

## 2023 Public Communications Survey

Help us gather insights on the size, scope, and responsibilities of public power communications departments so we can best serve and advocate for you.

All individual responses will remain confidential—data will only be presented in aggregate.

For any questions, please contact APPA's Communications Team at [Communications@PublicPower.org](mailto:Communications@PublicPower.org).

1) Utility/Organization:\*

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2) State(s):\*

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3) First Name:\*

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4) Last Name:\*

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5) Your title:\*

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6) How many customer meters (including residential, commercial and industrial) does your utility serve?\*

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**7) What is the name of the department in which communicators work?**

- Administration
- Communications
- Community relations
- Corporate communications
- Customer relations
- Customer services
- Energy services
- External affairs
- Marketing
- Public affairs
- Public information
- Public relations
- Communications & Public Relations
- Member services
- Other

**8) How many professional communications staff members belong to the department? (For part-time or shared employees, use a value of one half.)**

- 0-.5
- 1-1.5
- 2-2.5
- 3-3.5
- 4-4.5
- 5 to 10.5
- 11 to 19.5
- 20 and above

**9) How many administrative communications staff members belong to the department? (For part-time or shared employees, use a value of one half.)**

- 0-.5
- 1-1.5
- 2-2.5
- 3-3.5
- 4-4.5
- 5 to 10
- More than 10

**10) To whom does the communications department head report?**

- General Manager/CEO
- Assistant General Manager/Vice President
- Other Department or Division Head
- City Commission
- The chief communicator is the General Manager - the utility has no communications professionals
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_\*

**11) How long has your utility's top communicator been with your utility?**

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- more than 15 years
- Unsure

**12) What is your communications budget for 2023 (or the most recent fiscal year), EXCLUDING salaries?**

- Less than \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 to \$249,999
- \$250,000 to \$299,999
- \$300,000 to \$399,999
- \$400,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$599,999
- \$600,000 to \$699,999
- \$700,000 to \$799,999
- \$800,000 to \$899,999
- \$900,000 to \$999,999
- \$1,000,000 and up
- Unsure

**13) What percentage of your utility's electric revenue do you spend on communications?**

- Less than 0.01%
- 0.01% to 0.099%
- 0.1% to 0.99%
- 1% or more
- Unsure

**14) How much money do you spend on communications per customer?**

- \$0.01-\$1.00
- \$1.00-\$1.99
- \$2.00-\$2.99
- \$3.00-\$3.99
- \$4.00-\$4.99
- \$5.00-\$9.99
- \$10.00-\$15.00
- More than \$15.00
- Unsure

**15) Your communications budget for 2023 is:**

- Substantially higher than for 2022
- Moderately higher than for 2022
- About the same as for 2022
- Moderately lower than for 2022
- Substantially lower than for 2022

**16) What percentage of your communications budget is spent on internal (rather than external) communications?**

- 0-15%
- 16-30%
- 31-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%

**17) What are the functions of communicators at your utility? Check all that apply.**

- Brochure/written materials production
- Special events (open houses, dedications, etc.)
- Website content
- Website design
- Website posting and technical maintenance
- Media relations

- Advertising
- Community relations/sponsorships
- Employee communications
- Communication research (surveys, etc.)
- Exhibits/displays
- Public speaking
- Annual report
- Marketing
- Photography/videography
- Customer newsletter (residential)
- Public participation programs
- Audiovisual production
- School programs
- Speech writing
- Customer newsletter (key accounts/business)
- Customer contact
- Intranet site content
- Intranet site design
- Intranet posting and technical maintenance
- Speakers bureau
- Training staff/board in media relations or other communications topics
- Customer advisory groups
- Economic development
- Lobbying at the state level
- Lobbying at the national level
- Bondholder communications
- Blog on utility issues
- Public education
- Governmental communications
- Social media monitoring
- Social media content
- Multimedia production
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_\*

**18) Does your utility work with outside communications consultants on a regular basis? Check all that apply.**

- Photographer
- Graphic artist
- Web/Intranet site design
- Audiovisual producer
- Advertising agency
- Communication research
- Marketing consultant
- Public relations agency
- Social media agency
- Writer
- Media/speakers trainers
- No consultants
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

**19) Does your utility conduct communications research on a regular basis? Check all that apply.**

- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Employee communications/satisfaction surveys
- Customer focus groups
- Public opinion surveys
- News media content analyses
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

**20) Does your utility pay for any of the following advertising? Check all that apply.**

- Social media
- Newspapers
- Radio
- Specialized magazines (regional, state, economic development)
- Cable television
- Broadcast television
- Websites other than your own
- Billboards
- Local publications (community, school, newsletters)
- Community advertising (transit ads, bus signs, non-profit groups' programs)
- No advertising program
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

**21) What are the topics of your advertising? Check all that apply.**

- Branding/image
- Benefits of public power
- Customer safety
- Customer service
- Distributed Energy Resources (e.g., solar, storage, electric vehicles)
- Economic development
- Energy conservation/efficiency
- Marketing utility products/services to current customers
- Marketing utility products/services to new customers
- Need for new generation/power plant siting
- Rate changes
- Public hearings/meetings/notices
- Sponsorships of community events (such as sports teams, school activities, etc.)
- Utility-sponsored community event and activities
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \*



**22) If you advertise, what is your utility's advertising budget for 2023 (or your most recent fiscal year)?**

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 to \$499,999
- \$500,000 to \$999,999
- \$1,000,000 and up
- Unsure

**23) What percentage of your utility's revenue do you spend on advertising?**

- Less than 0.01%
- 0.01% to 0.099%
- 0.1% to 0.99%
- 1% or more
- Unsure

**24) How much money do you spend on advertising per customer?**

- \$0.01-\$1.00
- \$1.00-\$1.99
- \$2.00-\$2.99
- \$3.00-\$3.99
- \$4.00-\$4.99
- \$5.00-\$9.99
- \$10.00-\$15.00
- More than \$15.00
- Unsure

**25) Your advertising budget for 2023 is:**

- Substantially higher than for 2022
- Moderately higher than for 2022
- About the same as for 2022
- Moderately lower than for 2022
- Substantially lower than for 2022

**26) Do you promote your utility as a public power system?**

- Yes
- No

**27) Does your utility have a written crisis communications plan?**

- Yes
- No

**28) Does your utility engage in social media outreach?**

- Yes
- No

**29) [If Yes in Q28] Which social media platforms do you use? (Check all that apply.)**

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- YouTube
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

**30) What percentage of your communications budget would you estimate is used for social media?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**31) Does your organization have a slogan?**

Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

No

**32) What three issues have had the greatest impact on your communications programs/budget over the last 18 months?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**33) Is there regular discussion within your community about the amount of your communications expenditures (either too much or too little)?**

Yes

No

**34) Special question for joint action agencies/wholesale suppliers only: What communications services do you provide your utility system members/participants? Check all that apply.**

Newsletter/magazine

Creative services: newsletters, press releases, brochures

Workshops/seminars on communications topics

Sponsorship of sports events/teams/community contributions

State/regional advertising

Awards/recognition programs

Public relations consultation

Social media consultation

State/regional branding program

**35) Special question for joint action agencies/wholesale suppliers only: What are the audiences for your communications? Check all that apply.**

- Public power system employees
- Public power system governing board members
- Bond holders
- State legislators/regulators
- Public power community officials
- Public power customers
- Rating agencies
- Federal legislators/regulators
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_\*

**Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.**