



Citizen Satisfaction Survey

Five cities and towns in the New England States Performance Measurement Project (NESPMP) participated in their first online citizen satisfaction survey in the fall of 2009. The purpose of the survey was to determine what residents think of the services provided by their municipal government and how they view the quality of life in their town or city. The leadership of these participating towns believes that obtaining residents' views is critical to their ability to provide the best level of services while utilizing tax dollars most effectively and efficiently. The areas surveyed included public works, parks and recreation, police, fire, emergency services/rescue, public education, permitting and code enforcement, town management, and administrative leadership.

Each participating community was involved in the development of the survey instrument to which it had exclusive access. In some cases, the instrument was modified slightly to fit the needs of the particular town/city. Each community was responsible for sending a postcard to a random sample of about 10% of residents using a voter list, postal mailing list, or ratepayer list for a utility. The postcard contained a protected password to access the survey online. Each town was also responsible for publicity about the survey. The response rates for each community were as follows: Freeport, ME, 14.6%; Lewiston, ME, 10.3%; Holden, MA, 32.4%; Newport, RI, 12.7%; and South Portland, ME, 12.3%. The goal was to have a response rate of at least 10% for each community in order to have significant results, which was achieved. The analysis report compares these five communities' results for a variety of questions including quality of life, condition of streets, snow removal, and fire, ambulance, and 911 services.

The next survey will be conducted in the fall of 2010. Survey development will occur in late September. Posting of the online instrument should occur from mid-October through mid-December. Results will be available in the February-March timeframe. The analysis will include an individual report for each participating town and a cross-town comparison report.

If you are interested in further information or in participating in this project, please contact:

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