Feel Provide the Best Value

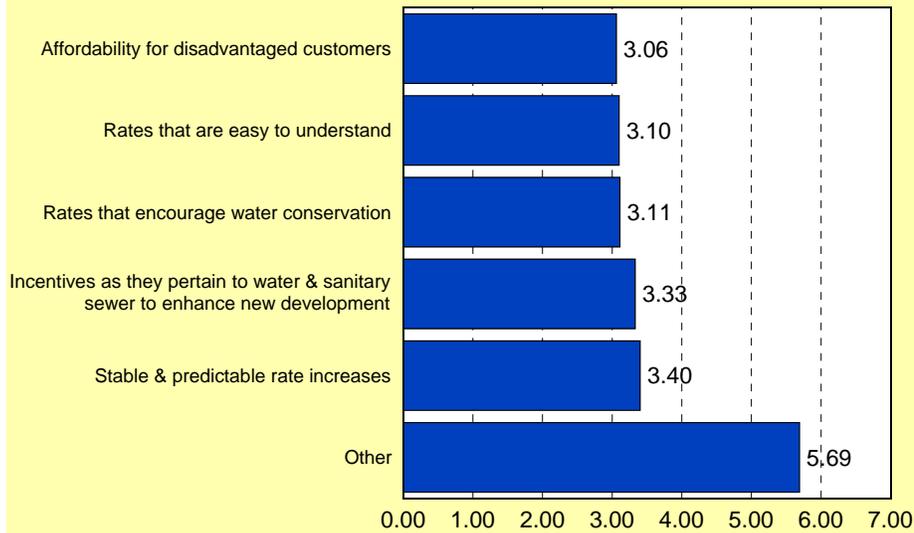
Represented in order by mean (Ranked 1 through 7 with 1 being the highest ranking)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q10. Aspects of Rate Design (Other than Costs) That Respondents Feel Are Most Important

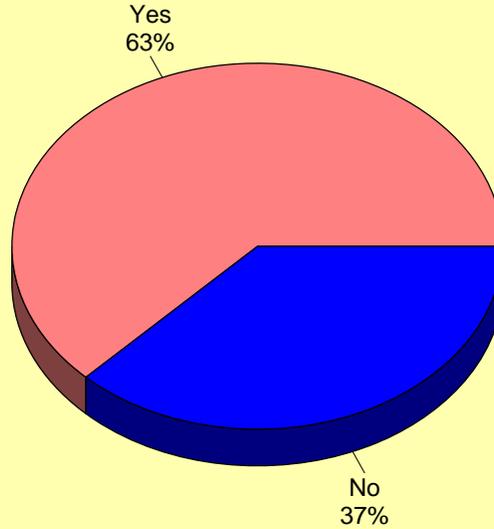
Represented in order by mean (Ranking 1-6 with 1 being the highest ranking)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q11. Annually, the City mails a "Consumer Confidence Report" to each household. Do you review this report in order to gain information about your water quality?

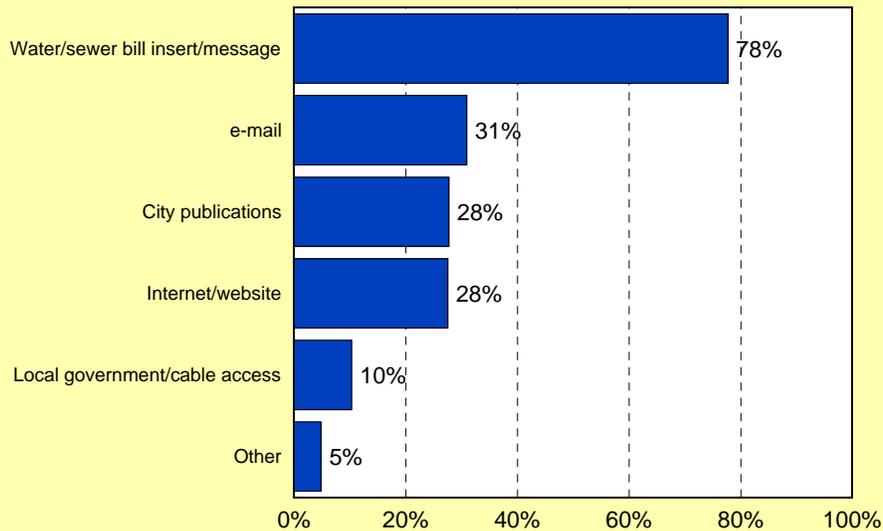
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q12. How would you prefer to receive information concerning Lee's Summit Water Utilities?

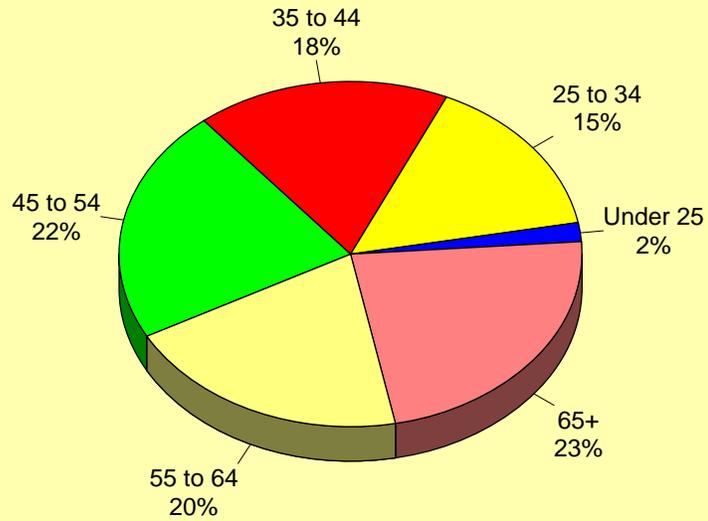
by percentage of respondents (multiple responses were allowed)



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q14. Demographics: What Is Your Age?

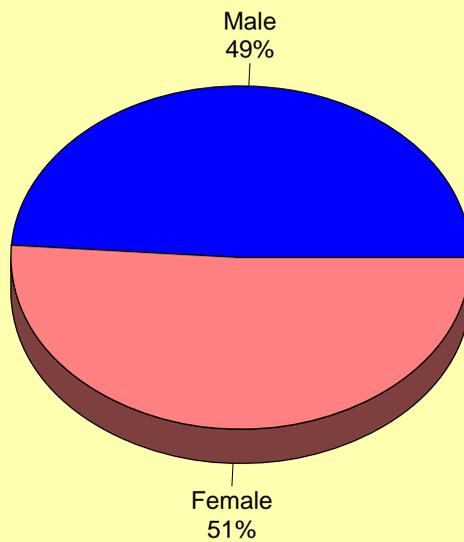
By percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

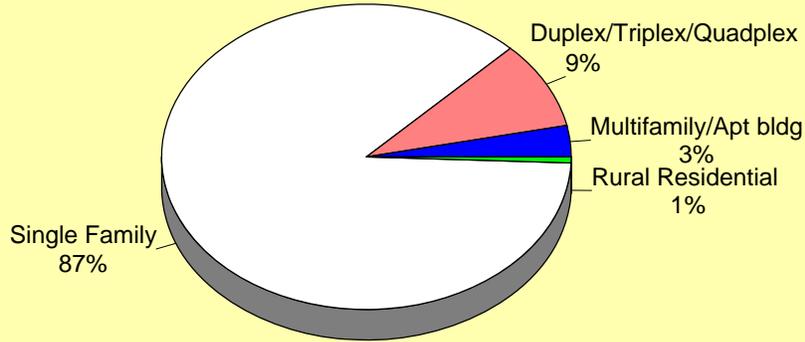
Q15. Demographics: Gender

By percentage of respondents



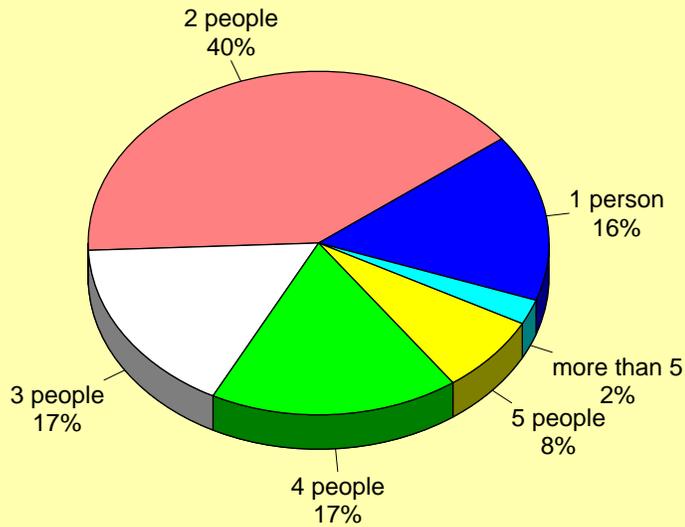
Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q16. Demographics: Which of the Following Best Describes Your Home? by percentage of business respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

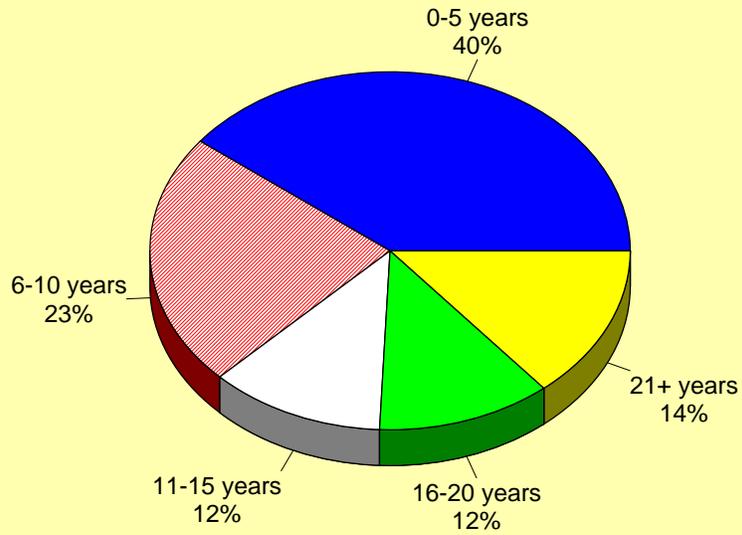
Q17. Demographics: How Many People Reside in Your Household? by percentage of business respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q18. Demographics: Approximately How Many Years Have You Lived at this Location?

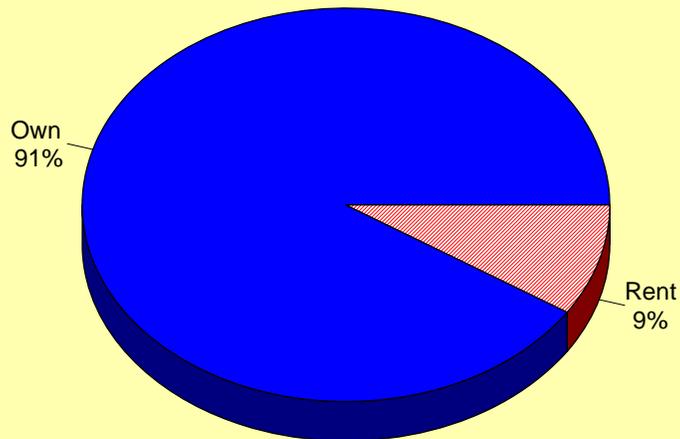
by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)

Q19. Demographics: Do You Own or Rent?

by percentage of respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2010)