

Board Presentation

2026 Customer Satisfaction Study

29 September 2026

Confidential & Proprietary

Project Overview

Research Objectives

- GreatBlue Research was commissioned by the Stowe Electric Department (hereinafter "Stowe Electric") to conduct comprehensive research among its residential and commercial customers to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions of the utility and satisfaction with the services provided.
- The primary goals of this research study were to assess the effectiveness of Stowe Electric's ability to serve its customers, identify areas for improvement, and isolate areas that may increase engagement.
- The outcome of this research will enable Stowe Electric personnel to a) more clearly understand, and ultimately set, customer expectations, b) act on near-term opportunities for improvement, and c) create a strategic roadmap to increase customer satisfaction.



Areas of Investigation

The 2026 Customer Satisfaction Survey leveraged a digital survey to address the following areas of investigation:

- Organizational characteristics and overall customer relationship
- Customer service experiences and satisfaction
- Awareness and perceptions of Stowe Electric as a community-owned municipal utility
- Communication preferences and use of digital self-service tools
- Satisfaction with outage restoration and communication
- Customer perceptions and priorities regarding electric service, rates, and renewable energy
- Awareness, adoption, and perceptions of beneficial electrification technologies
- Adoption and interest in electric vehicles, solar energy, heat pumps, and battery storage
- Awareness and interest in Stowe Electric programs, rebates, and incentives
- Awareness and interest in SmartHub, Connected Homes, and time-of-use rate programs
- Demographic and firmographic profiles of respondents

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Research Methodology Snapshot | Residential

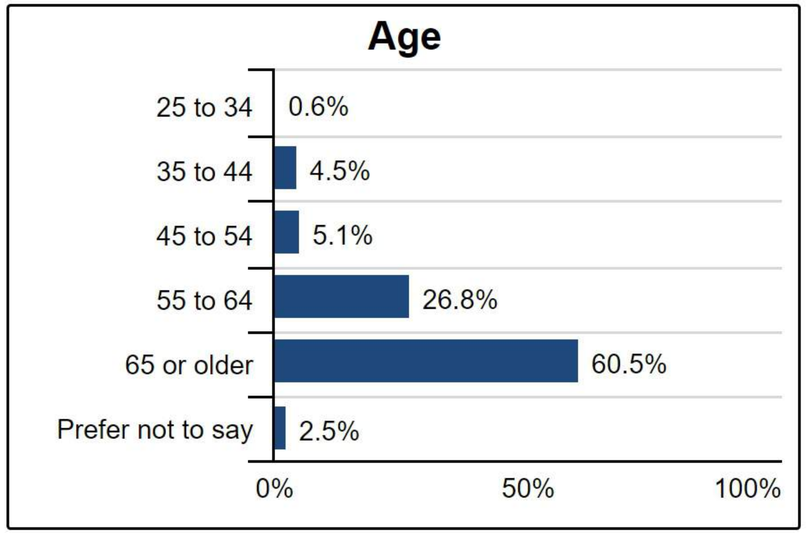
Methodology	No. of Completes	No. of Questions	Incentive	Sample
Digital	157	64*	None	Customer Lists

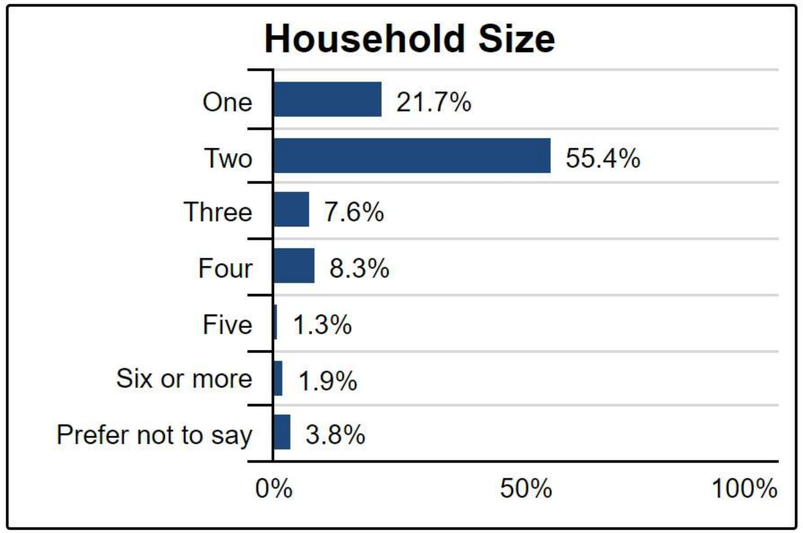
Target	Quality Assurance	Margin of Error	Confidence Level	Research Dates
Residential Customers	Dual-level**	+/- 7.56%	95%	June 15 - August 14, 2026

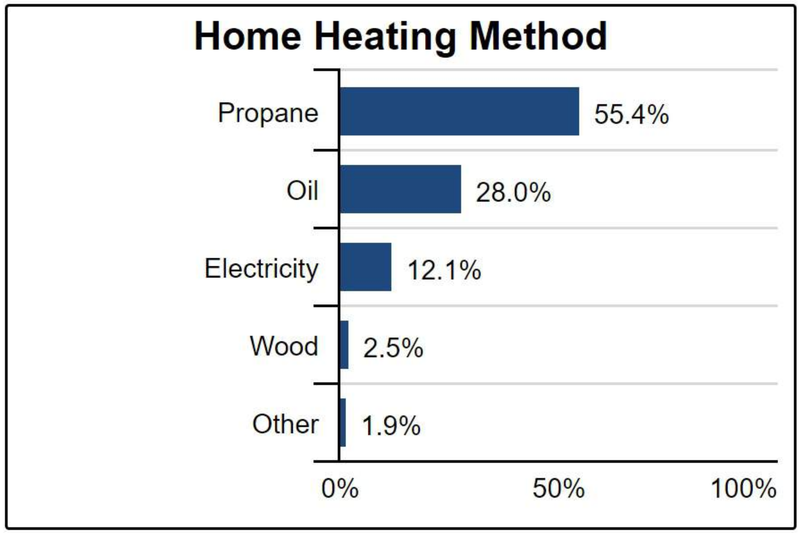
* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.
** Data quality personnel, in addition to a computer-aided interviewing platform, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

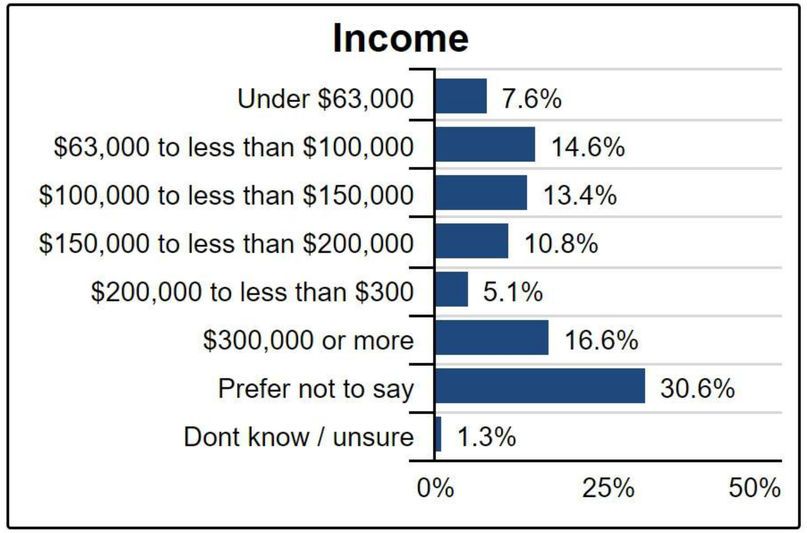
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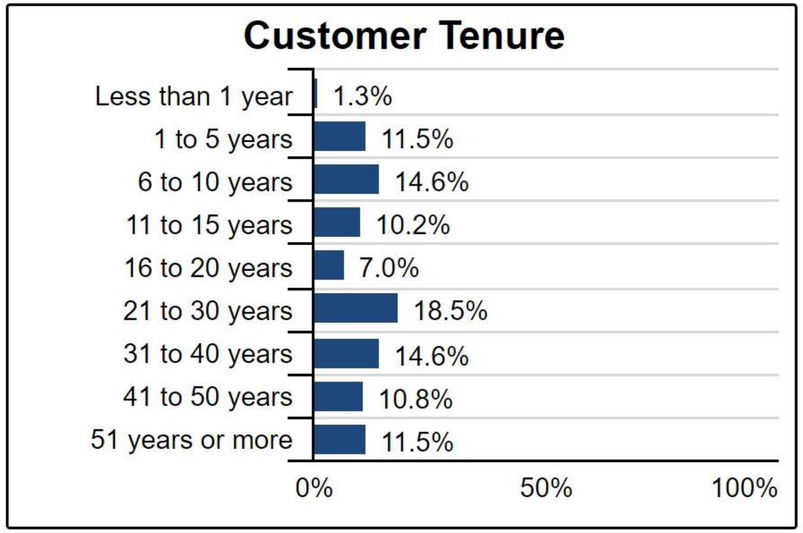
Respondent Profile | Demographics

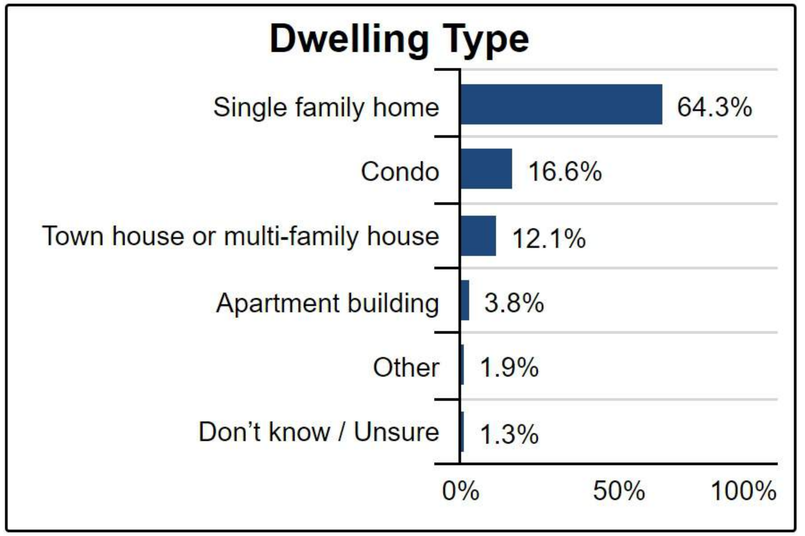








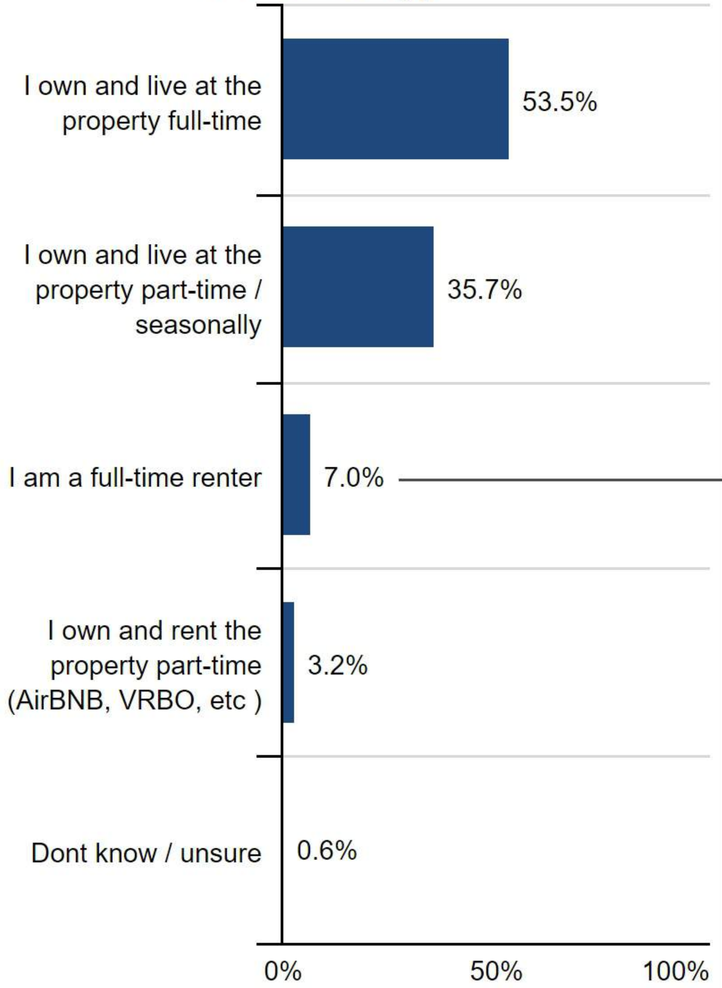




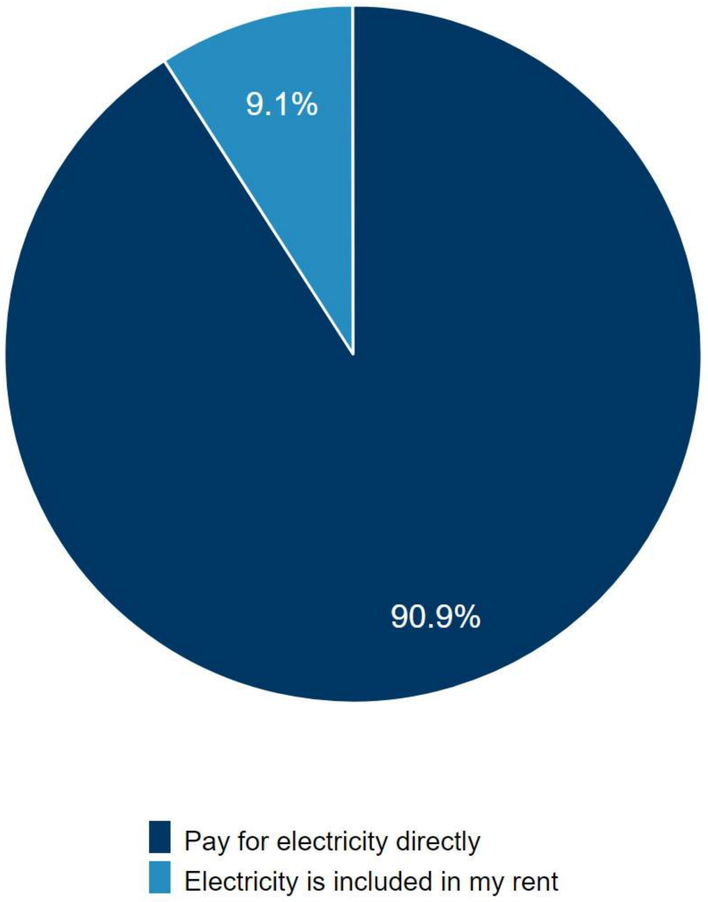
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Respondent Profile | Residency

Resident Type

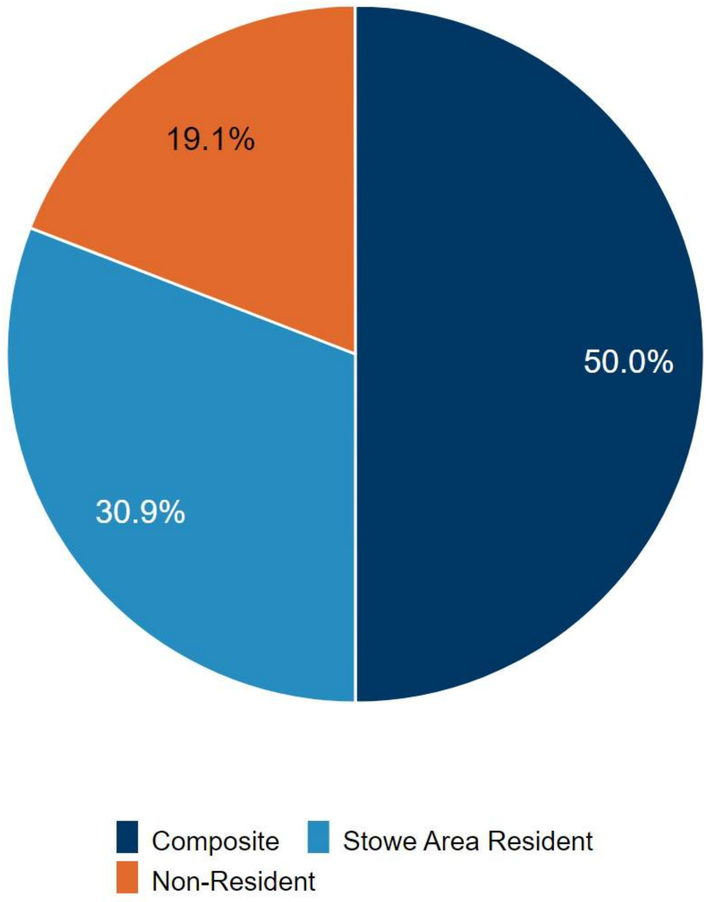


Method of Paying for Electricity



Only asked to those who are a full-time renter

Primary vs Secondary Residence



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Residential Findings



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Satisfaction | Organizational Characteristics

In 2026, Stowe Electric received higher positive ratings for three (3) out of six (6) organizational characteristics compared to 2023. This led to an overall average positive rating of 84.8%, which was on par with 2024. This was driven by more customers providing positive ratings for Stowe Electric having "reliable service" (+4.1 percentage points), their "honesty/integrity" (+4.1 percentage points), and their "customer interactions and communication" (+1.2 percentage points). However, fewer customers provided positive ratings for Stowe Electric having "fair rates" compared to 2023 (-2.4 percentage points).

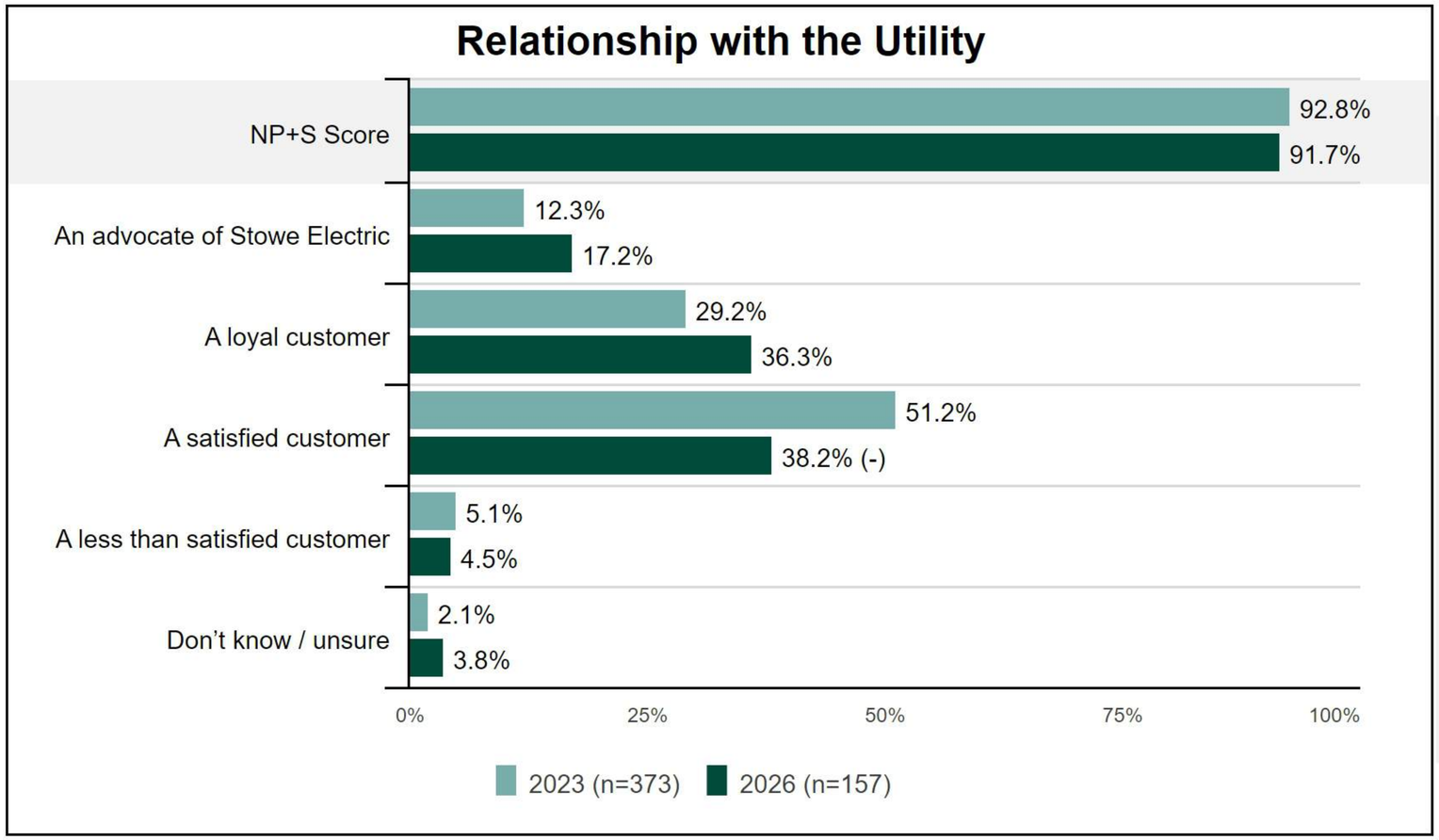
Aggregate of 7-10 responses, without "don't know" responses	2023	2026	National Average
Reliable service	91.3%	95.4%	74.4%
Honesty / Integrity	89.1%	93.2%	61.7%
Customer interactions and communication	87.7%	88.9%	63.5%
Helping customers with beneficial electrification	85.2%	85.1%	54.5%
Community Service	83.9%	82.1%	59.9%
Fair rates	66.3%	63.9%	-
Average	83.9%	84.8%	62.8%

*n=373 (2023), n=157 (2026), n=12,000 (2025 PPDS-National). *The Public Power Data Source is a residential customer satisfaction benchmarking tool*
[org_characteristics]: How would you rate Stowe Electric's performance on the following attributes?

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Satisfaction | NP+S & Improvement

Stowe Electric received a Net Positive Score (advocate + loyal + satisfied customers) of 91.7%, which was on par with 2023. While significantly fewer residential customers elected to call themselves a "satisfied customer" of the utility compared to 2023 (-13.0 percentage points), more customers identified themselves as either a "loyal customer" (+7.1 percentage points) or an "advocate of Stowe Electric" (+4.9 percentage points) compared to 2023. Of note, nearly one-fifth of customers cited "lower / affordable rates" as a way to improve the relationship they have with their customers.



Ways to Improve Customer Relationship

	2023	2026
Base size	*373*	*157*
Lower / affordable rates	16.4%	19.1%
Keep up the good work / doing a good job	15.3%	14.0%
No problems / issues	2.1%	**6.4%**
Improve communication / frequent updates	8.3%	3.8%
Rebates / incentives	0.8%	**3.2%**

Top 5 responses shown

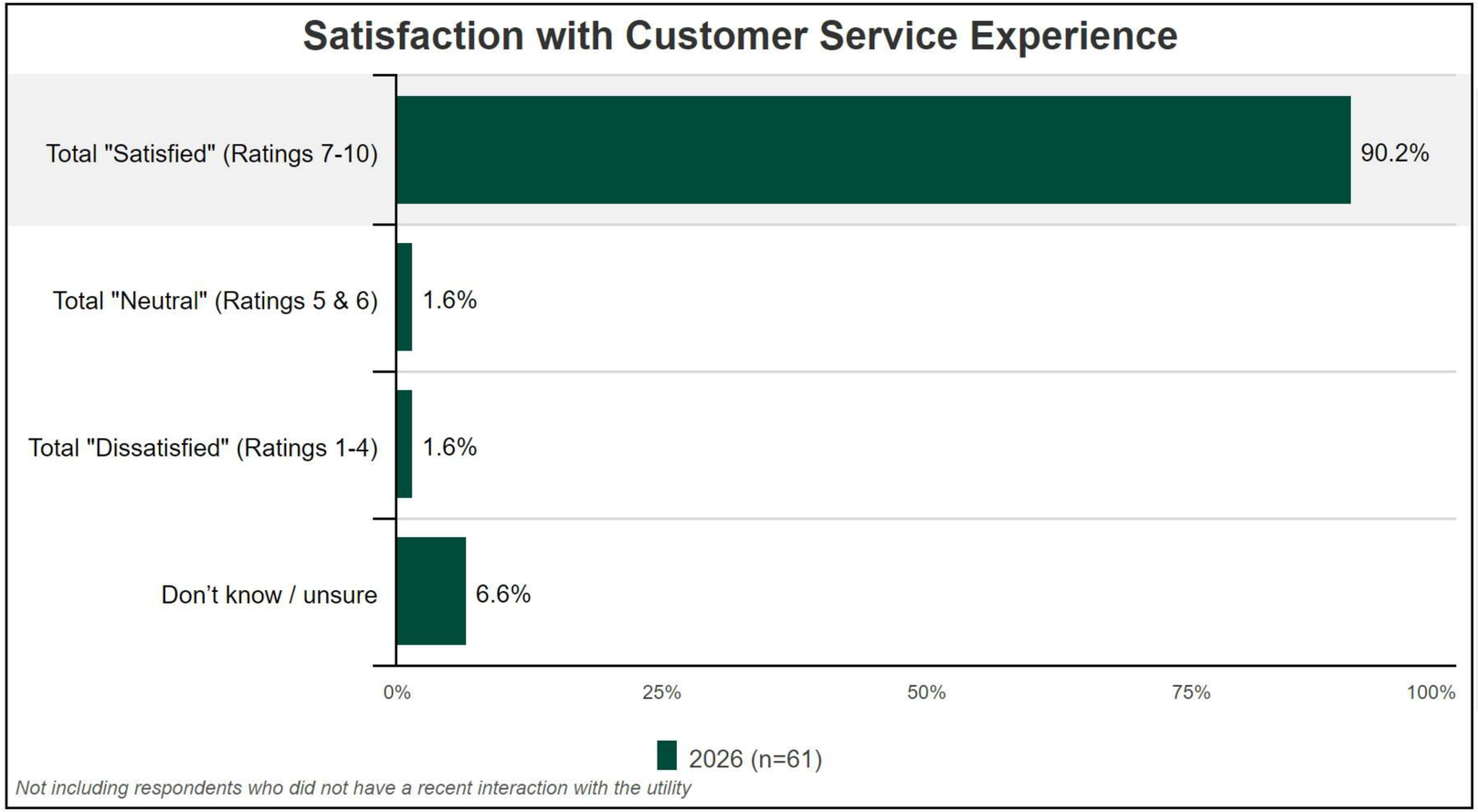
[nps]: How would best describe your relationship with Stowe Electric?
[improved_relationship]: What, if anything, would Stowe Electric need to do to improve the relationship you have with them?
(+/-) indicates statistical significance at a 95% confidence level compared to 2023 findings

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Customer Service | Contact Reasons & Methods

Of the 61 Stowe Electric residential customers who contacted the utility in the past 12 months, nearly one-quarter reported contacting the utility to "pay [their] bill" or to report an "outage." Overall, nine-out-of-ten residential customers reported being satisfied with their experience contacting Stowe Electric, compared to only 1.6% who were dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with Customer Service Experience



Not including respondents who did not have a recent interaction with the utility

Top Reasons for Contact

Base size	*61*
To pay bill	24.6%
Outage	23.0%
Other	16.4%
Question on bill (not complaint)	13.1%
Payment arrangement	9.8%
Install service	8.2%
Service call	8.2%
High bill question	6.6%
Don't know / unsure	4.9%
Rebates	3.3%

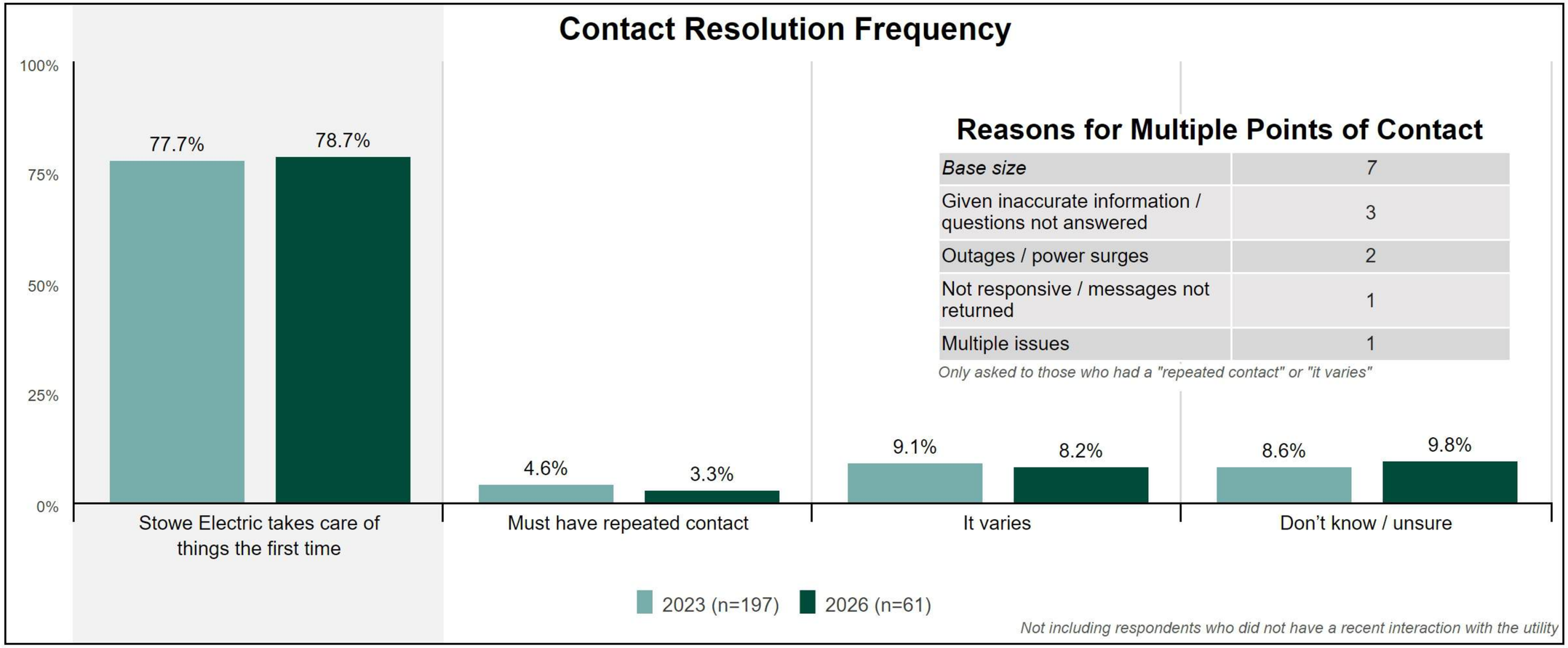
Not including respondents who did not have a recent interaction with the utility

[customer_service_contact]: If you have had a recent interaction with Stowe Electric, what was purpose of the call or visit?
[customer_service_satisfaction]: Overall how satisfied were you with the way the Stowe Electric customer service employee handled the call or visit?

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Customer Service | Contact Resolution

Among residential customers who had contact with Stowe Electric, over three-quarters indicated their questions or issues were "taken care of the first time," which was on par with 2023. Of the seven (7) customers who required multiple points of contact with the utility, three (3) reported they were "given inaccurate information/[their] questions [were] not answered."



Reasons for Multiple Points of Contact

Base size	7
Given inaccurate information / questions not answered	3
Outages / power surges	2
Not responsive / messages not returned	1
Multiple issues	1

Only asked to those who had a "repeated contact" or "it varies"

[contact_resolution]: Generally, when you contact Stowe Electric, are things taken care of to your satisfaction the first time, or must you have repeated contact with them?
[multiple_contacts_oe]: For what reason(s) did you require multiple points of contact with Stowe Electric?

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Customer Service | Characteristics

In 2026, Stowe Electric residential customers provided an average positive rating of 92.0% across the five (5) customer service qualities evaluated. Customers provided the highest positive rating for the “courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees," followed by “overall customer service provided."

Comparatively, customers provided lower positive ratings for “communicating and keeping customers informed," although over eight-out-of-ten customers provided positive ratings.

Customer Service Quality Ratings

Courtesy, understanding, helpfulness of employees	96.9%
Overall customer service provided	95.0%
Resolving issues or answering questions	92.6%
Timeliness and efficiency in responding to customers	92.4%
Communicating and keeping customers informed	83.3%
Average	92.0%

Aggregate of ratings 4 and 5, without "don't know" responses

n=157 (2026)
[customer_service_qualities]: Using a scale of one to five, where one (1) means “poor” and 5 means “excellent,” how would you rate Stowe Electric on each of the following customer service qualities?

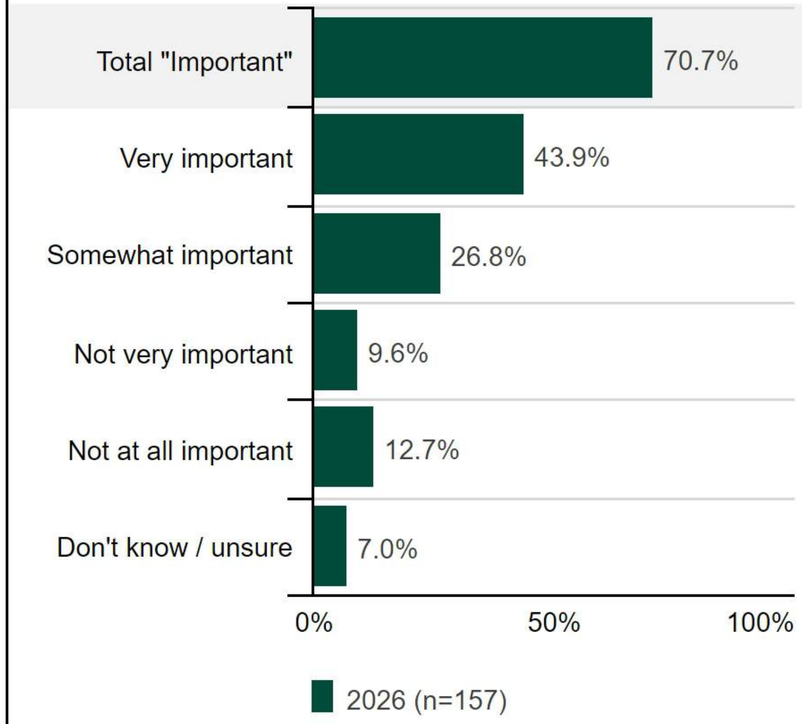
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Customer Service | Digital Self-Service

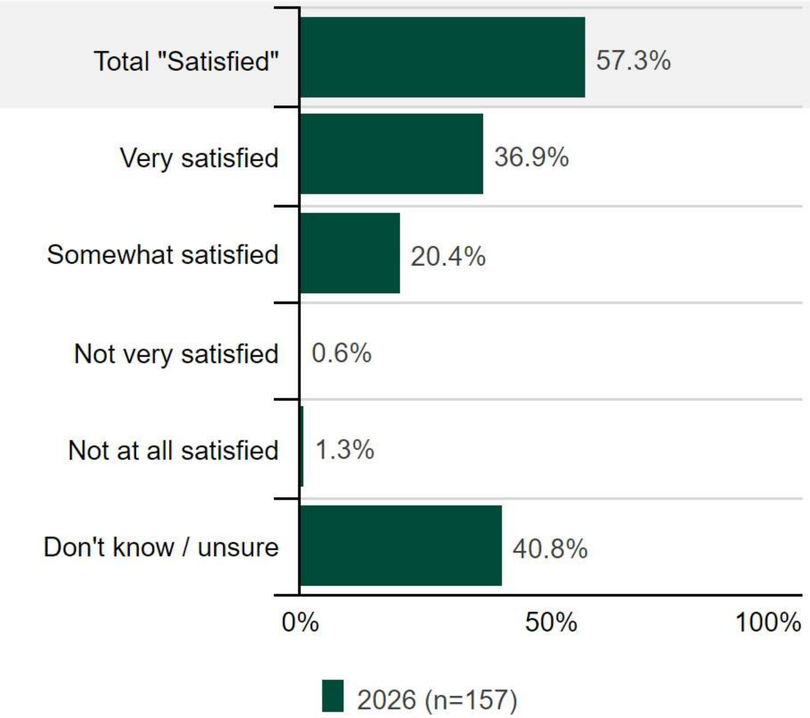
Overall, nearly three-quarters of customers find digital self-service platforms to be important, including over two-fifths who find them to be "very important." Further, over one-half of customers are satisfied with the digital self-service platforms Stowe Electric currently offers, while two-fifths were unsure. Among SmartHub users, over one-half of customers reported using Stowe Electric's SmartHub online tool to "view/pay bills," followed by one-third who use the tool to "set up automatic payments."

Overall Digital Self-Service Perceptions

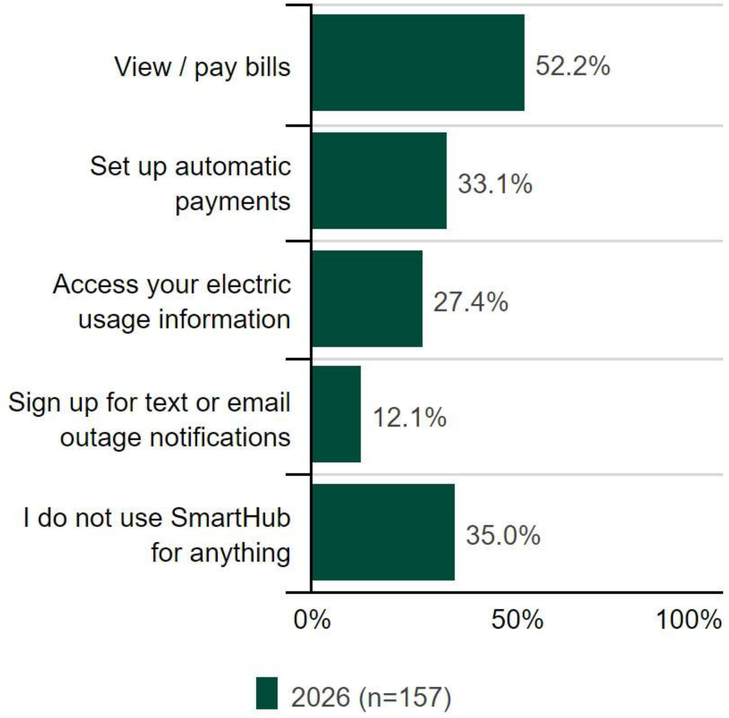
Importance of Digital Self-Service Platforms



Satisfaction with Digital Self-Service Platforms



Reason for SmartHub Use



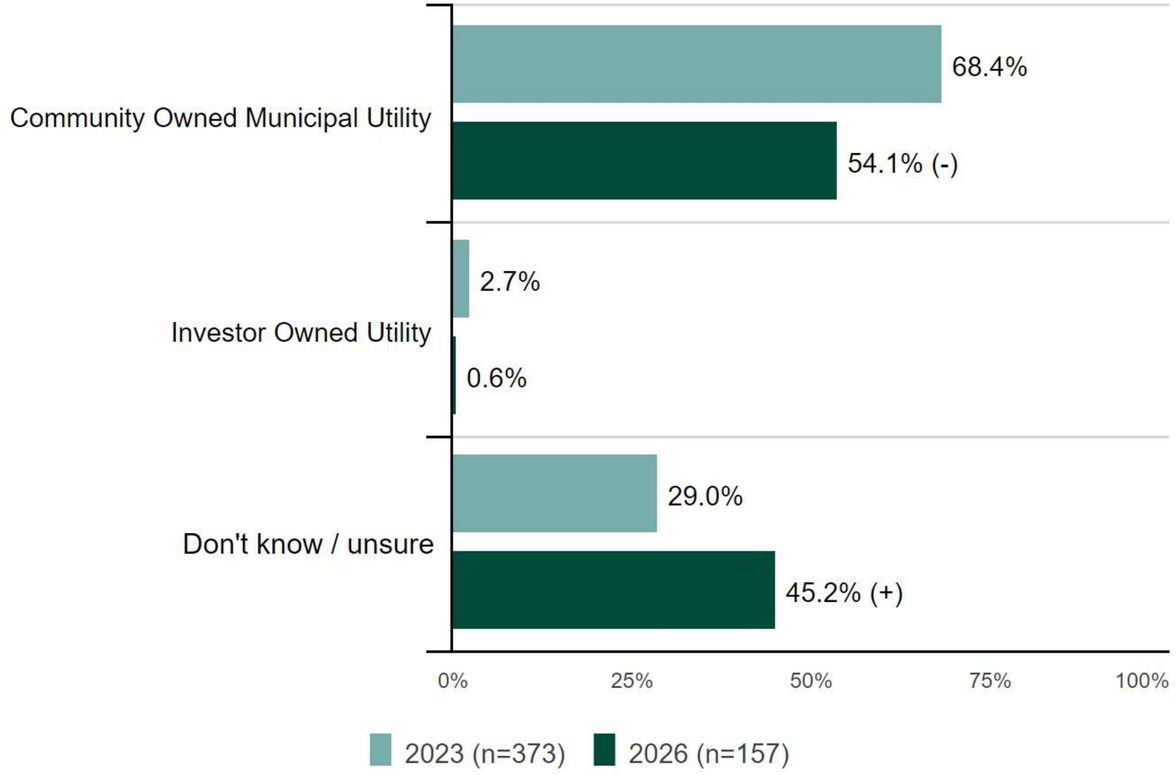
[smarthub_use]: How do you use Stowe Electric's SmartHub online tool? (Select all that apply)
[self_service_importance]: How important are digital self-service platforms that give you the ability to have general needs and questions taken care of without the need to speak to a live representative?
[overall_satisfaction]: Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with the digital self-service platforms your utility currently offers?

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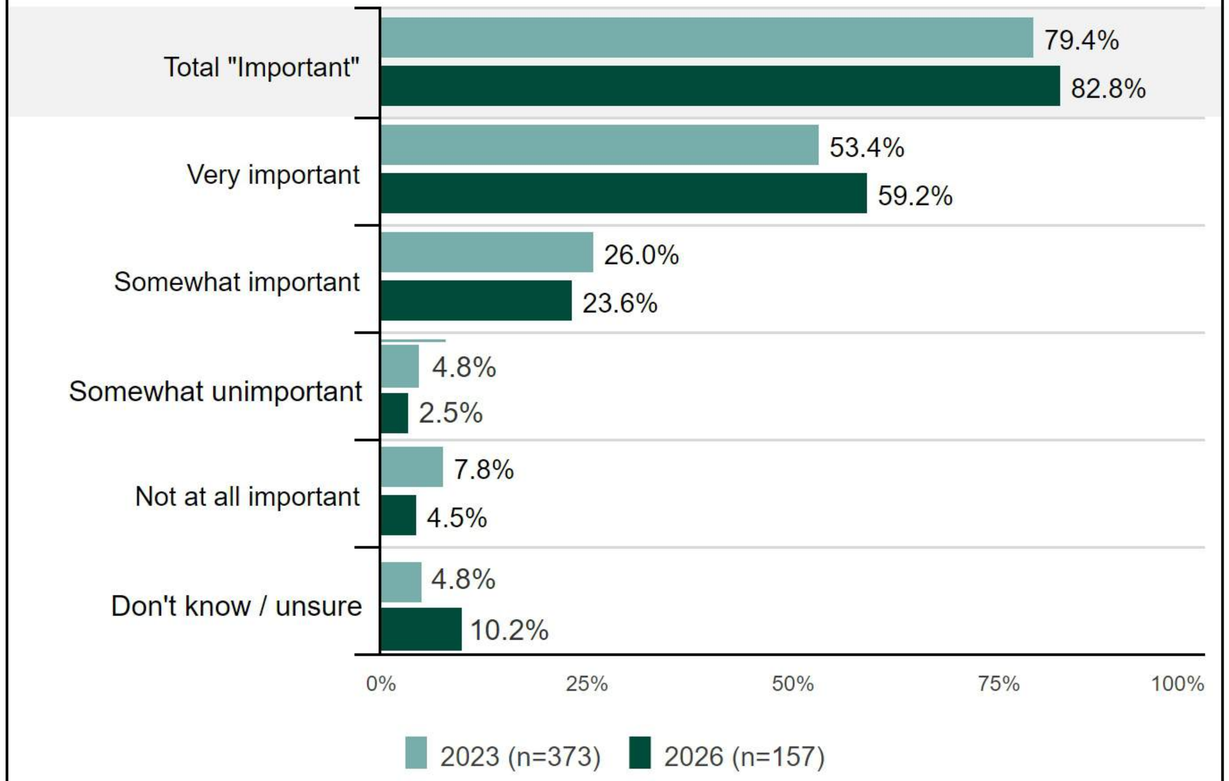
Awareness | Community Ownership

Over one-half of residential customers correctly identified Stowe Electric as a "community-owned municipal utility," which was a significant decrease compared to 2023 (-14.3 percentage points). This was driven by significantly more customers reporting being unsure of the utility's ownership status compared to 2023 (+16.2 percentage points). Further, over eight-out-of-ten customers find it important that the utility maintain local control, which was a slight increase compared to 2023 (+3.4 percentage points).

Awareness of Utility Ownership Status



Importance of Community Ownership Status



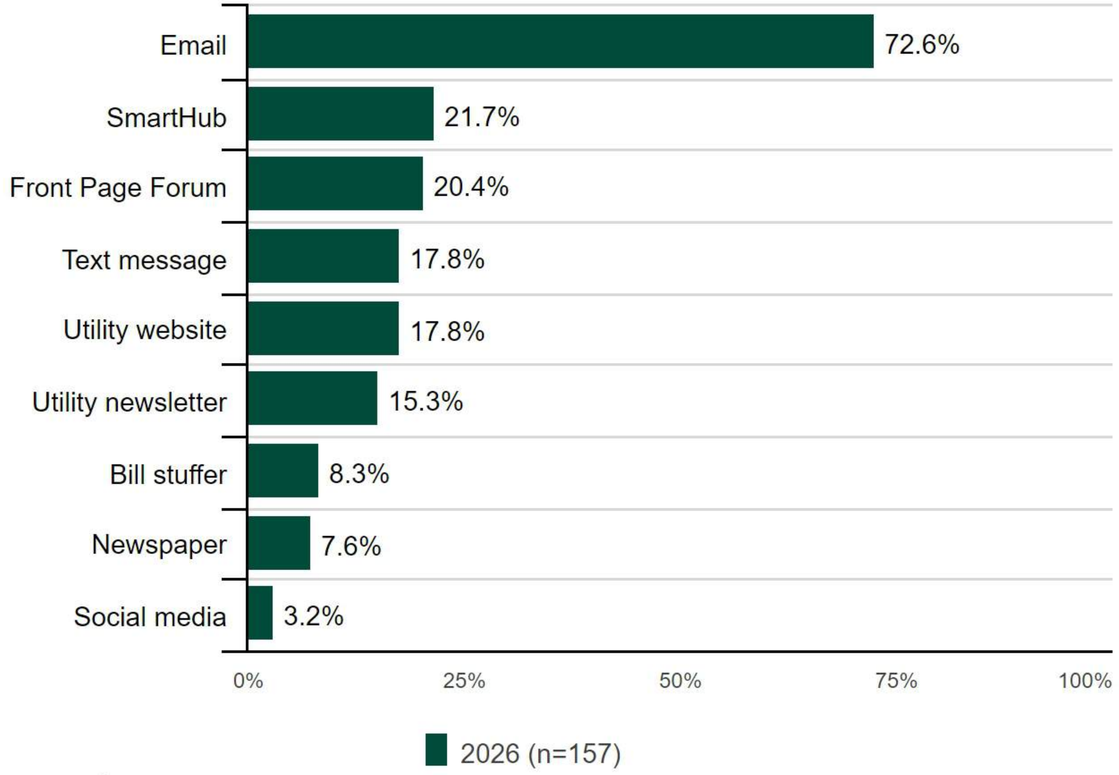
[ownership_awareness]: Do you know if Stowe Electric Department is a Community-Owned Municipal Utility, or an Investor Owned Utility?
[ownership_importance]: Stowe Electric is a "Community Owned Municipal Utility." How important to you is it to maintain local control of your municipal utility?
(+/-) indicates statistical significance at a 95% confidence level compared to 2023 findings

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Communication | Preferences

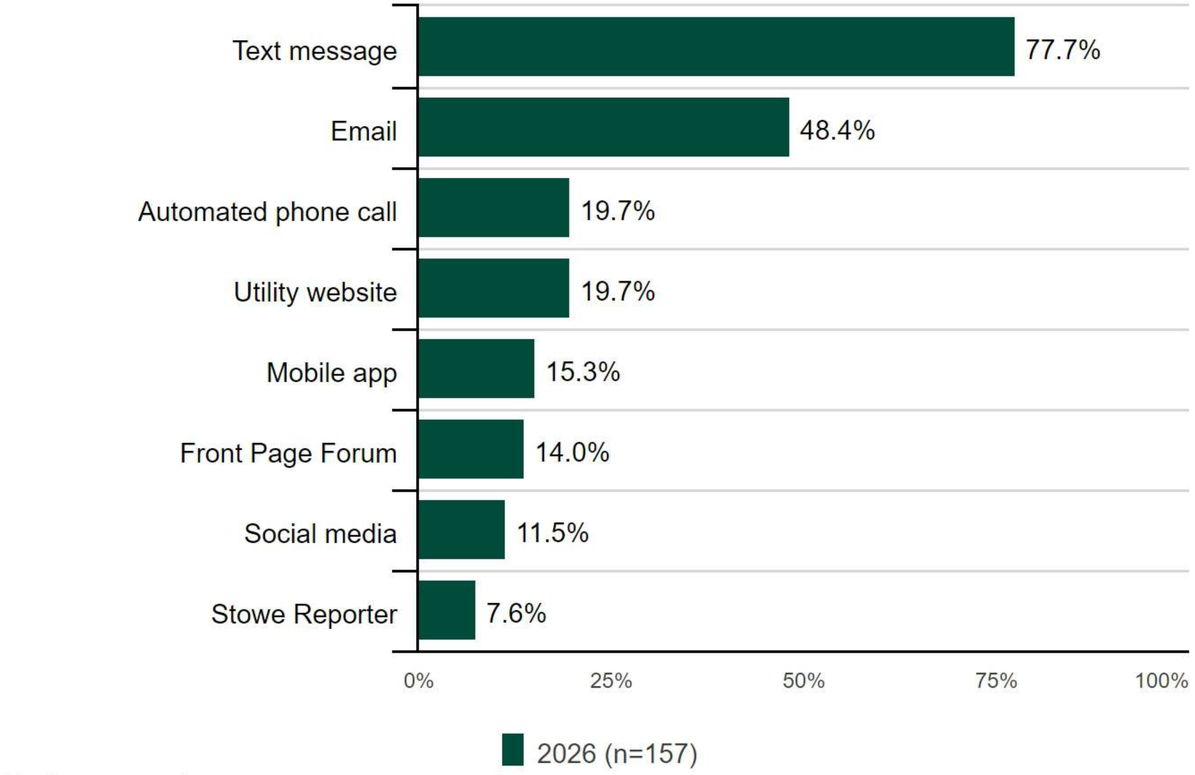
Nearly three-quarters of residential customers prefer to receive routine communications from Stowe Electric via “email," while approximately one-fifth prefer “SmartHub” and “Front Page Forum." Preferences differed for outage and emergency communications, with over three-quarters of customers preferring “text message," followed by nearly one-half who prefer “email."

Preferred Methods for Routine Communication



Top 9 responses shown

Preferred Methods for Emergency Communication



Top 8 responses shown

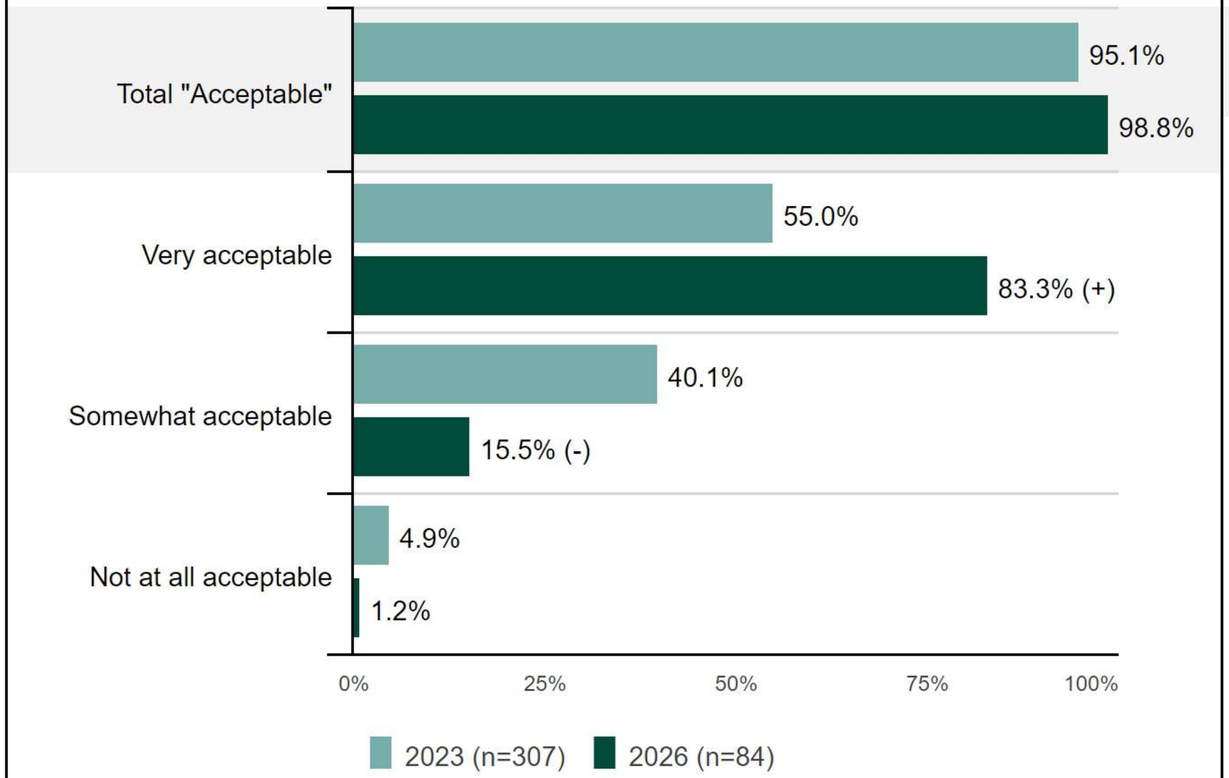
[preferred_routine_communications]: How would you prefer to receive routine communication, such as information about programs, services, or billing, from Stowe Electric? (Select all that apply)
[preferred_outage_communications]: How would you prefer to receive information about outages and emergencies from Stowe Electric? (Select all that apply)

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Major Storms | Restoration & Communication

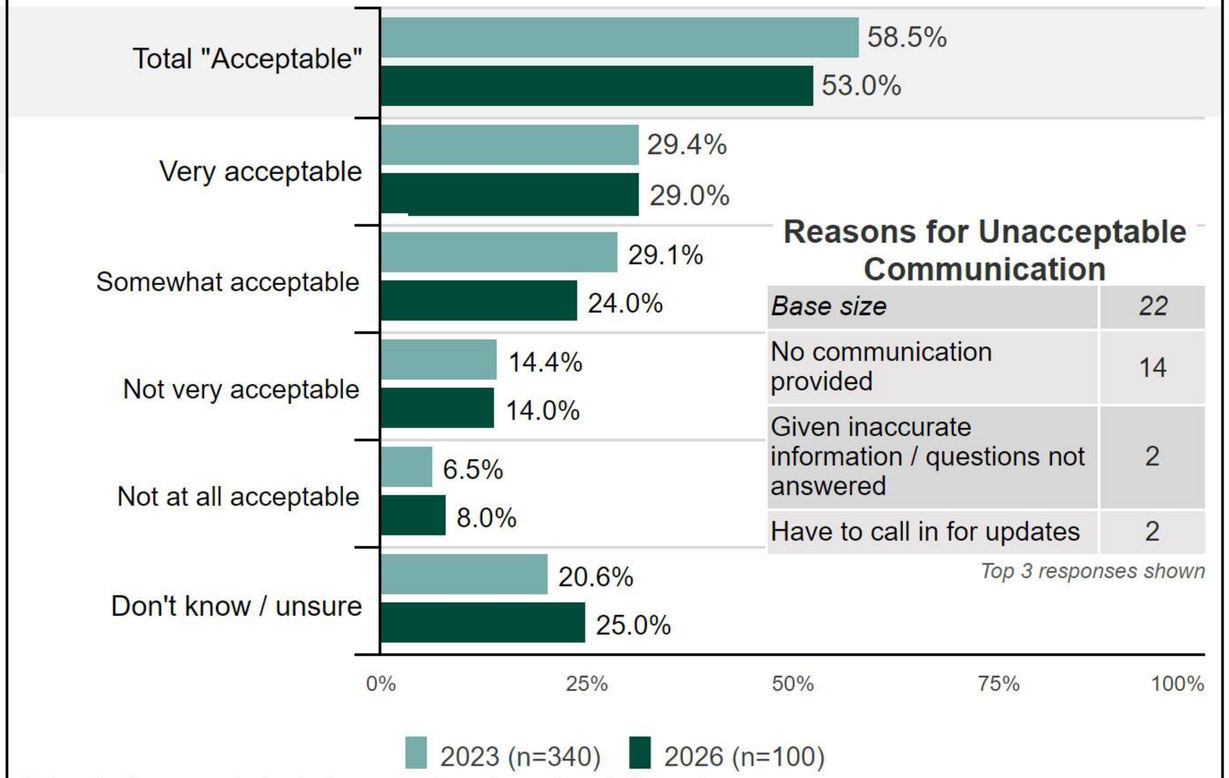
Among residential customers who experienced an outage in the past year, a majority found Stowe Electric's power restoration time acceptable, including significantly more customers who rated restoration time as "very acceptable" (+28.3 percentage points). Just over one-half of customers found the communication received during an outage acceptable, although one-quarter were unsure. Among the 22 customers who found outage communication unacceptable, the most frequently cited reason was receiving "no communication."

Perception of Power Restoration Time



Without respondents who have not experienced an outage in the past year or were unsure

Perception of Communication Received During Outage



Reasons for Unacceptable Communication

Base size	22
No communication provided	14
Given inaccurate information / questions not answered	2
Have to call in for updates	2

Top 3 responses shown

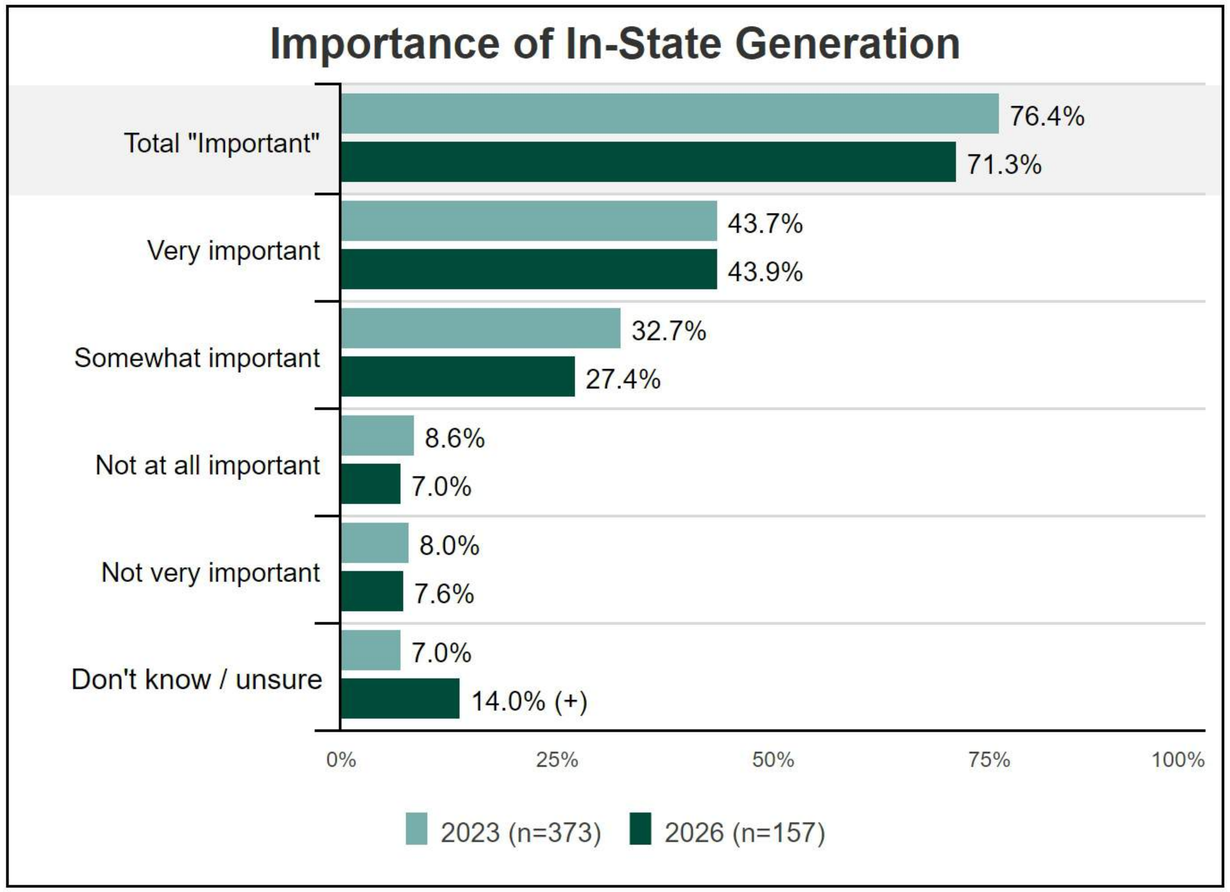
Only asked to respondents who have experienced an outage in the past year

[outage_restoration]: If you experienced a power outage over the past year, please indicate if the time to restore power was…
[outage_communication]: How acceptable is the communication you receive from Stowe Electric during an outage?
[outage_communication_oe]: Why do you believe the communication you receive from Stowe Electric during an outage is not acceptable?
(+/-) indicates statistical significance at a 95% confidence level compared to 2023 findings

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Electric Perceptions | Generation

Over seven-out-of-ten residential customers indicated that in-state renewable generation is important to them, including over two-fifths who consider it “very important," consistent with 2023. Regarding specific electricity sources, customers expressed the highest levels of support for “hydropower," “solar," and “wind," while comparatively fewer supported “burning wood and other plant material."



Support for Different Electricity Sources

Hydropower	87.3%
Solar	85.4%
Wind	78.3%
Nuclear	59.2%
Burning methane gas from landfills	51.0%
Burning wood and other plant material	36.9%

n=157
Aggregate of "Strongly support" and "somewhat support"

[renewable_generation]: How important is in-state renewable generation to you?
[vermont_electricity_types]: Going forward, how much would you support or oppose Vermont getting its electricity from the following sources?
(+/-) indicates statistical significance at a 95% confidence level compared to 2023 findings

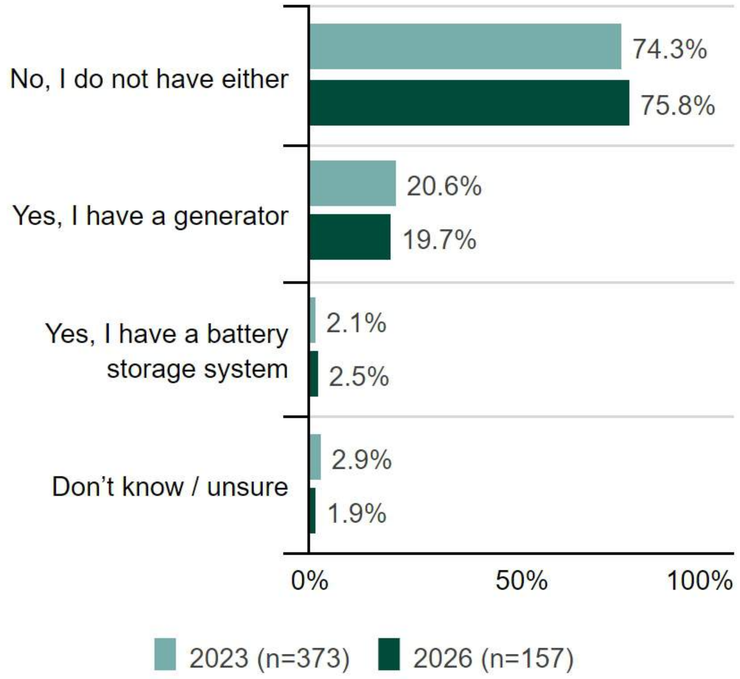
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Battery Storage | Adoption & Interest

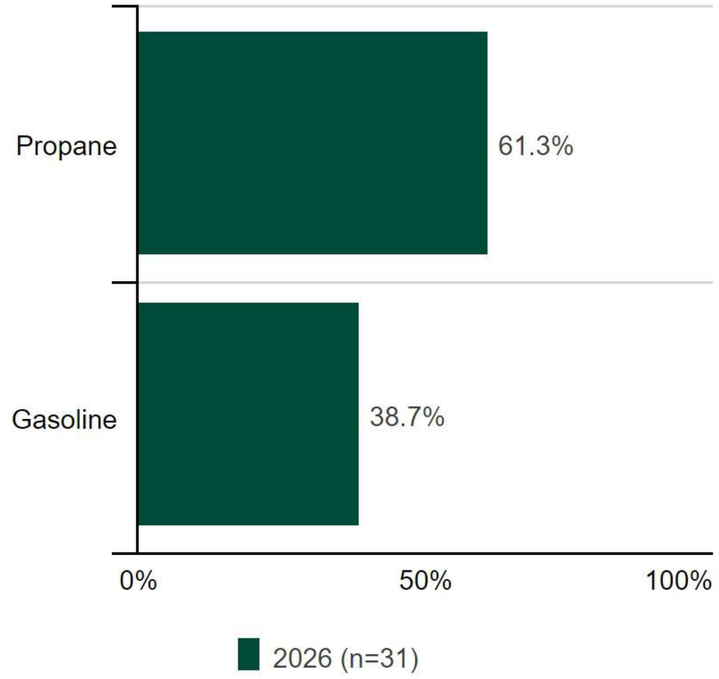
Three-quarters of residential customers reported not having a generator or a battery storage system at their residence, which was consistent with 2023. Among the 19.7% of customers with a generator, over three-fifths reported using propane as their fuel source, while 38.7% use gasoline. Looking ahead, nearly one-quarter of customers indicated they are likely to own or lease on-site backup battery storage within the next five years, while over one-half indicated they are unlikely to do so.

Overall Battery Storage Adoption

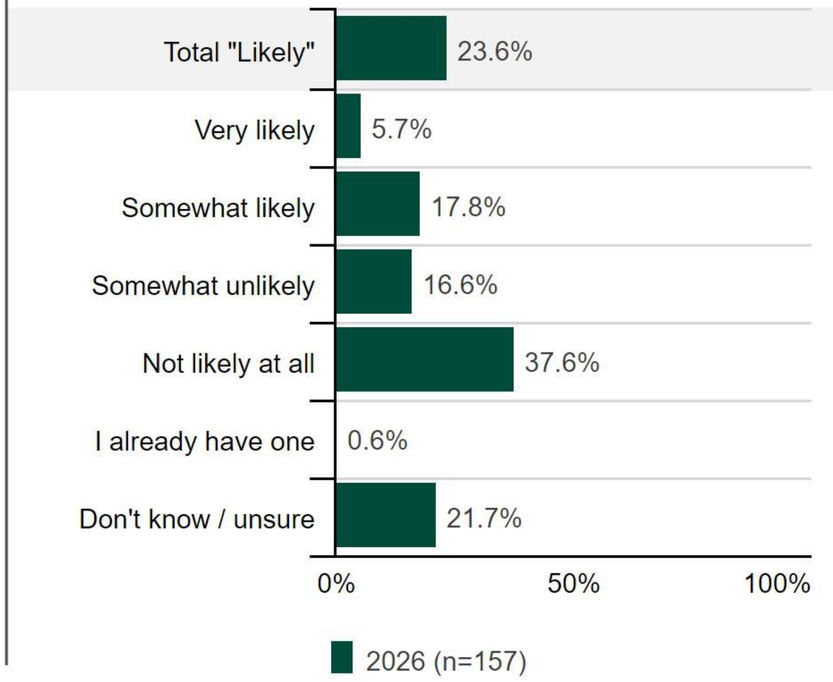
Current Use of Generator or a Battery Storage System



Generator Fuel Type Used



Likelihood to Own or Lease On-site Back Up Battery Storage in the Next 5 Years



Only asked to respondents who have a generator

[battery_storage_use]: Do you have a generator or a battery storage system at your residence?
[generator_fuel_type]: What is your generator fuel type?
[battery_storage_likelihood]: How likely is it that you will own or lease on-site back up battery storage for your home in the next five years?

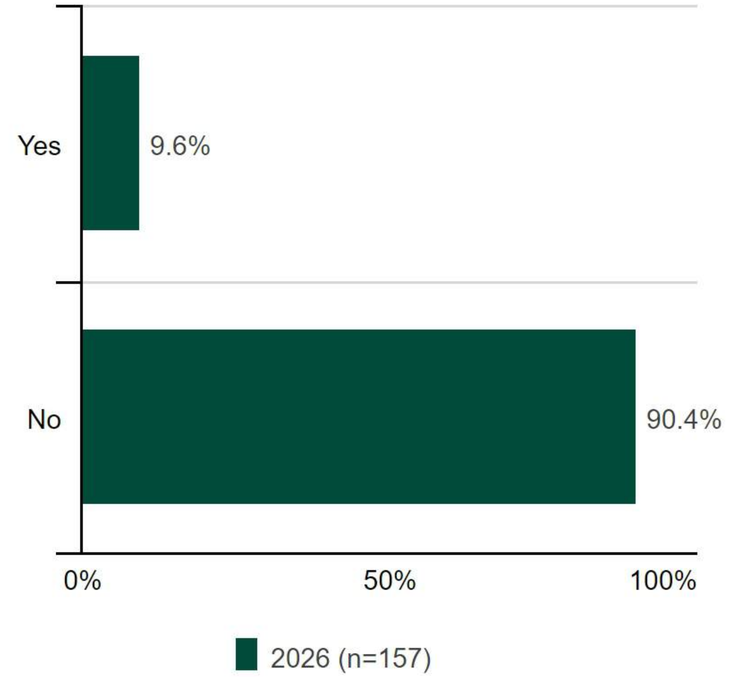
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Connected Homes | Awareness & Interest

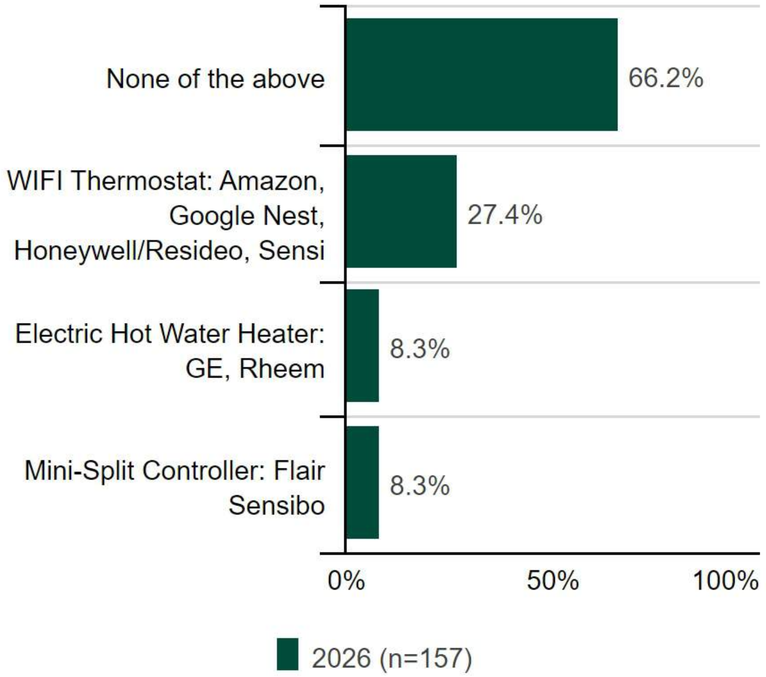
Over nine-out-of-ten residential customers reported being unaware of Stowe Electric's Connected Homes program. Approximately one-third (33.8%) reported owning at least one Connected Homes-compatible device, most commonly a Wi-Fi thermostat. Despite relatively low program awareness, over two-fifths of customers indicated they would be interested in participating in the Connected Homes program.

Overall Connected Homes Program Adoption

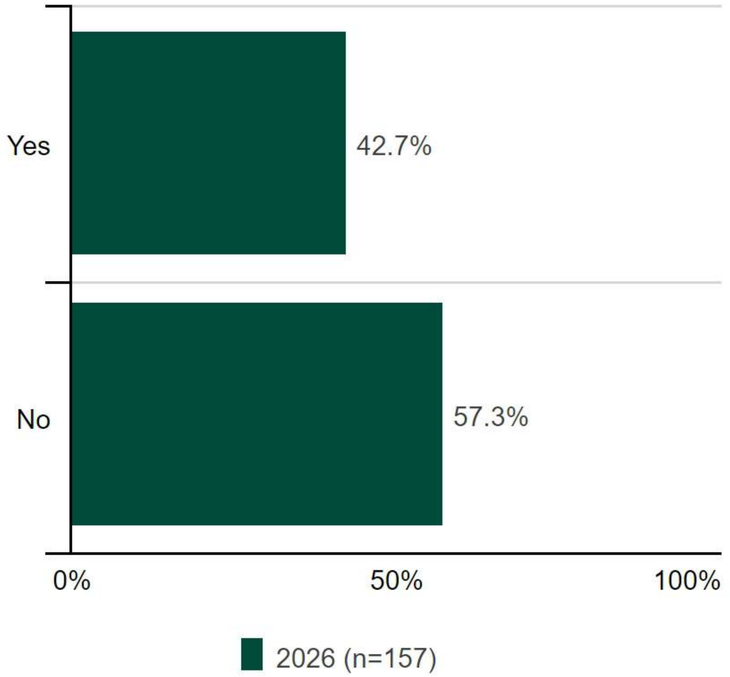
Awareness of Connected Homes Program



Ownership of Connected Homes Compatible Devices



Interest in Participating in the Connected Homes Program



[connected_homes_awareness]: Are you aware of Stowe Electric Department's Connected Homes program?
[connected_homes_awareness]: Do you have any of the following Connected Homes compatible devices?
[connected_homes_interest]: Would you be interested in Connected Homes?

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Key Study Findings | Residential

Strong Satisfaction & Customer Experience

- Stowe Electric continues to receive strong overall ratings, with an average positive rating of 84.8% across six organizational characteristics and a Net Positive Score of 91.7%. Ratings increased for “reliable service” (+4.1 percentage points), “honesty/integrity” (+4.1 percentage points), and “customer interactions and communication” (+1.2 percentage points), while “fair rates” declined slightly (-2.4 percentage points).
- Among customers who contacted Stowe Electric in the past year, 90.2% were satisfied with their experience and 78.7% indicated their question or issue was “taken care of the first time.” Across specific customer service qualities, customers provided the highest positive rating for the “courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees," (96.9%).
- Outage restoration remains a strength, with 98.8% of customers who experienced an outage finding restoration time acceptable. However, outage communication presents an opportunity, as only 53.0% found communication during an outage acceptable and 25% were unsure.

Public Power & Electric Service Priorities

- Stowe Electric is viewed positively in its role within the community, with 88.0% agreeing it “effectively represents community interests and meets local needs” and 87.0% agreeing it “effectively balances environmental stewardship with fiscal responsibility.”
- Reliability and affordability remain customers’ foremost electricity priorities, with 96.8% identifying each as important when considering how Vermont gets its electricity. Customers also expressed strong support for “hydropower” (87.3%), “solar” (85.4%), and “wind” (78.3%) as electricity sources.

Electrification & Engagement Opportunities

- Adoption of some beneficial electrification technologies is growing: 31.2% of customers currently have a heat pump (+6.8 percentage points), while electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle ownership also increased (+6.5 percentage points).
- However, 32.5% are now not considering an electric vehicle (+12.4 points), with “limited range/distance per charge” (51.0%) the most frequently cited barrier.
- Solar adoption remains limited, with 5.1% currently having solar panels and 12.8% of those without solar planning future adoption.
- Among prospective adopters, 31.6% now anticipate installing solar five or more years from now, a significant increase of 24.6 percentage points compared to 2023.
- Opportunities remain to build awareness of available programs: 45.2% are aware of Stowe Electric’s energy-efficiency rebates and incentives, while 90.4% are unaware of the Connected Homes program. Despite low Connected Homes awareness, 42.7% expressed interest in participating, suggesting an opportunity for additional education and outreach.

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Commercial Findings



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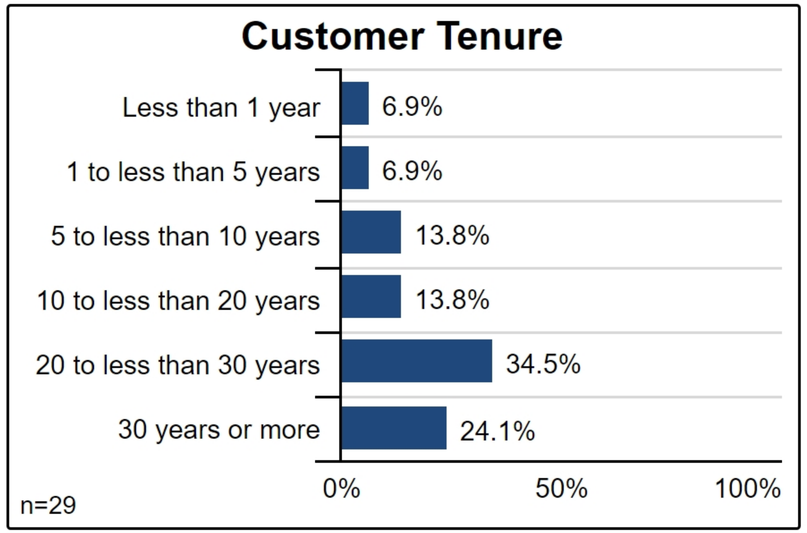
Research Methodology Snapshot | Commercial

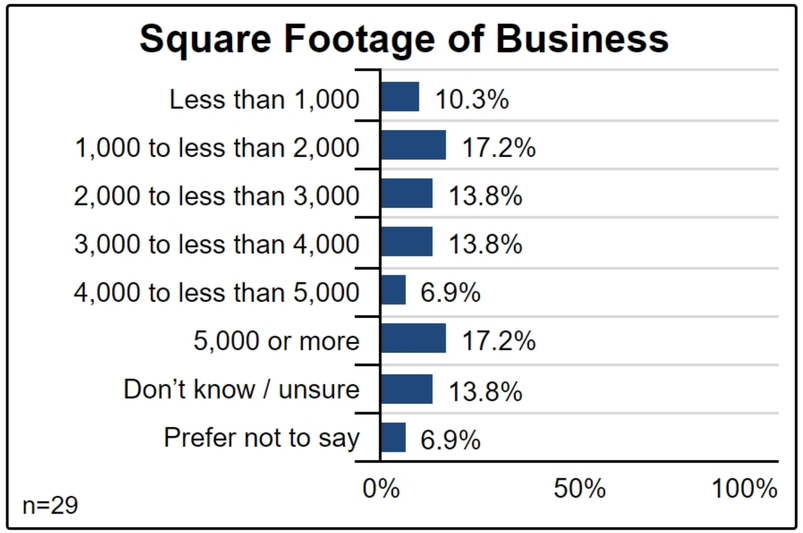
Methodology Digital	**No. of Completes** 29	**No. of Questions** 57*	**Incentive** None	**Sample** Customer Lists
Target Commercial Customers	**Quality Assurance** Dual-level**	**Margin of Error** +/- 17.25%	**Confidence Level** 95%	**Research Dates** October 31, 2025 - August 14, 2026

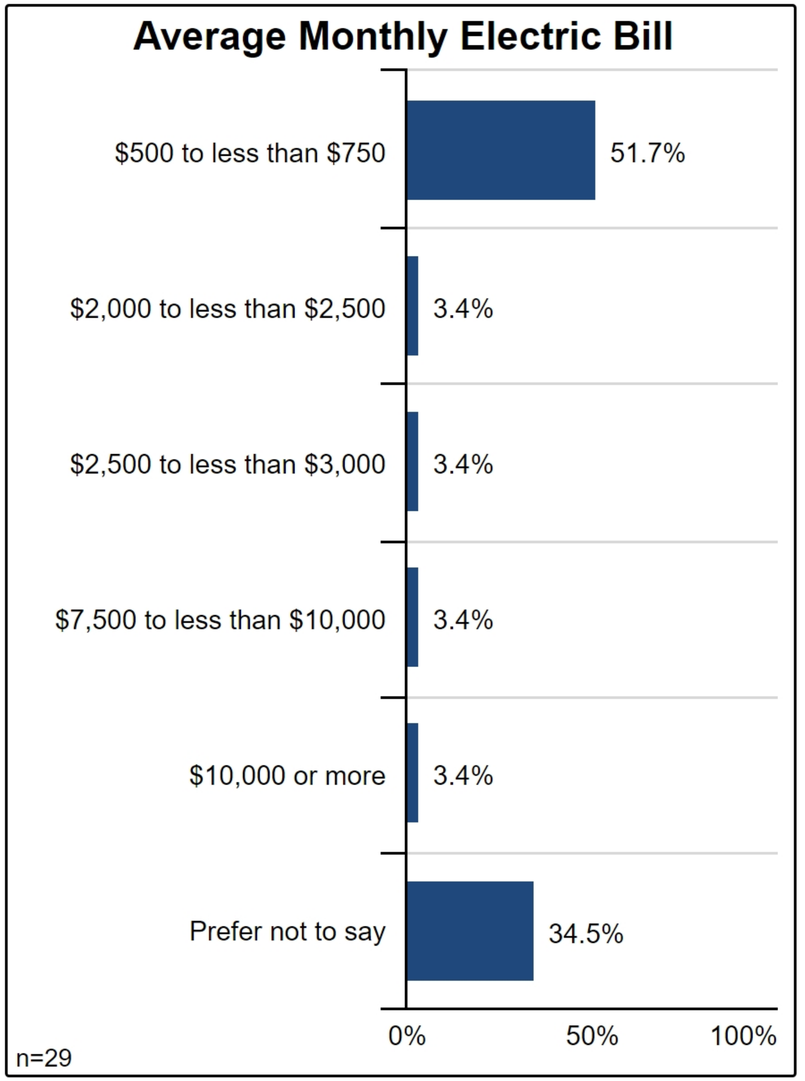
* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.
** Data quality personnel, in addition to a computer-aided interviewing platform, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

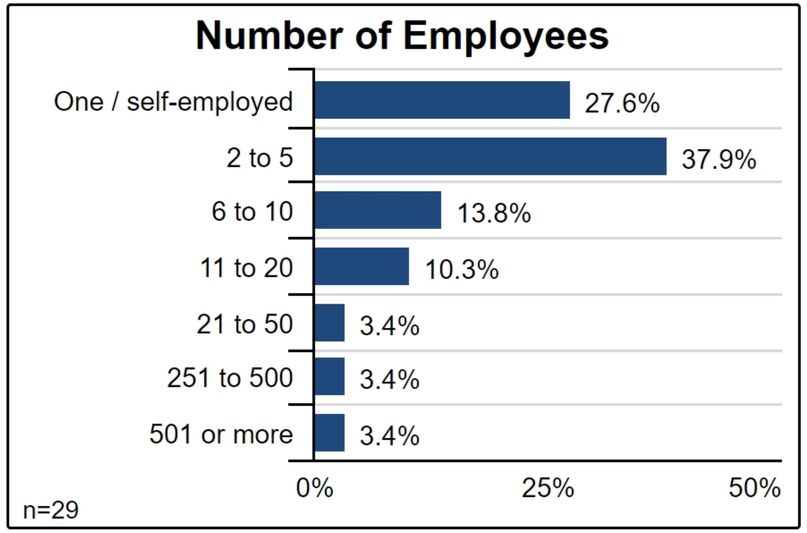
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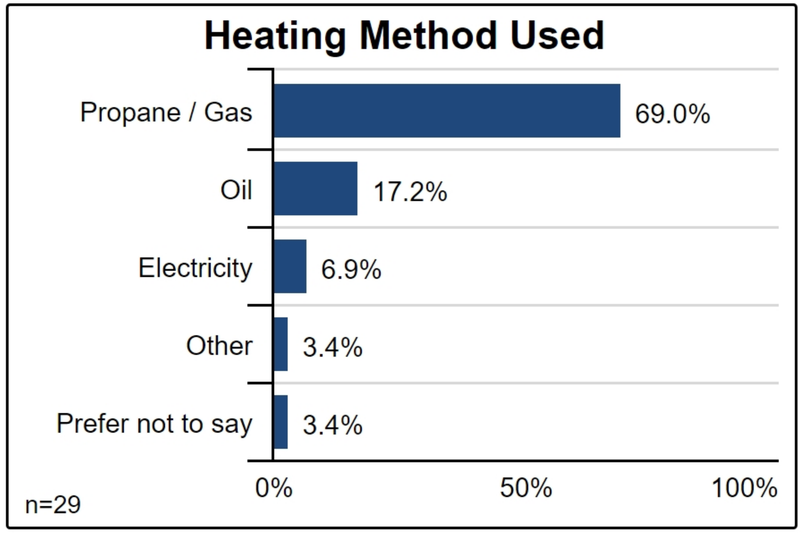
Respondent Profile | Firmographics





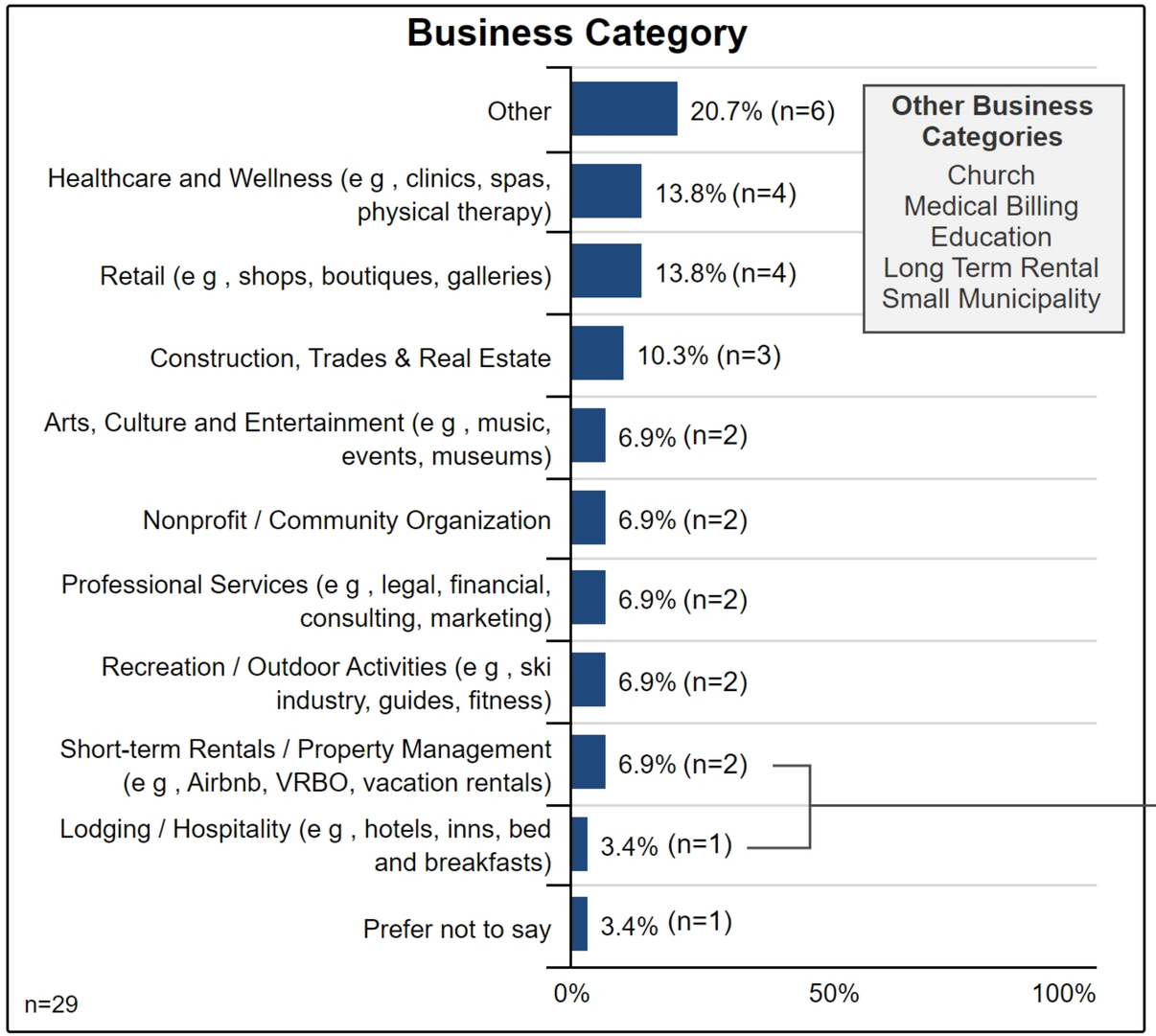


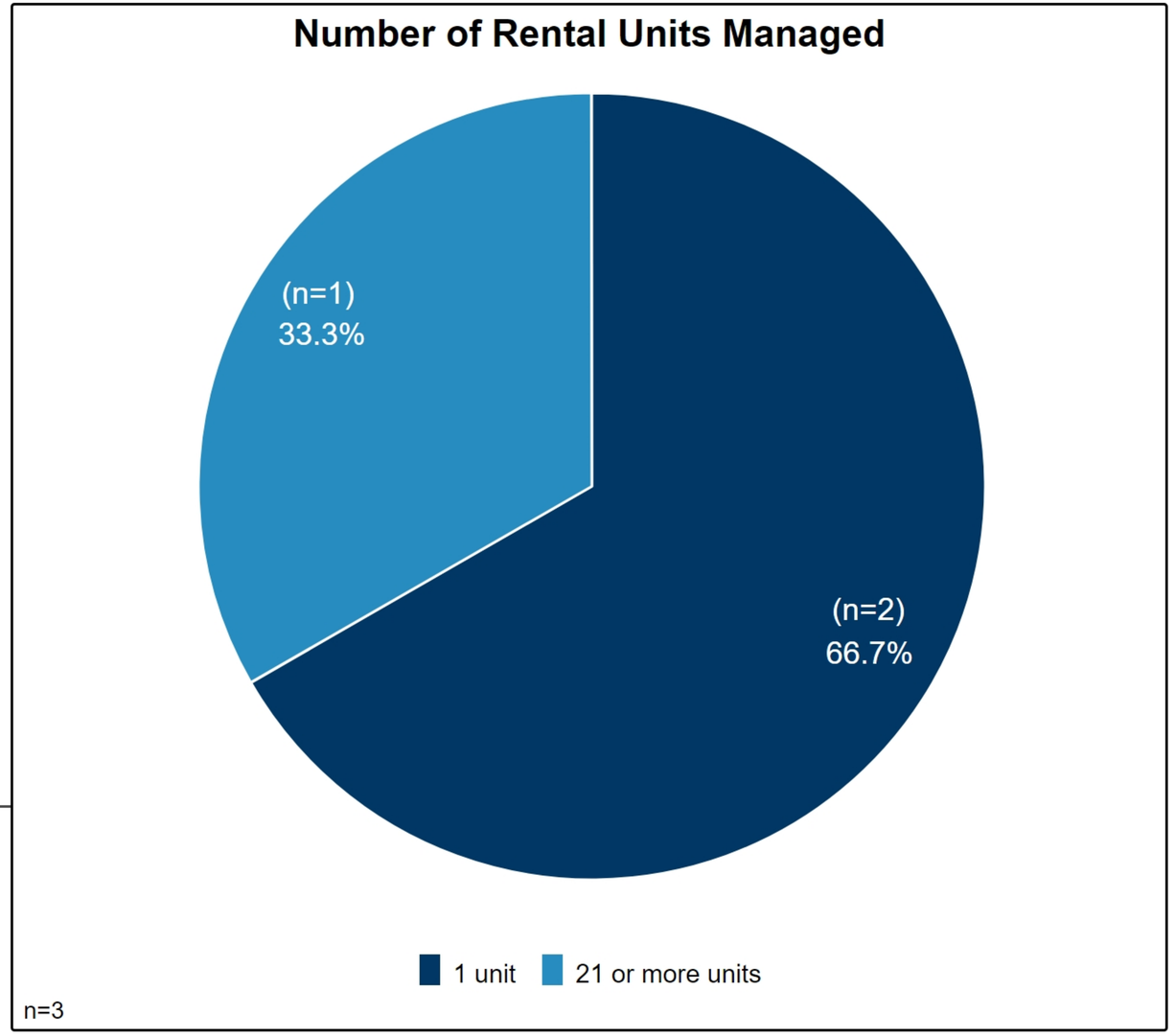




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Respondent Profile | Firmographics





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Satisfaction | Organizational Characteristics

In 2026, Stowe Electric received an overall average positive rating of 80.7% among commercial customers. This was driven by over nine-out-of-ten customers providing positive ratings for Stowe Electric having "reliable service" and "honesty/integrity." However, this was offset by less than two-thirds of customers who provided positive ratings for the utility having "fair rates" and "helping customers with beneficial electrification."

Aggregate of 7-10 responses, without "don't know" responses	2026	National Average
Reliable service	96.4%	79.9%
Honest / integrity	96.0%	70.0%
Customer interactions and communication	85.2%	70.1%
Community service	80.0%	66.9%
Fair rates	65.4%	-
Helping customers with beneficial electrification	61.1%	63.9%
Average	80.7%	70.2%

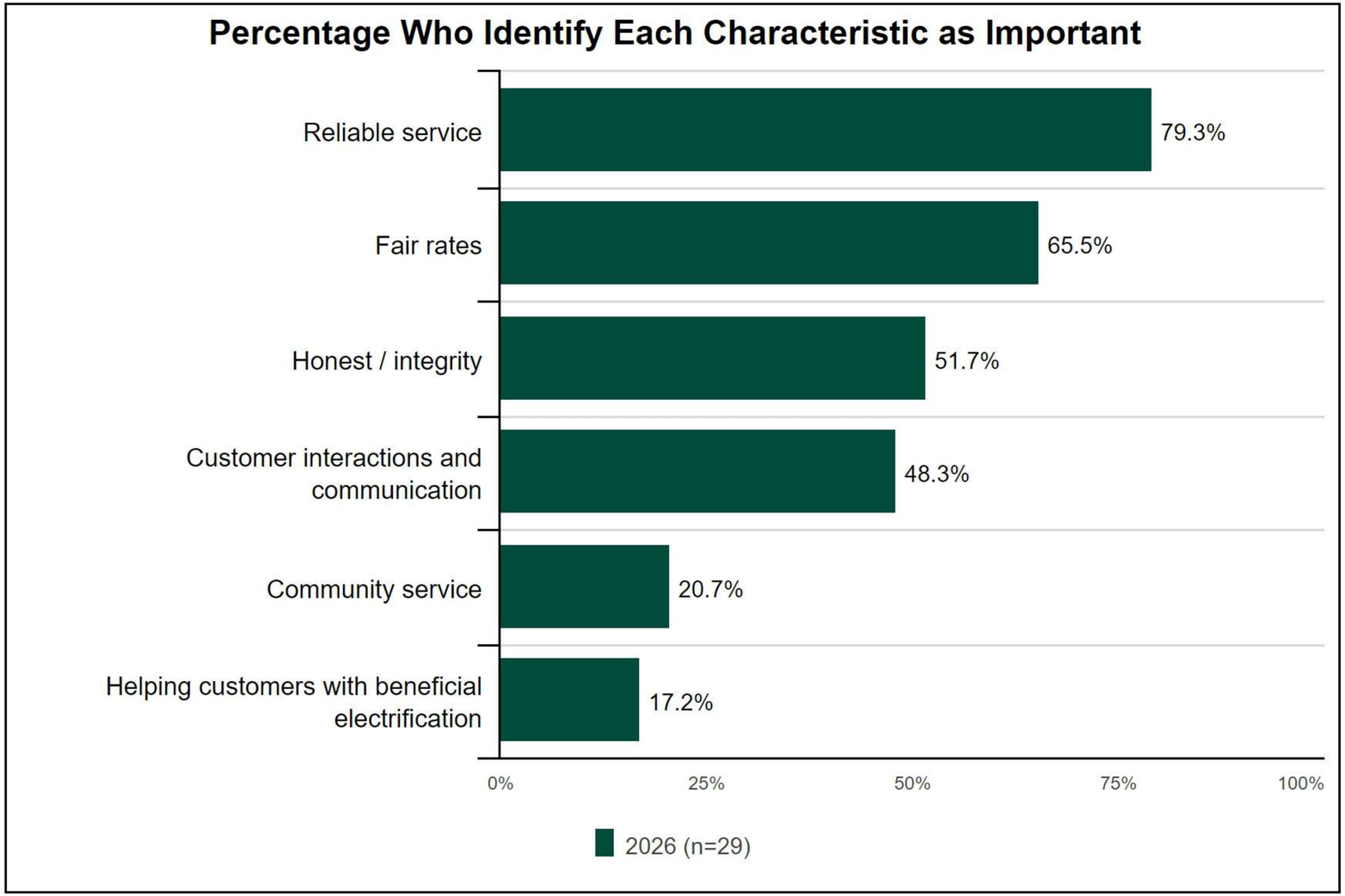
*n=29 (2026), n=1,002 (2025 PPDS-National). *The Public Power Data Source is a commercial customer satisfaction benchmarking tool*
[organizational_characteristics]: Please read the following list of different organizational characteristics. For each one, please rate Stowe Electric on a scale of one (1) to ten (10), where one is very poor and ten is very good.

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Satisfaction | Most Important Characteristics

The top three most important organizational characteristics for Stowe Electric commercial customers were having "reliable service," "fair rates," and/or being "honest/[having]integrity."

Of note, customers placed less importance on the utility's "community service" and/or "helping customers with beneficial electrification."

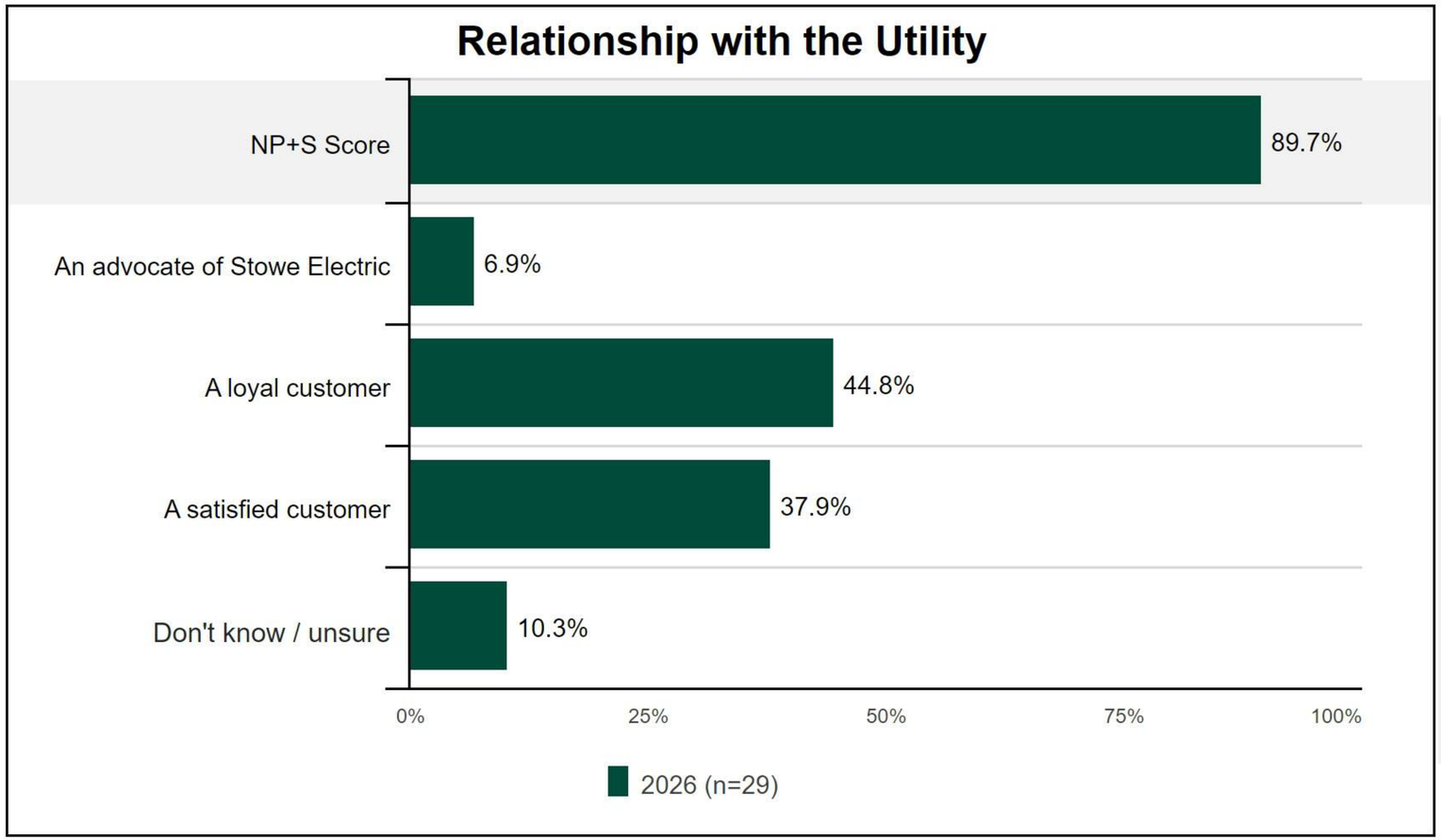


[important_characteristics]: Among the characteristics you just rated, what are the most important to you as a customer of Stowe Electric? (Select all that apply)

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Satisfaction | NP+S & Improvement

Stowe Electric received a Net Positive Score (advocate + loyal + satisfied customers) of 89.7% among its commercial customers. This was driven by over two-fifths of customers identifying themselves as "a loyal customer" of Stowe Electric, followed by over one-third who considered themselves "a satisfied customer" of the utility. Similar to residential customers, nearly one-fifth of customers offered "lower / affordable rates" as a way to improve the relationship they have with their customers.



Ways to Improve Customer Relationship

	2026
Base size	*29*
Lower / affordable rates	17.2%
Keep up the good work / doing a good job	10.3%
Improve communication / frequent updates	6.9%
Rebates / incentives	3.4%
Provide conservation / environmentally friendly tips	3.4%

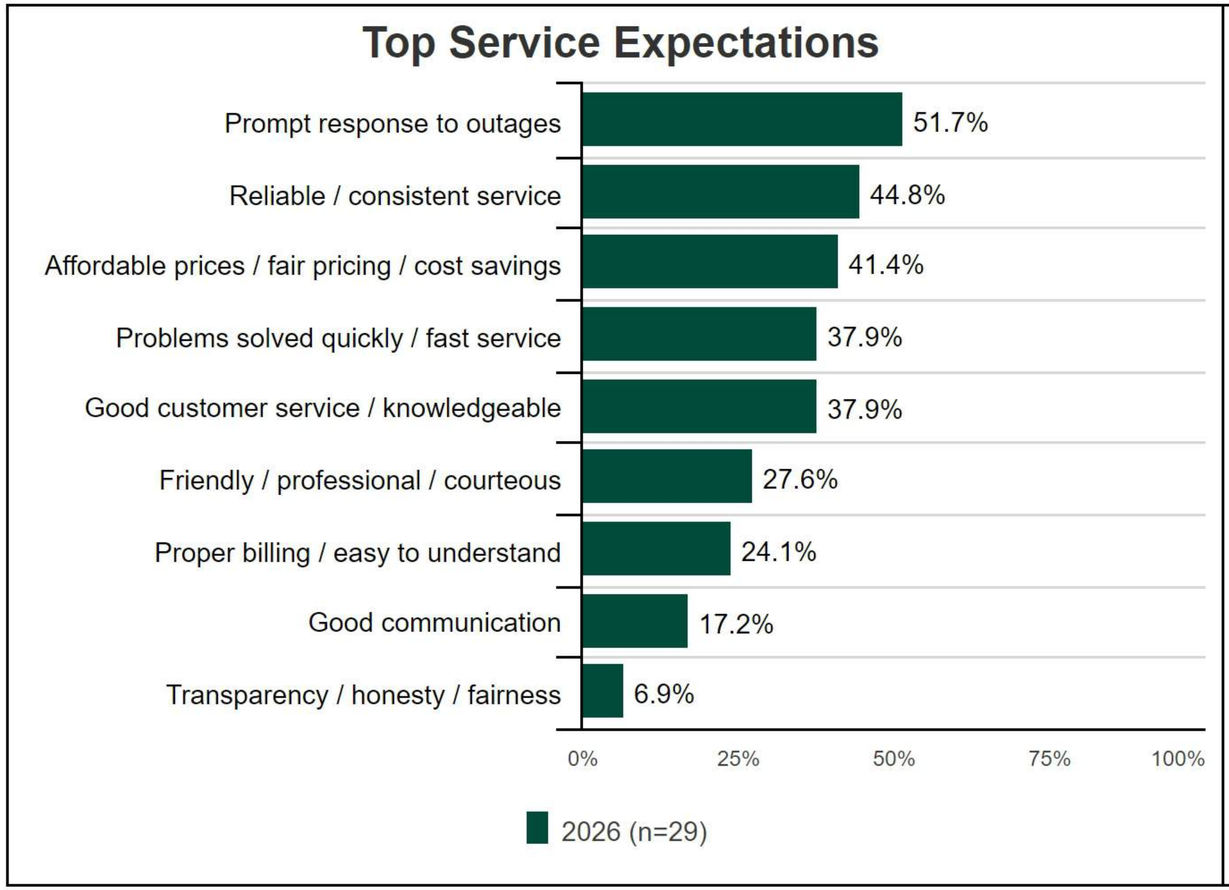
Top 5 responses shown

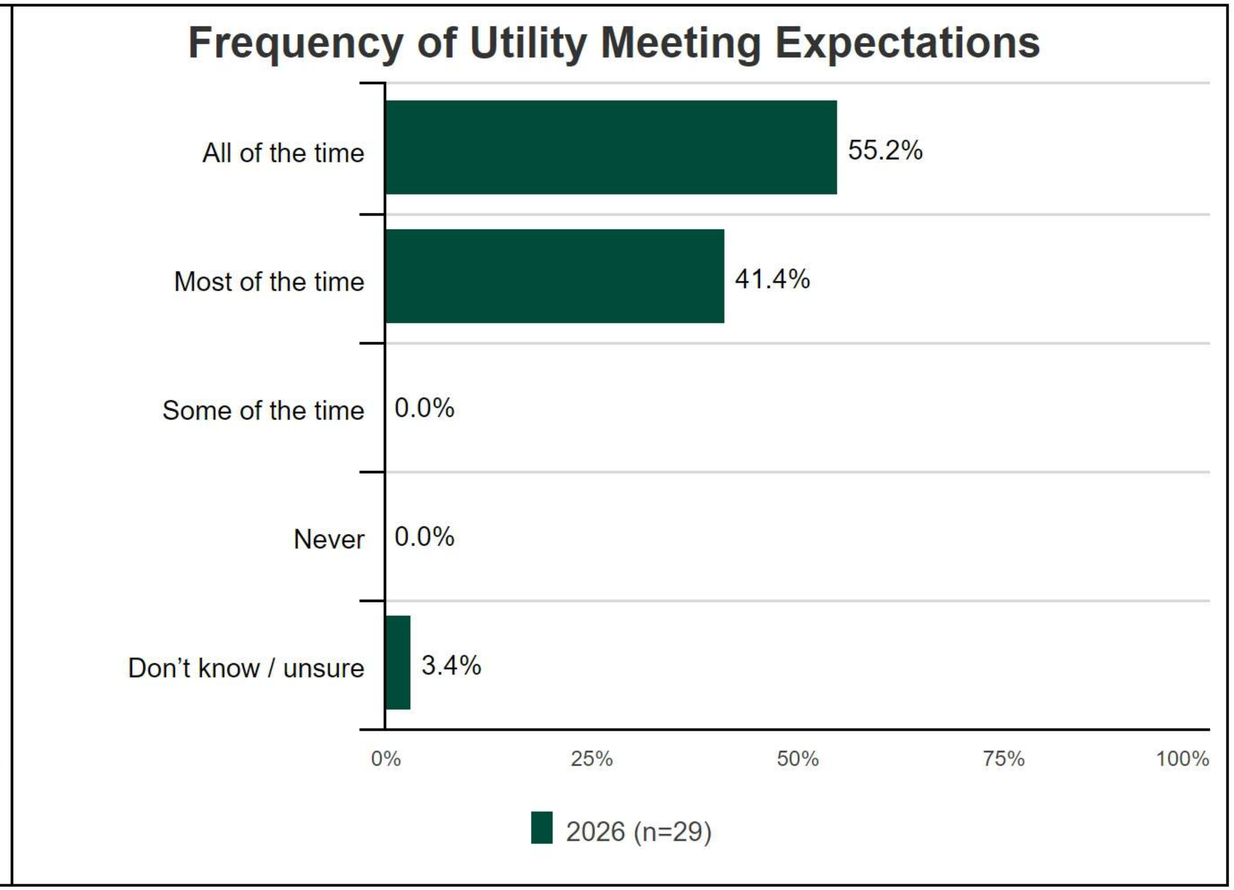
[nps]: How would you best describe your relationship with Stowe Electric?
[improved_relationship]: What, if anything, would Stowe Electric need to do to improve the relationship you have with them?

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Satifaction | Top Expectations

The top expectations among over two-fifths of Stowe Electric commercial customers were “prompt response to outages," “reliable/consistent service,” and "affordable prices/fair pricing/cost savings." When asked how often the utility meets these expectations, over one-half of commercial respondents reported Stowe Electric meets them "all of the time," while over two-fifths of customers reported the utility meets them "most of the time."



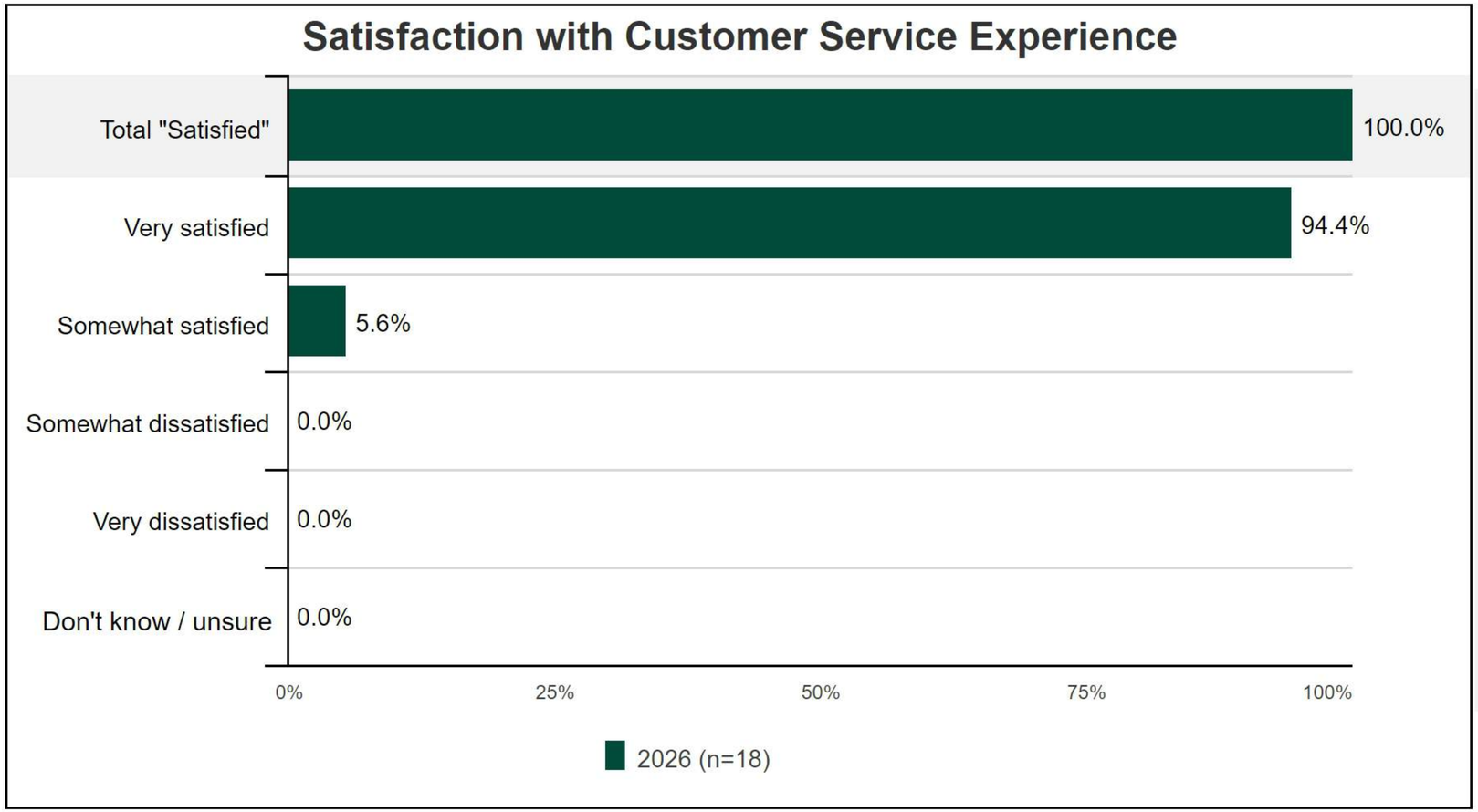


[service_expectations]: Everyone has expectations of the organizations they do business with over time. What are the top three expectations you have regarding the service you receive from Stowe Electric? (Select up to three responses)
[expectations_met]: How frequently does Stowe Electric meet your expectations…

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Customer Service | Contact Reasons & Methods

Of the 18 Stowe Electric commercial customers who contacted the utility in the past 12 months, approximately one-quarter reported contacting the utility to report an "outage" or "install service." Overall, all commercial customers reported being satisfied with their experience contacting Stowe Electric, including over nine-out-of-ten who were "very satisfied."



Top Reasons for Contact

Base size	*18*
Outage	27.8%
Install service	22.2%
To pay bill	11.1%
Other	11.1%
Service call	5.6%
Payment arrangement	5.6%
Rebates	5.6%
Account maintenance	5.6%
Consolidating meter reads	5.6%

Not including respondents who did not have a recent interaction with the utility

[customer_service_satisfaction]: Overall, how satisfied were you with the way the Stowe Electric customer service employee handled the call or visit?
[contact_purpose]: What was the purpose of the interaction?

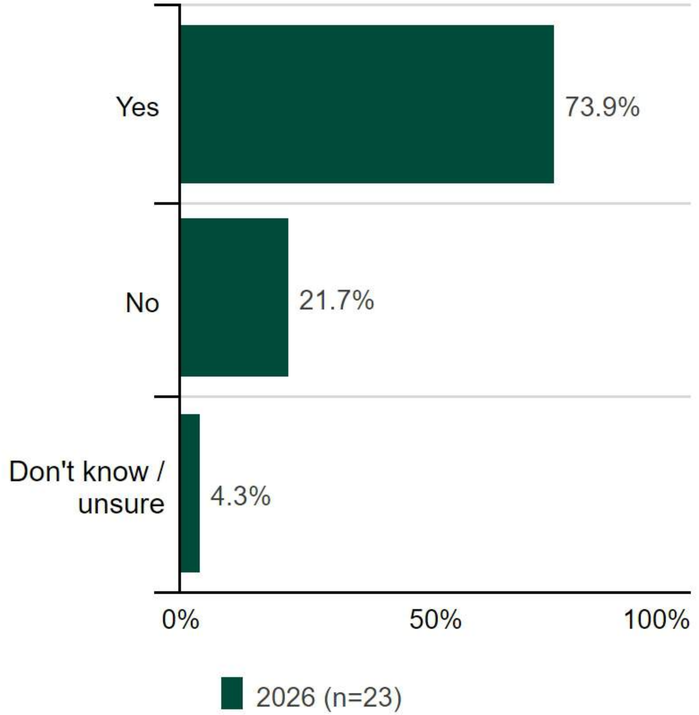
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Customer Service | SmartHub Platform

Among 23 commercial customers who were aware of the SmartHub portal, nearly three-quarters reported previously using the platform. Among SmartHub users, nearly nine-out-of-ten reported using the platform for “bill payment,” followed by over two-thirds who use it to “view billing history” and nearly three-fifths who use it to “view [their] electric usage.” Of note, all commercial customers who previously used SmartHub were satisfied with their experience, including over two-thirds who were “very satisfied.”

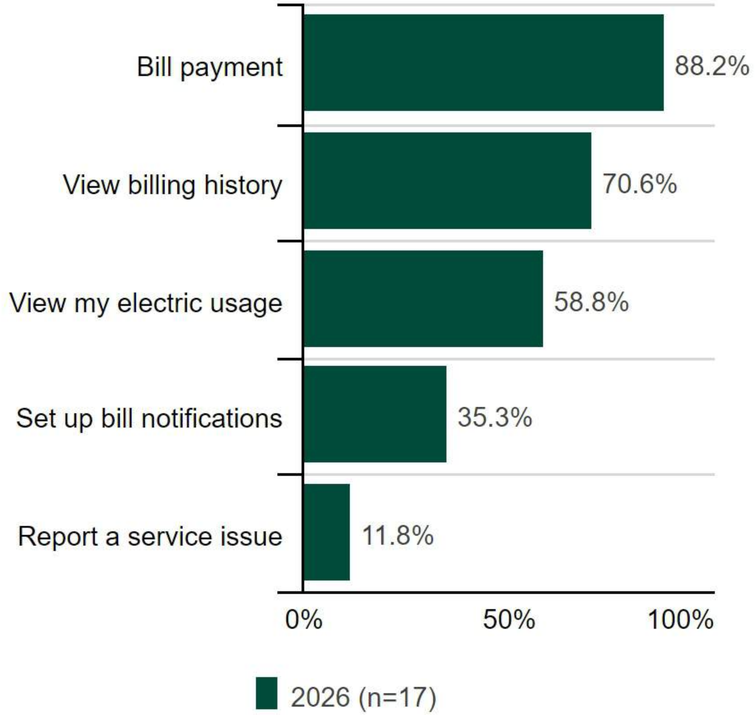
Overall SmartHub Perceptions

Have Previously Used SmartHub



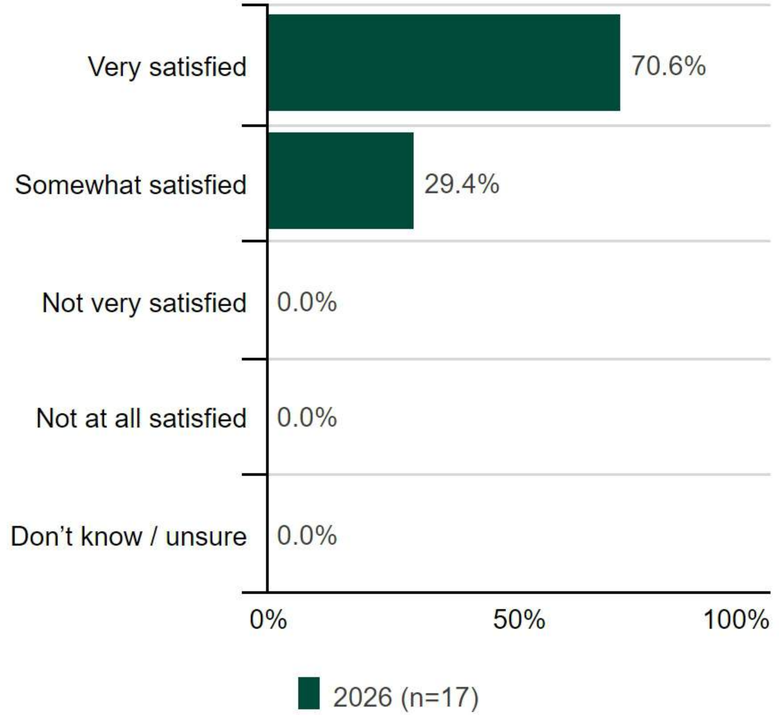
Only asked to respondents who were aware of the SmartHub Portal

Reason for SmartHub Use



Only asked to respondents who have previously used the SmartHub Portal

Satisfaction with SmartHub Experience



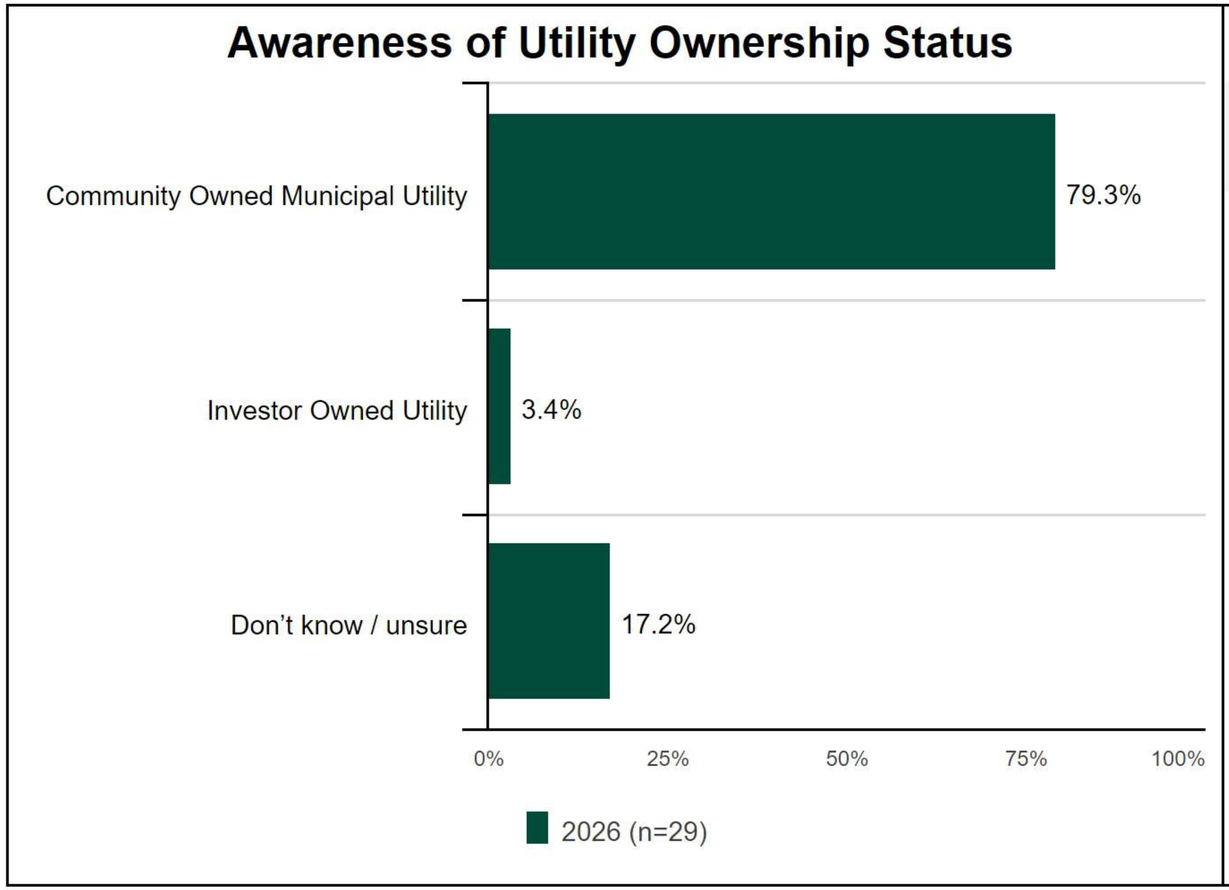
Only asked to respondents who have previously used the SmartHub Portal

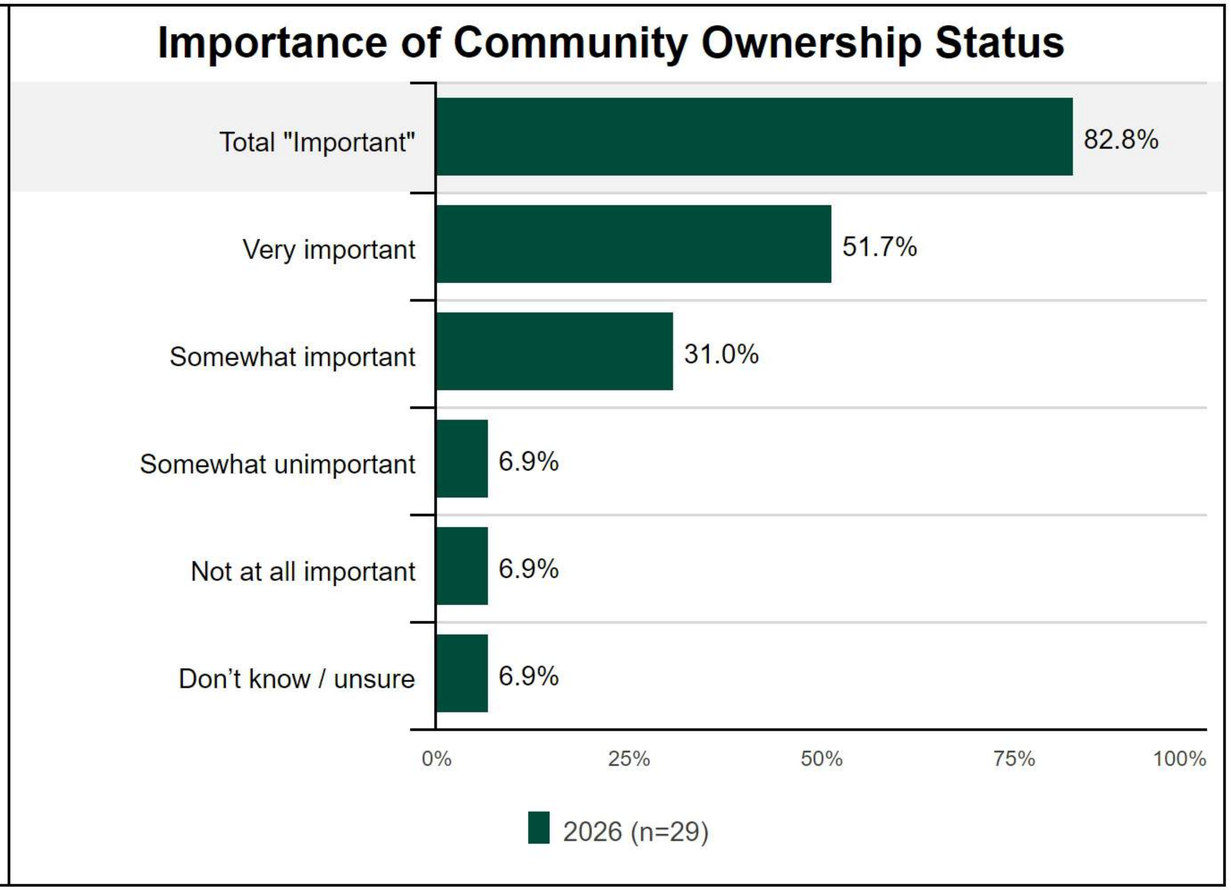
[smarthub_use]: Have you previously used Stowe Electric’s SmartHub customer portal?
[smarthub_functions]: In what way(s) have you previously used the SmartHub platform?
[smarthub_satisfaction]: How satisfied are you with your experience using the SmartHub platform?

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Awareness | Community Ownership

Almost eight-out-of-ten commercial customers correctly identified Stowe Electric as a "community-owned municipal utility," while less than one-fifth were unsure. Further, over eight-out-of-ten customers find it important that the utility maintain local control, including over one-half of customers who find it "very important."





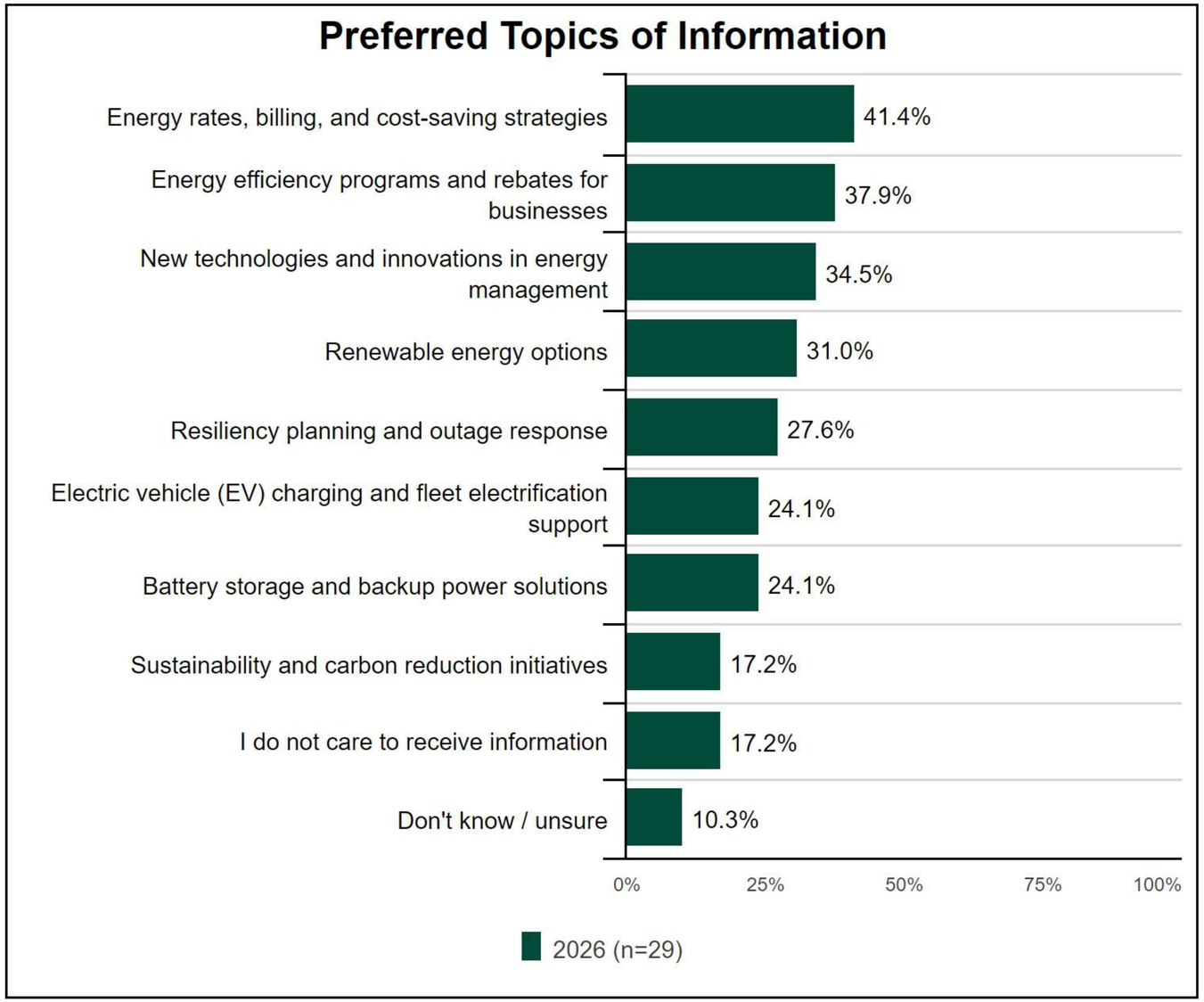
[ownership_awareness]: Would you say that your own electric service is provided by a "Community Owned Municipal Utility" or an "Investor Owned Utility?"
[ownership_importance]: Stowe Electric is a "Community Owned Municipal Utility." How important to you is it to maintain local control of your municipal utility?

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Communication | Preferred Topics

Commercial customers were most interested in receiving information from Stowe Electric about “energy rates, billing, and cost-saving strategies," followed by “energy efficiency programs and rebates for businesses” and “new technologies and innovations in energy management."

However, fewer customers preferred to receive information on topics regarding "sustainability and carbon reduction initiatives."



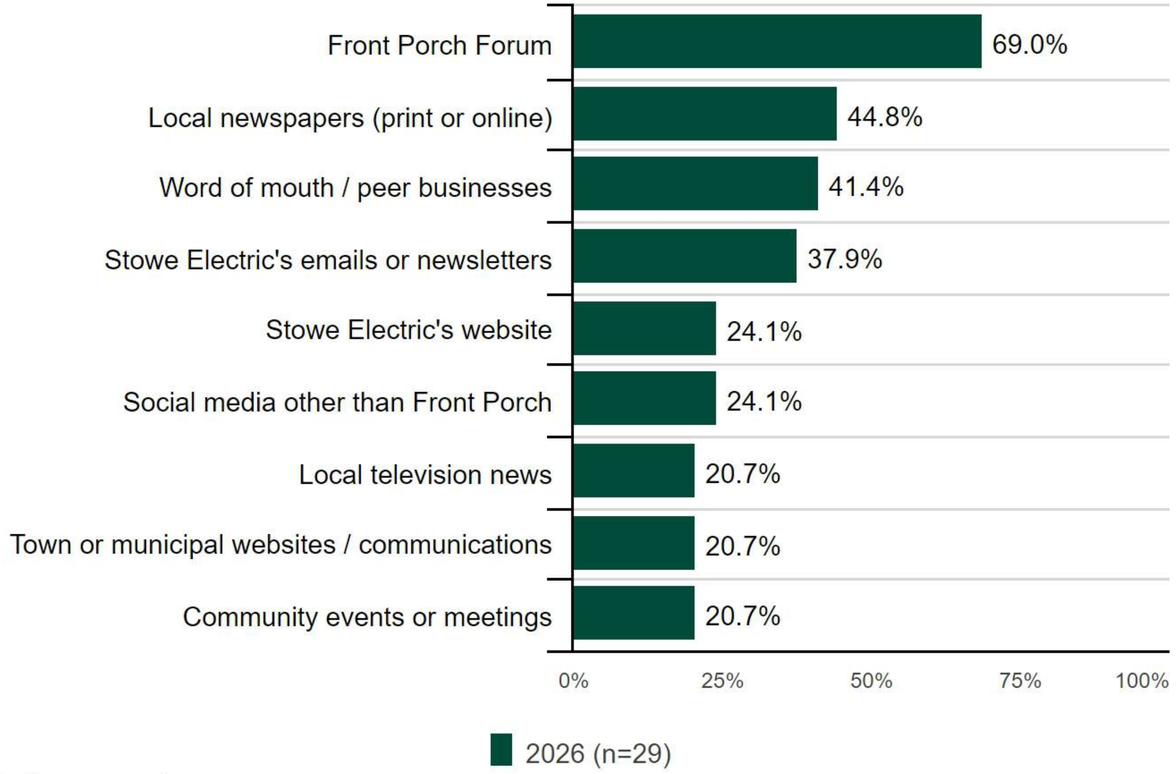
[comm_topics]: What topics do you want to receive more information on from Stowe Electric? (Select all that apply)

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Communication | Community Involvement

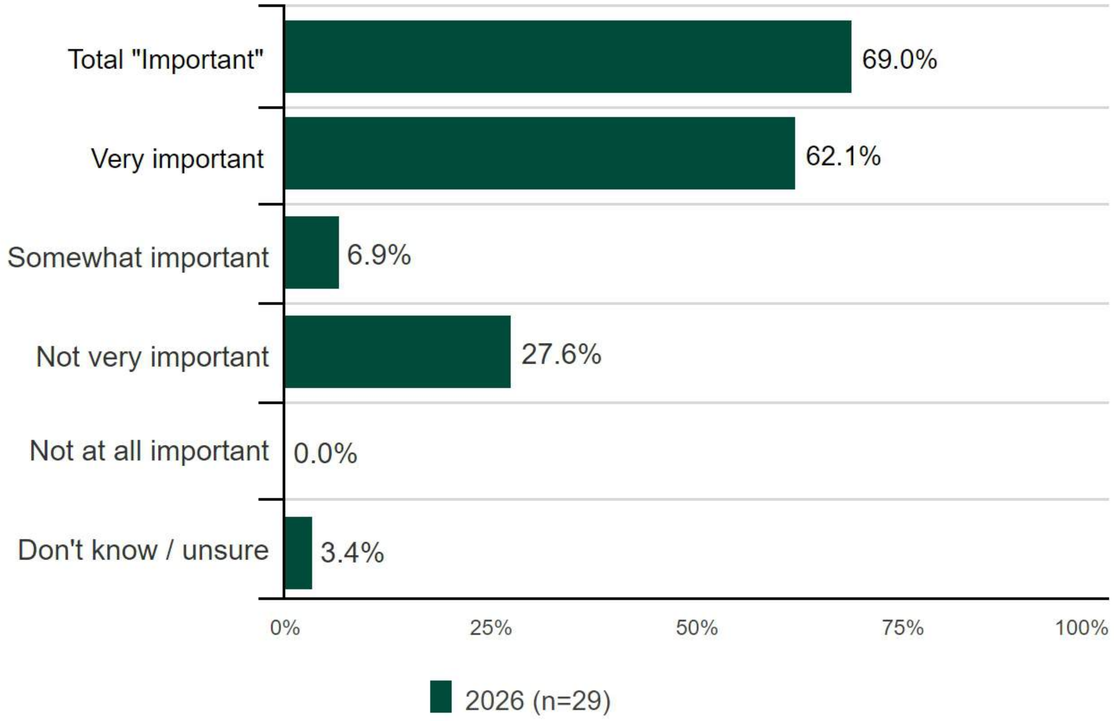
Over two-thirds of commercial respondents reported using “Front Porch Forum” as a source of local community information, followed by “local newspapers (print or online)" and “word of mouth/peer businesses." Regarding Stowe Electric’s involvement in the business community, over two-thirds of respondents (69.0%) indicated that it is important for Stowe Electric to be an active member of the business community, with over three-fifths indicating it is "very important."

Sources of Local Community Information



Top 9 responses shown

Importance of Stowe Electric Being an Active Member of the Business Community



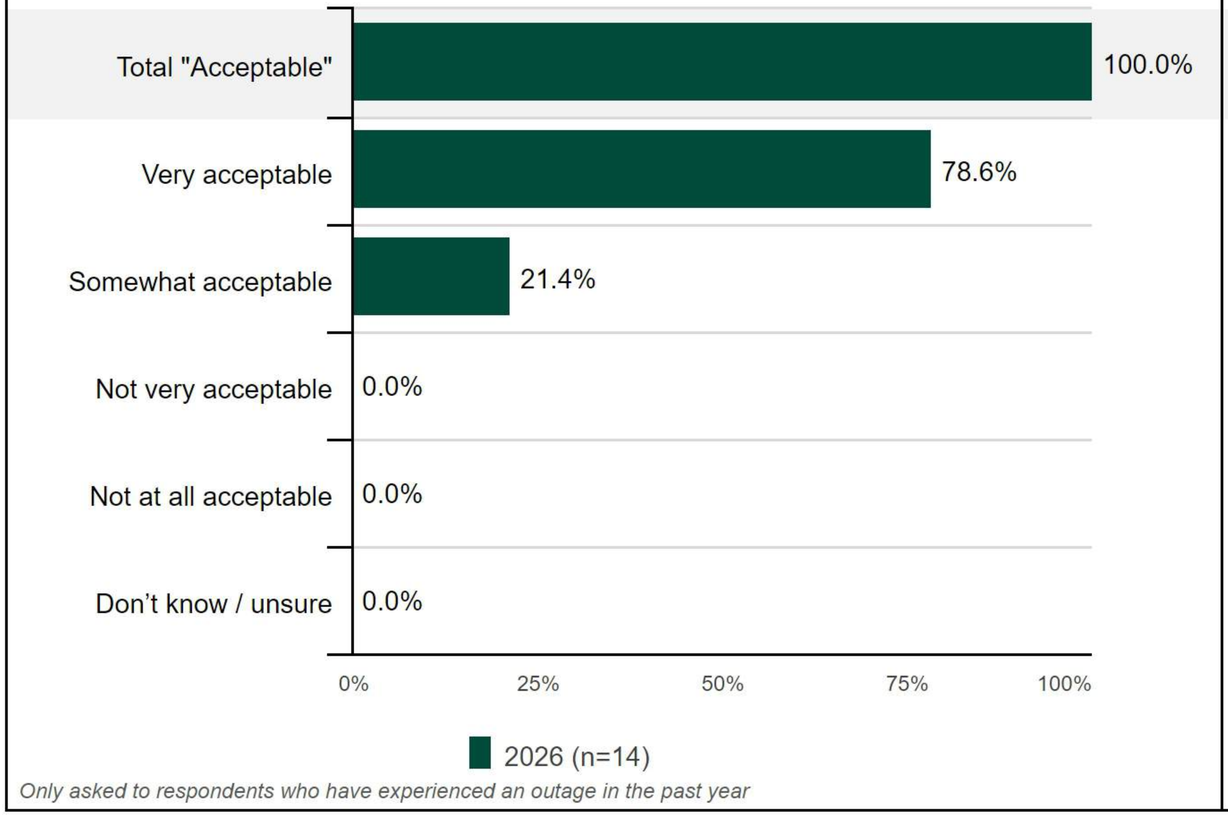
[community_information]: Where do you currently look for information about the local community? (Select all that apply)
[member_of_communutity]: How important is it to you that Stowe Electric is an active member of the business community?

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Major Storms | Restoration & Communication

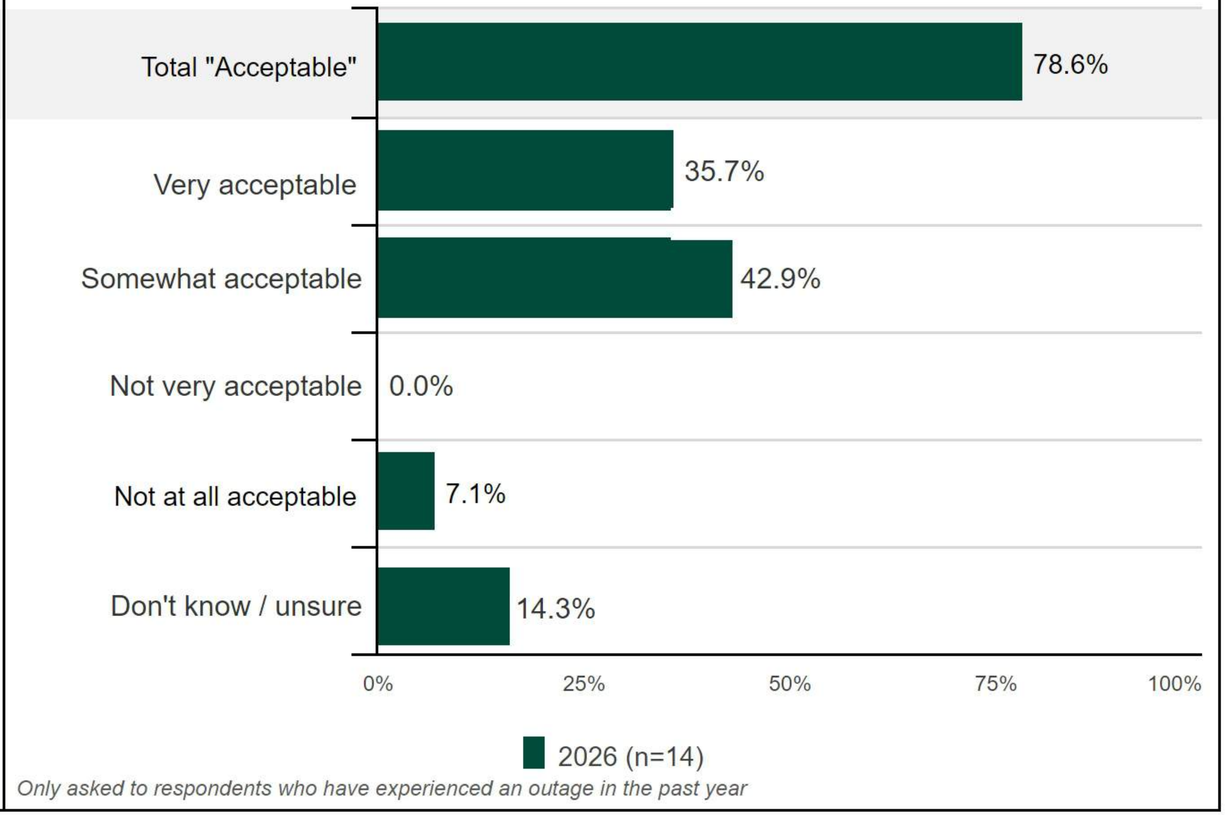
Among commercial customers who experienced an outage in the past year, all customers found Stowe Electric's power restoration time acceptable, including over three-quarters who found it to be "very acceptable." Just over three-quarters of customers also found the communication received during an outage acceptable, although 14.3% were unsure and 7.1% found it unacceptable.

Perception of Power Restoration Time



Only asked to respondents who have experienced an outage in the past year

Perception of Communication Received During Outage



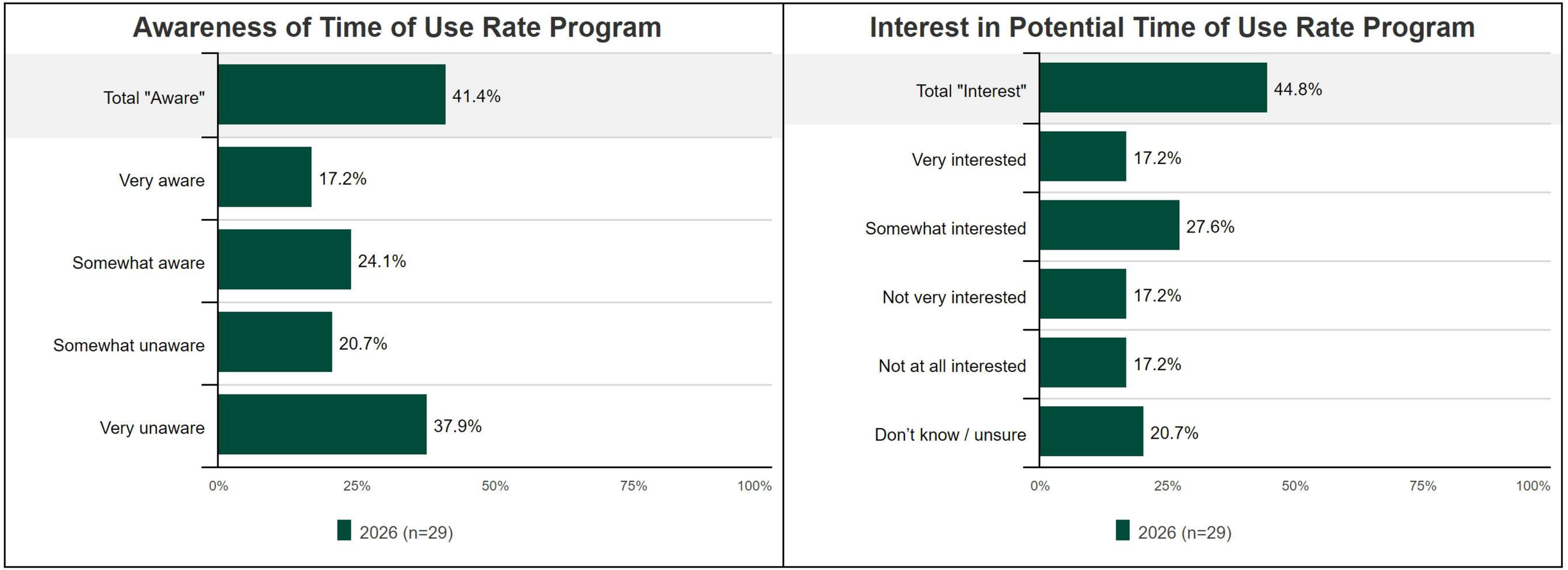
Only asked to respondents who have experienced an outage in the past year

[outage_restoration]: Overall, how acceptable do you find the time it takes Stowe Electric to restore power after an outage?
[outage_communication]: How acceptable do you find the communication you receive from Stowe Electric during a power outage?

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Renewable Energy | Time of Use Rates

Just over two-fifths of commercial customers reported being aware of time-of-use rate programs, although over one-third reported being "very unaware." Interest in a potential Stowe Electric time-of-use rate program was similarly mixed, with nearly one-half of customers reporting they would be either “very” or “somewhat interested," with another fifth being unsure (20.7%).



[TOU_awareness]: Prior to this survey, how aware were you of “time of use” rate programs?
[TOU_interest]: How interested would you be in enrolling in a potential Stowe Electric “time of use” rate program?

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Key Study Findings | Commercial

Satisfaction & Customer Experience

- Stowe Electric received an 80.7% average positive rating, led by particularly strong ratings for “reliable service” (96.4%) and “honesty/integrity” (96.0%). However, ratings were lower for “fair rates” (65.4%) and “helping customers with beneficial electrification” (61.1%).
- Commercial customers reported a strong relationship with Stowe Electric, resulting in an 89.7% Net Positive Score, including 44.8% “loyal” and 37.9% “satisfied” customers.
- However, 17.2% recommended lower/more affordable rates as a way to improve the customer relationship.
- Among customers who contacted Stowe Electric in the past year, 100.0% were satisfied with their experience, including 94.4% who were “very satisfied.” Similarly, 100.0% of SmartHub users were satisfied with the platform, including 70.6% who were “very satisfied.”
- Outage performance was also viewed favorably, with 100.0% of customers who experienced an outage rating restoration time as acceptable and 78.6% rating outage communications as acceptable.

Public Power & Communication

- Nearly eight-out-of-ten commercial customers (79.3%) correctly identified Stowe Electric as a community-owned municipal utility, while 82.8% indicated that maintaining local control is important.
- “Reliable service” (82.8%) was the most frequently identified benefit of public power, followed by “responsiveness to customer concerns” (65.5%). Additionally, 62.1% each recognized community-focused benefits related to local decision-making, keeping revenues in the community, and supporting local employment/economic development.
- Commercial customers prefer email for routine communications (55.2%) and text messages for outage/emergency communications (51.7%). Customers were most interested in information about rates, billing, and cost-saving strategies (41.4%) and energy efficiency programs/rebates (37.9%).
- Community involvement remains important, as 69.0% believe Stowe Electric being an active member of the business community is important. Front Porch Forum (69.0%) was also the most frequently used source for local community information.

Electrification & Future Priorities

- Commercial customers clearly prioritized the fundamentals of electric service: 58.6% ranked reliability as their top long-term planning priority, while 34.5% ranked cost first. Conversely, 86.2% ranked reducing carbon in the electricity portfolio last among the three priorities evaluated.
- Awareness and perceived value of beneficial electrification were mixed. 48.3% were “very” or “moderately aware,” while 53.8% agreed beneficial electrification could reduce their organization’s environmental impact and 45.8% agreed it could save their organization money.
- Electrification adoption varies by technology. 44.8% currently use heat pumps, while 41.4% expect to have at least one EV in their fleet within 10 years; however, only 10.3% currently have solar panels and 6.9% plan to add solar in the future.
- Interest in additional energy offerings presents a potential opportunity for Stowe Electric, as 44.8% expressed interest in a potential time-of-use rate program, despite only 41.4% currently being aware of time-of-use rate programs.

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Considerations



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Considerations

Strengthen Communication Across Key Customer Touchpoints

Stowe Electric should build on its strong overall customer relationships by focusing on communication during moments when customers most need timely, actionable information. While a majority of both residential and commercial customers who contacted Stowe Electric were satisfied with their experience and found outage restoration times acceptable, only half of residential customers and three-quarters of commercial customers found outage communication acceptable, with a lack of communication the most common concern among those providing unfavorable ratings. Additionally, customer service ratings were comparatively lower for “timeliness and efficiency in responding to customers” and “resolving issues or answering questions," suggesting an opportunity to strengthen responsiveness alongside Stowe Electric’s existing service strengths.

Actionable Insights

- Expand proactive text-based outage communications, including outage confirmation, restoration progress, estimated restoration times when available, and service-restored notifications.
- Establish communication standards for major outages to ensure customers receive updates at consistent intervals, even when restoration estimates or other new information are not yet available.
- Continue using email as the primary channel for routine communications, while promoting enrollment in text alerts and other emergency notification tools.

Increase Awareness and Engagement with Electrification Programs

Stowe Electric has an opportunity to translate customers’ interest in clean energy and beneficial electrification into greater awareness and participation in available programs. Residential customers demonstrated strong support for renewable electricity sources, including hydropower (87.3%), solar (85.4%), and wind (78.3%), while heat pump ownership increased to 31.2% in 2026. However, only 45.2% of customers were aware of Stowe Electric’s energy-efficiency rebates and incentives, and 90.4% were unaware of the Connected Homes program despite 42.7% expressing interest in participating. Increasing education around available programs, incentives, and technologies could help Stowe Electric capitalize on this underlying interest while positioning the utility as a trusted resource for customers considering electrification.

Actionable Insights

- Develop a targeted awareness campaign for Connected Homes, emphasizing program benefits and eligibility, particularly given that 33.8% of residential customers already own at least one compatible device while only 9.6% are aware of the program.
- Increase promotion of Stowe Electric’s rebates and incentives, using email, SmartHub, billing communications, and the utility website to connect customers with relevant opportunities.
- Address specific barriers to EV adoption through educational outreach, particularly limited range/distance per charge, higher initial purchase costs, and low availability of charging stations.

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About GreatBlue



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...to help clients achieve organizational goals.

Data supporting strategic decisions to improve products and services. Since 1979, our experience with study and instrument design, data collection, analysis, and formal presentation assists our clients in identifying the “why” and “what’s next.”

Talent with a knowledge base in a wide range of industries and methodologies ensures a 360º view of the challenges faced and the expertise to address them.

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- Focus Groups
- In-Depth Interviews

Studies:

- Awareness and Perception Studies
- Customer and Employee Satisfaction Studies
- Journey Mapping
- Creative and New Concept Testing

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WHAT'S NEXT.

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