SUEZ WATER NEW YORK
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VIA Electronic Filing

January 13, 2022

The Honorable Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary to the Commission
New York State
Public Service Commission
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223-1350

SUBJECT: Case 21-W-0338, Joint Petition of Veolia Environnement S.A., Veolia North America, Inc., SUEZ S.A., and SUEZ Water New York Inc. for Approval Pursuant to Section 89-h of the Public Service Law of the Acquisition of SUEZ S.A. by Veolia Environnement S.A.

Case 19-W-0168 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission as to the Rates, Charges, Rules and Regulations of SUEZ Water New York Inc., SUEZ Water Westchester Inc. and SUEZ Water Owego-Nichols Inc. for Water Service.

Dear Secretary Phillips:

Enclosed please find the SUEZ Water New York Inc. annual Customer Satisfaction Report, which has been submitted in accordance with our joint proposal for Case 21-W-0338 page 8.

If you or the Commission's Staff have any questions concerning the Company's report, please do not hesitate to contact me at (845) 620-3352.

Sincerely,

Chris Graziano
Vice President & General Manager

SUEZ Water New York Inc.

2021 Customer Satisfaction Survey

January 13, 2022

Case 19-W-0168 - Case 21-W-0338

BACKGROUND

As part of SUEZ Water New York's (SWNY) rate case order, a Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) is conducted each year. Customer Satisfaction measures how services supplied by an individual utility meet customer expectations. This is an imperative part of the business as it provides SUEZ with valuable feedback and metrics that can be used to manage and improve a variety of service offerings. The results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey are designed to ensure that the company is delivering an exceptional customer experience and adhering to the guidelines set forth by the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC). The results of the CSS are taken into consideration when PSC staff reviews the quality of customer service delivered by an individual utility in a given year.

SATISFACTION GOALS

The goal provided in the rate order states that SWNY must maintain a CSS score over 75.7%.

OBJECTIVES

Work within the parameters set forth in the regulations to effectively meet customer expectations by resolving customer complaints timely, providing enhanced offerings to our customers, and delivering an overall exceptional customer experience.

SUMMARY

Providing an outstanding customer experience that consistently prioritizes the customer first is a core value at SUEZ. In 2021, SUEZ launched its new electronic paperless billing (SUEZ Paperless Billing) which enhances the customer experience by providing an improved user journey. There were upgrades made to our customer service systems such as, our Interactive Voice Response "IVR" front end messaging capabilities. Upgraded features on our website mysuezwater.com, continued to advance our self-service offerings to customers. These website upgrades provided customers with the option to view additional years of billing history as well as view other notifications such as payment reminder notices electronically. SUEZ piloted a customer Chat feature on its website that is integrated into our IVR phone platform and will enable customers with an additional means of contacting customer service to address questions and concerns.

SUEZ continued to utilize its customer notification system, Notify, to advise customers of unplanned and planned outages. In addition, there were several internal process improvements launched to better the overall customer facing experience. SUEZ also continued to address the needs of our customers during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, SUEZ made every effort to resolve all customer concerns and complaints directly with the customer in a timely and amicable manner.

The chart below is a summary of the SWNY goal and results for the 2021 CSS:

2021 Customer Satisfaction Survey		
Company	**Goal**	**Result**
SWNY	75.7%	88%

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

RESULTS

At SUEZ, providing a superior customer experience for all our customers is our main priority. SUEZ consistently strives to promote customer awareness and enhance its offerings in an effort to drive positive customer interactions. Additionally, the company always endeavors to resolve all customer inquiries in an equitable fashion to enhance customer satisfaction.

SWNY received an 88% satisfaction rating in 2021, above the benchmark of 75.7%.

Our 2021 rating of 88% demonstrates a 6% improvement over our 2020 satisfaction rating of 82%. While this score satisfies the goal set forth in the rate order, SUEZ will continue to look for opportunities to improve the customer experience.

2021 CUSTOMER IMPROVEMENTS/PROJECTS

It is important to highlight notable efforts and upgrades made in 2021, to continue improving the customer experience.

SUEZ Paperless Billing

In early 2021, SUEZ launched its updated electronic billing platform to customers. Based on customer feedback obtained, via customer focus groups and other means, SUEZ developed enhancements that simplify the way customers can receive and pay their water bills electronically. The system provides our customers with a more streamlined electronic billing process. Customers who are currently enrolled in SUEZ paperless billing, receive the benefits that come with having a mysuezwater.com account. These include:

- A one-stop shop to manage SUEZ account(s)
- The ability to view past bills and notices and consumption trends prior to making the payment of the customer electronic bill
- Seamless payment processing
- The ability for customers to receive a notification related to reminder delinquency notice (AR notice) or Payment Plan reminders both electronically and regular mail
- The opportunity to view water usage and compare with similar households
- Easier ways to update contact information within the same platform
- View important messages that are sent along with the customer bill, bill inserts and customer onserts -information pamphlets electronically
- View more years of billing history – previously the system went back 12 months and now goes back to past billing over 24 months
- For customers that sign up for Paperless billing and have multiple accounts- all accounts will be enrolled in paperless billing, previously a customer would have to contact a live agent to have multiple accounts linked

Enhanced Online Information and New Chat Feature

In 2021, SUEZ continued to trend in the direction where more customers obtained pertinent information regarding their account online. Customers visited our website regarding billing, rates and regulations, conservation, to view and monitor consumption, make payments, and obtain pertinent outage alerts. Our website continues to offer options for starting and stopping accounts, electronic notification, text message notification, bill due date reminders, scheduling a meter change appointment, and enrolling in one of our several convenient payment options, including SUEZ paperless billing, recurring credit card payments

and direct debit. The website also allows customers to contact customer service to log a customer inquiry ticket to address any questions or concerns electronically. SUEZ continues to develop enhancements on the web, and in 2021, we noted an increase in our customer web adoption rate. Features on the web remain available as follows:

- Customer can update contact information and mailing address online
- CSR Communication Portal to contact customer service via email
- Appointment scheduling online
- Request to start or stop an account
- Customers can set a conservation goal
- Track water usage at more frequent intervals with enhanced water usage graph and customer consumption trend data preferences
- Set personalized benchmarks regarding water account/consumption
- Receive enhanced customer notifications
- Manage multiple accounts more easily
- Access several convenient payment options; including enhanced payment options, wallet functionality, set future payments, establish recurring payment set up, and pay multiple accounts in one transaction with no processing fee
- CSR can trigger automated notification to any customer from our billing system for a seamless web registration enrollment

In 2021, SUEZ worked to develop a new feature on its website which will allow customers to chat with a customer service representative during normal business hours. The chat feature is currently in a pilot phase and provides active web users with a chat link. This link is currently available once customers login to their account on our website. The feature is available to customers in three locations on the website, on the customer account page, payments page and billing page of our website. When a customer initiates a chat, they will be prompted with several options to address their inquiry. These options include automated responses from a chat bot and gives the customer the option to speak with a live representative should their inquiry be more complex.

Chat is known to improve upon the customer experience in the following ways:

- Live chat improves the support experience for customers
- Live chat allows the customer and representative to build rapport
- Live chat reduces repetition for customers and often time results in first contact resolution
- Live chat boosts customer service productivity as agents can have more than one chat conversation at once
- Live chat also offers quicker response time to inquires

In early 2022, SUEZ will complete the chat pilot with the intention of launching additional chat options to customers.

PFAS

In July 2020, the New York State Department of Health (DOH) announced new state standards for PFOA/PFAS of 10 parts per trillion (PPT) for drinking water systems. (The new standard was seven times lower than the federal health advisory limit of 70 PPT.) Under the mandate, New York water systems serving more than 10,000 individuals were to begin testing for PFOA, PFAS, and 1,4 Dioxane within 60 days of the establishment of the standard. To communicate this important development to its customers, SUEZ New York launched a dedicated web page (www.nysuezwq.com) in October that featured a comprehensive explanation of PFAS, the new testing standard and SUEZ's remediation strategies, along with regular updates on the progress of SUEZ's water treatment upgrade projects. The web site served as the centerpiece of a proactive, multi-channel communications program that reached customers using

email, social media, bill inserts, radio and the distribution of informational brochures at public libraries and town centers.

Customer Centricity- Internal Customer Service Training and Quality Call Management

Ensuring that our staff is trained and able to assist our customers readily and knowledgably to the best of their abilities is an important part of continually improving the customer experience at SUEZ. In 2021, the company held various customer service trainings/meetings ranging on a variety of topics, which include but are not limited to, billing system and internal application training, web content and navigation, field operations, rates and regulations, and billing. In addition, SUEZ ensured that all staff completed various customer service specific refresher trainings via our electronic training platform, Talent Up. Customer Service staff participated in electronic trainings that covered a variety of topics including:

- Customer Service Customer Call De-Escalation Phone Techniques
- MySUEZWater Masquerade Training – web navigational training
- High Bill Investigation- which covers assisting the customer in troubleshooting a high bill/excess consumption/potential leaks
- Sensus Analytics Training – on meter and consumption customer trends
- Mastering Email – customer communication via email and portal
- SUEZ Call Guidelines

SUEZ also developed an updated training curriculum for new hires which includes a comprehensive review of all SUEZ platforms, policies, and rules and regulations. It has significant focus on customer centricity and ensuring that our representatives are readily able to assist our customers.

The new hire plan includes but is not limited to the follow training topics:

- Week 1: Call Journey/General Expectations, call handling, proper etiquette for handling customer interactions, and SUEZ Overview/ Applications use and access
- Week 2: Rates and Regulations, Understanding the customer bill and surcharges
- Week 3: Billing system navigation and use, customer contacts, use of field work orders and appointment scheduling, customer account start/stops process, creation of payment plans for customers, updating account information, and understanding the credit and collections process
- Week 4: MySUEZWater.com, customer service portal, troubleshooting online customer account issues, customer service email inbox response/general email responses to customers
- Week 5: Metering – Review of compliance program, reading device program, use of reading analytics, and demo of actual meter and reading device and its operation
- Week 6: Customer billing- including billing corrections, and all billing related work
- Week 7: Overview of other departments including Planning Department, Transmission and Distribution and Production departments
- Week 8: Review training topics, employee progress and next steps within the customer service department

Additional trainings will be implemented throughout the course of the New Year in 2022 and SUEZ will continue to hold annual trainings on a variety of customer centric topics.

Furthermore, SUEZ continues to utilize quality call management monitoring tools to ensure that our customers are receiving an optimal experience and drive improvements. SUEZ Supervisors met with customer service staff monthly to review customer calls and provide feedback and coaching for various customer contact scenarios. This process focuses on four main components that address critical elements of all customer calls, as follow:

- Opening a Customer Call/Verify Pertinent Account Information
- Customer Centricity/Building Rapport
- Call Discovery and Resolution

- Completing the Call

Customer Notify and Key Account Management

SUEZ continues to maintain open lines of communication with customers regarding repairs and outages with our automated outbound calling system, Notify. In 2021, the Notify system was utilized to send a variety of customer notification campaigns via voice, email, and text message methods. Customers who receive an automated Notify call also have the option to be transferred to the SUEZ call center. This allows customers to directly connect to the SUEZ IVR phone system to speak with a representative should they have questions regarding the automated call without having to hang up and dial the call center. This feature provides a seamless and easy contact/call back option for the customer. Lastly, SUEZ continues to refine key customer relationships to ensure that our customers' have direct access to SUEZ representatives, who can appropriately address inquires.

COVID- 19 Response and Customer Assistance

Despite the ongoing challenges faced by many in 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SUEZ made every effort throughout the year to ensure its customers that we were not only here to provide safe and reliable service, but that there are also means to assist those customers that were directly impacted financially due to the pandemic and facing an arrears bill. Our walk-in customer service center as well as our call center remained open to ensure all customer needs and expectations were met.

In response and consistent with State of New York Executive Order 202 issued originally on March 7, 2020, SUEZ continued its suspension on all collection activities for the majority of 2021, until the order was lifted by the New York State governor on June 24, 2021, which included:

- Collection/shut off notices
- Late payment charges
- Collection shut off calls, and
- Termination of water service to delinquent customer accounts

As part of the Governor's order, SUEZ also worked to comply with the second phase of the utility moratorium on termination/ disconnections of water service. SUEZ notified all customers of the additional protections in place for qualifying customers along with every bill. The customer notifications advised customers that while the first phase of the utility moratorium had ended, the Public Service Law of the State of New York provided an additional 180-day period of protections for qualifying residential and small business customers with 25 or fewer employees from termination/disconnection of water service. Both residential and small business customers that experienced a change in financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency were asked to contact SUEZ to avail themselves of the additional 180-days of protection. Small business customers were also advised of the need to provide documentation verifying the eligibility criteria set forth in Public Service Law 89-b.

Despite the first phase of the order being lifted, SUEZ, in an effort to assist its customers continued its collections suspension for an additional grace period until October 15, 2021, to benefit all customers due to the pandemic that had not previously self-certified. Residential and small business customers that self-certified a change in financial hardship due to COVID-19, continued to receive the benefits of the protections in place from disconnection/termination of water service beyond October 2021. The additional customer protections include:

- Water service cannot be turned off due to non-payment of overdue charges
- Water service cannot be turned off if a customer defaults on an existing payment agreement if the default or non-payment is a result of a COVID-19 related hardship

- Customers have the right to enter into a deferred payment agreement or renegotiate an existing agreement. During this time, there will be no down payment requirements, late fees, or penalties

Moreover, SUEZ continued to utilize various customer outreach mechanisms to inform customers of the protections in place, and payment assistance available. These outreach measures included but were not limited to the following:

- Bill Messages
  - Allows for quick updates/outreach to customers and are generally under the important section of all customers' bills.

- Bill Notice(s) - COVID-19 customer outreach and updated notices regarding New York State moratorium on terminations/disconnections
  - Letter to all customers via bill insert, which outlines payment methods and financial assistance available to customers, such as payment plans.

- SUEZ Cares Grant Program and Outreach Brochure - for qualifying residential customers who;
  - Have established water service with SUEZ
  - Are experiencing a financial crisis, such as a job loss or illness
  - Have a balance in arrears
  - Have made a good faith payment of at least $20 within 90 days of applying
  - Grant amount up to $150 towards SUEZ bill

SUEZ continues to work with all customers by providing information regarding account(s), offering extended payment plans and re-instating broken payment plans as deemed appropriate and within the guidelines set forth. It is of utmost importance to SUEZ that its customers maintain safe, reliable water service and we are committed to working with all of our customers to ensure continuity of service going forward. Our customer service staff remains available to assist customers during normal business hours should customers require additional information or wish to enter into a deferred payment plan due to financial hardship.

2022 Enhancement Plans

In 2022, the company will strive to identify areas for continuous improvement and will drive enhancements that will provide exceptional customer satisfaction. SUEZ will continue to review and develop enhancements to customer platforms such as the IVR phone system and customer website, including a full implementation of the previously piloted customer Chat feature. In addition, SUEZ will continue to look for opportunities to provide customers with seamless self-service interactions through various channels, including our IVR phone system, on our website and via email communication. SUEZ will also continue to install upgraded reading equipment at customer premises as we work towards completing our advanced meter infrastructure (AMI). This will enable SUEZ to provide customers with enhanced analytics on water usage making it quicker to detect variances in customer consumption. SUEZ will continue its effort to build a more robust web-based platform so that we may also provide potential leak/high consumption information to customers that seem to be using water continuously over a defined period. SUEZ will explore the feasibility of upgrading its Oracle based billing platform, known as Customer Care and Billing, to continue enhancing the customer experience. Additionally, we will continue to assist our customers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and communicate regarding the protections that currently remain in place through June of 2022.

In 2022, SUEZ will also focus heavily on facilitating the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) that is administered by NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. This program helps low-income households pay for the cost of drinking and wastewater services, who have past due bills. LIHWAP is a benefit based on the actual amount of drinking water and/or wastewater arrears and can provide qualifying customers with grants of up to a maximum of $2,500 per drinking

water or wastewater provider, or $5,000 if drinking water and wastewater services are combined, per applicant. These benefits are paid directly to the drinking water and/or wastewater vendor(s) and are applied to the customers' accounts to satisfy the past due billing and in some instances avoid interruption of service.

Lastly, we will continue to improve upon our customer service training programs, quality management, internal processes and external communications and outreach to customers. While meeting the CSS target in compliance with the rate order, SUEZ continues to explore innovative ways to meet our customers' expectations and looks forward to ongoing opportunities to improve that experience. Providing exceptional customer service is our top priority.

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

The charts below provide the SUEZ Water New York survey. This includes the following:

- Overall score, 88%
- Total number of customers who participated
- Survey results
- Areas of change vs 2020

2021 SWNY SURVEY MARGIN OF ERROR

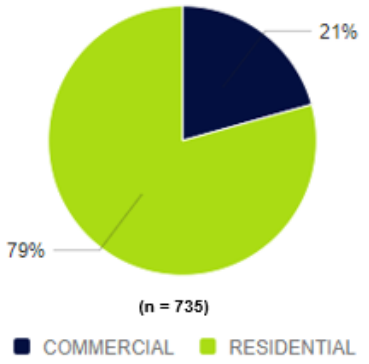
With a 95% confidence:

Division	Margin of Error
SUEZ Water New York	2.77%

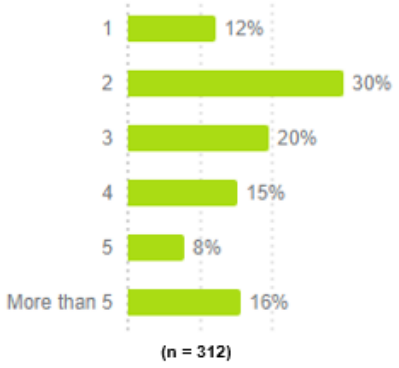
2021 Customer Satisfaction Program
NEW YORK

Respondent Profile

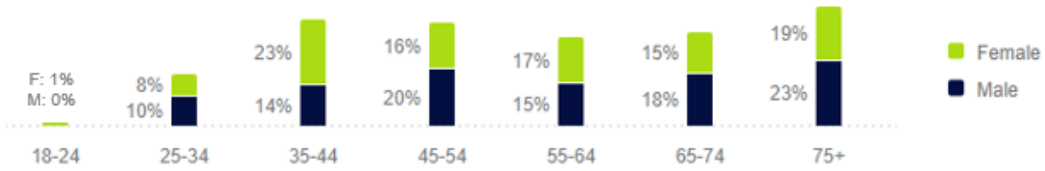
Customer Class



of Persons in Household

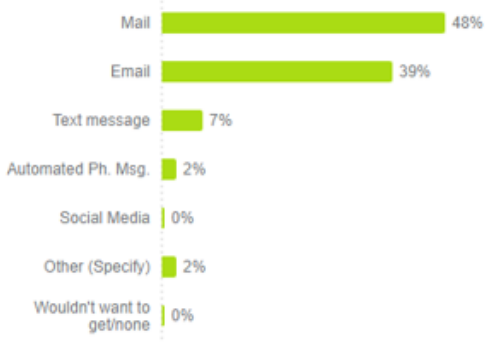


Age & Gender of Respondents

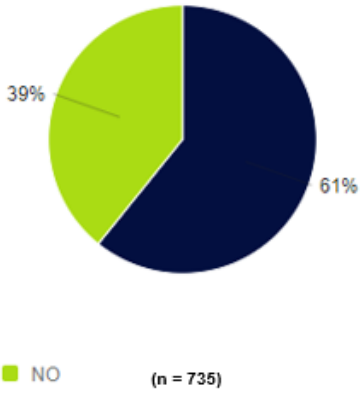


Communication Preferences

Preferred Method for Communications

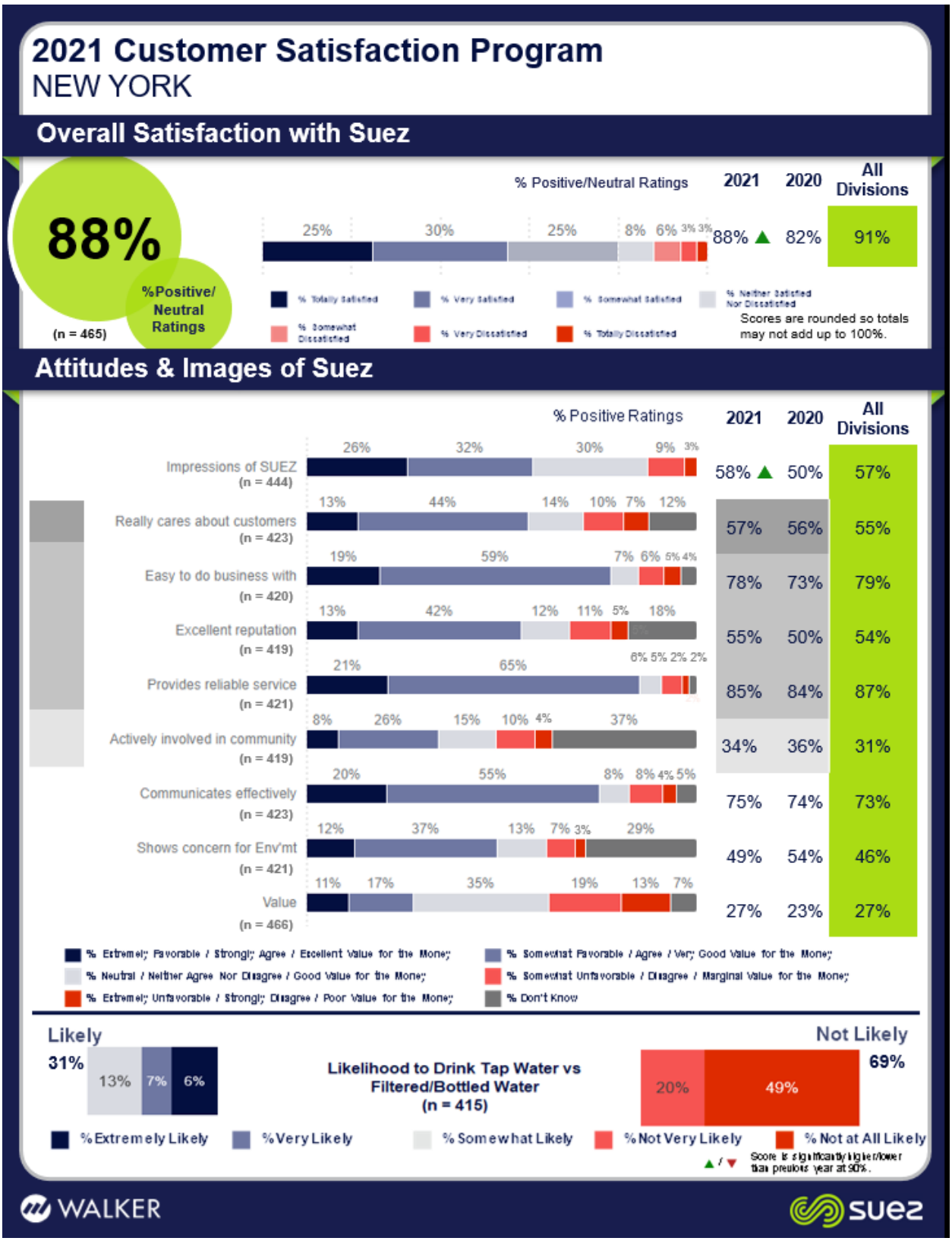


Electronic Billing



WALKER

suez


2021 Customer Satisfaction Program
NEW YORK
Overall Satisfaction with Suez
88%
%Positive/ Neutral Ratings
(n = 465)
% Positive/Neutral Ratings
2021
2020
All Divisions
25% 30% 25% 8% 6% 3% 3%
88% ▲
82%
91%
% Totally Satisfied
% Very Satisfied
% Somewhat Satisfied
% Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied
% Somewhat Dissatisfied
% Very Dissatisfied
% Totally Dissatisfied
Scores are rounded so totals may not add up to 100%.
Attitudes & Images of Suez
% Positive Ratings
2021
2020
All Divisions
Impressions of SUEZ (n = 444)
26% 32% 30% 9% 3%
58% ▲
50%
57%
Really cares about customers (n = 423)
13% 44% 14% 10% 7% 12%
57%
56%
55%
Easy to do business with (n = 420)
19% 59% 7% 6% 5% 4%
78%
73%
79%
Excellent reputation (n = 419)
13% 42% 12% 11% 5% 18%
55%
50%
54%
Provides reliable service (n = 421)
21% 65% 6% 5% 2% 2%
85%
84%
87%
Actively involved in community (n = 419)
8% 26% 15% 10% 4% 37%
34%
36%
31%
Communicates effectively (n = 423)
20% 55% 8% 8% 4% 5%
75%
74%
73%
Shows concern for Env'mt (n = 421)
12% 37% 13% 7% 3% 29%
49%
54%
46%
Value (n = 466)
11% 17% 35% 19% 13% 7%
27%
23%
27%
% Extremely Favorable / Strongly Agree / Excellent Value for the Money
% Somewhat Favorable / Agree / Very Good Value for the Money
% Neutral / Neither Agree Nor Disagree / Good Value for the Money
% Somewhat Unfavorable / Disagree / Marginal Value for the Money
% Extremely Unfavorable / Strongly Disagree / Poor Value for the Money
% Don't Know
Likely
31%
13% 7% 6%
Likelihood to Drink Tap Water vs Filtered/Bottled Water (n = 415)
Not Likely
69%
20% 49%
% Extremely Likely
% Very Likely
% Somewhat Likely
% Not Very Likely
% Not at All Likely
▲ / ▼ Score is significantly higher/lower than previous year at 90%.
WALKER
suez