2017 MRWA Wage, Salary & Benefit Survey FAQ

Q1: In the section on basic information, does the "number of connections" in section II refer to connections or customers?
A1: Connections.

Q2: In the section on insurance and retirement (section VI), what is the difference between the two % columns?
A2: Both columns relate to what the employer pays, not what the employee pays. One column asks for the % the employer pays for an individual policy, and the other asks for the % the employer pays for a family policy. These % questions should only be filled out for items for which YES is selected. Otherwise, leave them blank.

Q3: In the section on insurance and retirement (section VI), I don't understand what the retirement plan question is asking me to do.
A3: For most retirement plans, the employer pays in a specific % of salary. If that is your situation, please state the plan type and the %. In some plans, there may be an amount of money specified that the employer needs to pay. If that is the case, please fill in the dollar amount line instead of the %. If your plan does not fit easily into either of these categories, please give a short description in the comments section on page 4 of the survey.

Q4: My utility has no employees because we contract out all the operations. Should I just toss the survey you sent?
A4: ***Please don't toss the survey.*** Please place a check mark to the right of the Titles in the Salary Chart on page 3, indicating that they are positions that are contracted out. It will be useful to know how many utilities are contracting positions, and which positions are being most frequently outsourced. If we get enough of this information, we can include it in the report. In addition, if you know how much the contracted individuals are paid, please include this information on the Salary Chart, Page 3, under "Current Wage Salary/per hr".

Q5: Our utility uses job titles that are not on your Salary Chart. Should I write our job titles on the page and use them instead of yours?
A5: Instead of writing in your titles, please see the Job Descriptions page. Find the position that has responsibilities closest to the job you are entering, and use that for your job title. We prefer for you to use the titles provided on the survey so we can include your employee information with those from other utilities having similar responsibilities. Otherwise your data may not be counted.

Q6: I manage a small system with two employees. My job responsibilities include those of superintendent, operator, laborer and everything else in the field. I have one office person. How do I enter our data? ***Answer on next page***.

A6: Please put the salaries in the category that best represents the majority of the employee's responsibilities. If the job is truly split evenly, use the highest ranking category that he or she performs. If you want to explain the position, please feel free to insert a quick note in the comments (page 4). Only list the salary and the number of hours once.

For example: Your title is Superintendent/Operator and you earn $20 per hour. You primarily perform operator responsibilities, although you also have some maintenance responsibilities. The trustees assist with the managerial work. Here is what your entry might look like in the 2 columns that show Average Hours per Week and Current Wage. **Note: It is not necessary to put notes on the survey under other categories, as done below, unless the job title and responsibilities are unusual or confusing.**

Job Title	Average Hours per Week	Current Wage
Superintendent	Op/Trustees	
Operator	30	$20/hr
Maintenance	Op	
Meter Reader	OP	

Q7: I do not understand why I need to include an average number of hours per week for a salaried employee.
A7: The only way we can compare hourly and salaried employees doing the same job is if we have this information. It is often difficult to calculate, but just give your best estimate of how many hours they work. The employee will frequently be able to supply this data. If not, ask him or her to consider an average quarter - there are usually busy weeks, slow weeks, and something in between. Find the average of these three hourly totals and use it as the estimate.

Q8: I am a joint utility. How do I log my employees?
A8: You should have received a separate Joint Utility Survey. If you have not received one, please contact us.

If you are a small joint utility with very few employees who work on both water and wastewater, please use the simplified Salary Chart (Page 5 of the joint salary survey) with five job descriptions. Feel free to write in additional employee positions, as needed, from the Job Description page. Please use the drop-down box in column 2 to specify whether the employee is strictly water, strictly wastewater, or both.

If you are a medium to large joint utility, please use both the Water and Wastewater Salary Charts (Pages 3 and 4 of the joint salary survey). If possible, split your employee hours between water and wastewater. If you cannot do so, use one page, noting that the page includes both water and wastewater personnel in the comments (page 6 of the joint salary survey).