
**Pennichuck Water Works:
2003 Strategic Image Survey**

Submitted to:

Pennichuck Water Works
4 Water Street
Nashua, New Hampshire 03060

Submitted by:

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PW 010155

Communications***Efforts to counter the City's effort to acquire Pennichuck Water Works should focus on selected messages.***

The results of the research indicate that there are several specific messages that could be used to counter the City's effort to acquire Pennichuck Water Works. The following is an outline of the most effective messages:

1. **Rates** The research strongly suggests that support for the City's effort to acquire Pennichuck Water Works erodes significantly if it would result in higher rates.

2. **Experience** The research strongly suggests that most people believe "it is in the public interest to have the current staff and personnel maintain and operate the City's water system." Perhaps more striking, this argument is particularly compelling among current supporters of the City's effort to acquire Pennichuck Water Works.

Most people also indicate that the public is well served by a company which has continuously served the City of over 150 years.

3. **Uncertainty** The research indicates that most people are not interested in pursuing the principle of local control if it would require a long, expensive and uncertain legal challenge.

Most residents would react favorably to a negotiated settlement.

The research suggest that most voters would prefer a negotiated settlement over an expensive, protracted legal battle. Nearly one-half of voters (46%) believe that there should be a public/private partnership whereby the City of Nashua owns the City's water service and contracts with Pennichuck Water Works to manage and operate the service. Far fewer voters believe that the City's water system should be solely owned and operated by Pennichuck Water Works (21%) or the City of Nashua (18%). Even among voters who support the City's effort to acquire Pennichuck Water Works, 53 percent would prefer a public/private partnership.

>q38<

Let's assume that the price you pay for water would be 10 percent higher if it were provided by the City of Nashua.

If this were true, would you support or oppose efforts for the City of Nashua to purchase Pennichuck Water Works?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

- <9> Don't know / unsure

>q39<

Let's assume that the price you pay for water would be 25 percent higher if it were provided by the City of Nashua.

If this were true, would you support or oppose efforts for the City of Nashua to purchase Pennichuck Water Works?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

- <9> Don't know / unsure

>q40< How familiar are you with the term "eminent domain" and how it could potentially be used by the City of Nashua to try and take control of the Pennichuck Water Works?

Read responses:

- <1> Very familiar
- <2> Moderately familiar
- <3> Only somewhat familiar
- <4> Not that familiar

<9> Don't know / unsure

>q41< Let's assume that Pennichuck Water Works did not agree to the City of Nashua's offer to be purchased. Would you support or oppose efforts to try and take control of the Pennichuck Water Works through a legal challenge using eminent domain? If you are unsure, please feel free to say so.

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

<9> Don't know / unsure

>q42< Let's assume that a legal challenge would take at least 2 years to complete?

If this were true, would you support or oppose efforts by the City of Nashua to try and take control of Pennichuck Water Works?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

<9> Don't know / unsure

>q43<

Let's assume that a legal challenge would take at least 2 years to complete, and it would cost the City hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees.

If this were true, would you support or oppose efforts by the City of Nashua to try and take control of Pennichuck Water Works?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

- <9> Don't know / unsure

>q44<

Let's assume that a legal challenge would take at least 2 years to complete, and it would cost the City hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, and it were uncertain if the City would succeed?

If this were true, would you support or oppose efforts by the City of Nashua to try and take control of Pennichuck Water Works?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

- <9> Don't know / unsure

Arguments for and against:

>q45< Now I would like to read you a list of reasons for and against having the City of Nashua take control of Pennichuck Water Works. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

It is not in the City's interest to enter into a long and expensive legal challenge to try and take control of Pennichuck Water Works because it is uncertain what the outcome would be?

"Do you feel that strongly or moderately?"

- <1> Strongly agree
- <2> Moderately agree
- <3> Moderately disagree
- <4> Strongly disagree

- <9> Unsure/depends

>q46< The City of Nashua would do a better job providing reliable, high quality water service to the residents of Nashua?

>q47< Municipal control over the City's water system is not a good idea because it would result in the loss of 85 private-sector jobs?

>q48< It is important for the City of Nashua to have local control over the City's water service?

>q49< The residents of Nashua are better served by the Pennichuck Water Works, which has owned and operated the City's water system for over 150 years?

>q50< Municipal control over the City's water system is not a good idea because the City's actions would put out of business one of the oldest, continuously serving water companies in the state of New Hampshire?

>q51< The City of Nashua would do a better job controlling the cost of providing water service to the residents of Nashua?

>q52< It is in the public interest to have the current staff and personnel maintain and operate the City's water system rather than turn it over to a new, less experienced management team?

>q53< The City of Nashua would do a better job protecting the environment and watershed that supports the City's water supply?

>q54< What if the City of Nashua took ownership of Pennichuck Water Works - and then contracted with an out-of-state firm to operate the system. Would you support or oppose this type of arrangement?

(Do you feel that strongly or moderately?)

- <1> Strongly support
- <2> Moderately support
- <3> Moderately oppose
- <4> Strongly oppose

- <9> Don't know / unsure

>q55< Which of the following arrangements do you think is in the best financial interest of the taxpayers of Nashua?

Read responses:

- <1> Maintain the current private system whereby the cost of water that residents are charged is regulated by the Public Utility Commission of New Hampshire
- <2> Establish a new municipally owned water system whereby the cost of water that residents are charged would be set by local politicians

- <8> Both equally (volunteered)
- <9> Don't know / unsure

>q56< Would you be more or less likely to support efforts to take control of Pennichuck Water Works if the new agency set up to manage the water system were a regional authority rather than the City of Nashua?

- <1> Much more likely to support if controlled by a regional authority
- <2> Somewhat more likely
- <3> Somewhat less likely
- <4> Much less likely

Opinion Leader:

>q57< How many times have you attended any type of public meeting in the past 12 months?

- <0> None
- <1-100> Number of times

>q58< How many different educational, recreational, social, civic, political, religious and other types of organizations are you actively involved in?

- <0> None
- <1-100> Number of organizations respondent is active in