

2010 SURVEY OF AARP MEMBERS IN WEST VIRGINIA ABOUT ELECTRICITY RATE INCREASE

AARP's West Virginia State Office, in response to its commitment to ensure affordable utility rates for all residents, commissioned this survey to explore the views of its members on the proposed rate increase by Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power.

These results are based on a telephone survey, fielded May 25-28, 2010 of AARP members in West Virginia who receive their electricity bill from Appalachian Power or Wheeling Power. A total of 700 interviews were completed yielding a sampling error of ± 3.7 percent.

A weighted, annotated survey of responses begins on page 2, and detailed methodology is on page 8.

SURVEY-IN-BRIEF

- ❖ **Most AARP members in West Virginia are concerned about the rising costs of heating and cooling their homes, and many think they are currently paying too much for electricity.**
 - ✓ 67 percent say they are extremely or very concerned about the rising costs of heating and cooling their homes; and another 20 percent say they are somewhat concerned. In fact, only 12 percent say they are not very or not at all concerned.
 - ✓ 57 percent say the amount they are paying for electricity is too much.

- ❖ **Nearly all members in West Virginia oppose a request by Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power to increase their electricity bill.**
 - ✓ 92 percent say they oppose the Public Service Commission approving Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power's request to increase their monthly electricity bill.
 - ✓ 2 percent support this request; and 6 percent are not sure.

- ❖ **Most AARP members in West Virginia are concerned about their ability to pay more for electricity.**
 - ✓ 69 percent say they are extremely or very concerned about their ability to pay more for electricity if the Public Service Commission approves Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power's request to increase their monthly electricity bill; and another 20 percent are somewhat concerned. In fact, only 10 percent say they are not very or not at all concerned.

- ❖ **Most AARP members in West Virginia do not feel their elected officials are doing enough to help people affected with rising energy costs.**
 - ✓ 74 percent say they do not feel their elected officials are doing enough; 12 percent say they are; and 13 percent are not sure.
 - ✓ 64 percent say they have always voted in state elections for Governor and Legislators in the last 10 years; and another 20 percent say they have voted most of the time.

West Virginia AARP Member Telephone Survey

n = 700; Sampling Error = ±3.7

Hello, this is _____ calling from RDD, a national opinion research firm. We are not telemarketers and are not trying to sell you anything. We are interested in your opinions on utility services in your community. Your opinions are important, and we would greatly appreciate your participation. Your responses will be kept entirely confidential. We only need about 5 minutes of your time.

SCREENING QUESTIONS

S-1 Are you a member of AARP?

100% Yes

S-2 Do you live in West Virginia?

100% Yes

S-3 Do you receive your electricity bill from ... [READ ALL OPTIONS]

96% Appalachian Power
4% Wheeling Power

MAIN QUESTIONS

M-1 How concerned are you about the costs of cooling your home or heating your home going up? Are you ...[READ ANSWERS]

32% Extremely concerned
35% Very concerned
20% Somewhat concerned
7% Not very concerned
5% Not at all concerned
2% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-2 Thinking about the amount you pay for electricity, is this amount too little, about right, or too much?

1% Too little
38% About right
57% Too much
4% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-3 In May, Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power asked the Public Service Commission of West Virginia to raise your electricity rates by 17 percent. This is the second rate hike requested in 3 months. If both rate increases are approved, that means the average electricity bill will have increased by 70 percent since 2006. Were you aware of these potential increases to your electricity bill?

68% Yes
32% No
<1% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-4 Do you support or oppose the Public Service Commission approving Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power's request to increase your monthly electricity bill?

2% Support [SKIP TO M-4a]
92% Oppose [SKIP TO M-4b]
6% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-4a Would you say you strongly support it or somewhat support it? (n=12)

1% Strongly
1% Somewhat

M-4b Would you say you strongly oppose it or somewhat oppose it? (n=644)

80% Strongly
12% Somewhat

M-5 If the Public Service Commission approves Appalachian Power and Wheeling Power's request to increase your monthly electricity bill, how concerned are you about your ability to pay more for electricity?

37% Extremely concerned
32% Very concerned
20% Somewhat concerned
6% Not very concerned
4% Not at all concerned
1% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

Ask M-6 and M-7 only of AARP members who receive electricity from Appalachian Power.

M-6 On December 18th and 19th of 2009, a winter storm cut off power to many households in West Virginia. Did your household lose power during this storm or did any of your friends or family members lose power during this storm? (n=669)

- 16% Yes, my household lost power
- 22% Yes, family and friends I know lost power
- 28% Yes, my household lost power and family and friends I know lost power
- 31% No, my household nor any family or friends I know lost power
- 3% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
- <1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-7 How would you rate the performance of Appalachian Power in restoring electricity to those households who lost power during this storm? Would you say it was ... [READ ALL OPTIONS] (n=669)

- 6% Excellent
- 18% Very good
- 28% Good
- 17% Fair
- 20% Poor
- 9% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
- <1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

M-8 Do you feel your elected officials are doing enough to help people affected by rising energy costs?

- 12% Yes
- 74% No
- 13% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
- 1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

Our final set of questions is for classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.

D-1 What is your age as of your last birthday?

- <1% Less than 50 years
- 21% 50 to 59 years
- 48% 60 to 74 years
- 31% 75+ years
- 0% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-2 Gender [RECORD]

55% Male
45% Female

D-3 What is your county?

Record County
Don't know [DO NOT READ]
Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-4 Which of the following best describes your current employment status? Are you ... [READ OPTIONS, IF NECESSARY]

2% Self-employed full-time
1% Self-employed part-time
13% Employed full-time
2% Employed part-time
72% Retired and not working at all
1% Unemployed and looking for work
7% Or are you not in the labor force for other reasons
<1% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-5 What is the highest level of education that you completed? [READ OPTIONS, IF NECESSARY]

9% 0-12th grade (no diploma)
41% High school graduate (or equivalent)
11% Post-high school education (no degree)
13% 2-year college degree
12% 4-year college degree
2% Post-graduate study (no degree)
10% Graduate or professional degree(s)
<1% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
2% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-6 What is your current marital status? [READ OPTIONS, IF NECESSARY]

66% Married
1% Not married, living with your partner or significant other
<1% Separated
8% Divorced
18% Widowed
5% Currently single and never married
<1% Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-7 Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?

- 1% Yes
- 95% No
- 2% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 2% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-8 What is your race? [READ OPTIONS IF NECESSARY]

- 93% White or Caucasian
- 2% Black or African American
- 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
- <1% Asian
- 0% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- 2% Other
- <1% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 3% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-9 Thinking about your state elections for West Virginia Governor and Legislators in the last ten years, how often would you say you vote? Would you say you [READ OPTIONS] vote?

- 64% Always
- 20% Most of the time
- 5% About half of the time
- 3% Seldom
- 5% Never
- 1% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 3% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-10 Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?

- 53% Democrat
- 23% Republican
- 14% Independent
- 5% Something else
- 1% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 5% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-11 Do you own or rent your primary residence?

- 93% Own
- 5% Rent
- <1% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 3% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-12 What type of home is your primary residence? Is it a ... [READ OPTIONS]?

- 87% Single family home
- 6% Mobile home
- 1% Townhome or duplex
- 2% Apartment
- 1% Condominium or co-op
- 1% Something else
- 0% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 3% Refused [DO NOT READ]

D-13 We realize that income is a private matter and so rather than ask you anything specific about your income, I'd like to ask you to please stop me when I get to the category that includes your household's income before taxes in 2009?

- 4% Less than \$10,000
- 14% \$10,000 to less than \$20,000
- 15% \$20,000 to less than \$30,000
- 15% \$30,000 to less than \$40,000
- 10% \$40,000 to less than \$50,000
- 7% \$50,000 to less than \$60,000
- 3% \$60,000 to less than \$70,000
- 12% \$70,000 or more
- 4% Don't know [DO NOT READ]
- 16% Refused [DO NOT READ]

Methodology

AARP West Virginia commissioned a research study to explore the opinions of its members in West Virginia about proposed increases in electricity rates. RDD Field Services conducted a telephone survey of West Virginia residents who are members of AARP and receive their electricity from Appalachian Power or Wheeling Power. The survey was conducted between May 26, 2010 and May 28, 2010, and a total of 700 interviews were completed. A sample of this size has a sampling error of plus or minus 3.7 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Survey responses were weighted to reflect the actual distribution of age and gender for AARP membership in West Virginia. Interviewing was completed with a final response rate of 9.33 percent, cooperation rate of 71.07 percent, and refusal rate of 7.29 percent. The response, cooperation, and refusal rates were calculated according to AAPOR standards RR3, CCOP3, REF3.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice, and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce *AARP The Magazine*, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with over 35.7 million readers; *AARP Bulletin*, the go-to news source for AARP's millions of members and Americans 50+; *AARP VIVA*, the only bilingual U.S. publication dedicated exclusively to the 50+ Hispanic community; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

State Research brings the right knowledge at the right time to our state and national partners in support of their efforts to improve the lives of people age 50+. State Research consultants provide strategic insights and actionable research to attain measurable state and national outcomes.

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Research and Strategic Analysis

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