



APPENDIX G – EXAMPLE DISCUSSION WORKSHEET

This is an example of a discussion worksheet from a Community Water Academy that can be customized and used as part of the planning process as you identify key topics to be reflected upon and discussed. This particular worksheet used topic ranking as a way to evaluate priorities and spark discussion, but other options include reflection worksheets, brainstorming worksheets, and role playing worksheets.

[CITY/TOWN NAME] COMMUNITY WATER ACADEMY GAUGING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Drinking Water & Wastewater Topics	Topic Description	How important is the topic to you? Please indicate: High, Medium, Low.	On a scale of 1-5, how important is this topic to you? 1 is most important; 5 is least important.
Information about the quality of the drinking water	<p>It is important to have information about the quality of drinking water, including test results and whether the utility is complying with regulations.</p> <p>Information should be provided in a manner that the community can easily understand.</p>		
Access to bill paying assistance programs	<p>If a customer is having a difficult time paying their water or sewer bill, there should be programs in place to help them.</p> <p>The program should be well-advertised, so people know it's available and know how to access it.</p>		
Utilities are fully staffed	<p>The drinking water and sewer utilities need sufficient staff to run the systems.</p> <p>The staff should be well-paid, have opportunity for advancement, and receive regular training.</p>		
Community involvement in utility decisions	<p>The community should have an opportunity to learn about and provide input on utility decisions such as pipeline improvements, timing of repairs, and how community-focused programs are set up.</p>		

Drinking Water & Wastewater Topics	Topic Description	How important is the topic to you? Please indicate: High, Medium, Low.	On a scale of 1-5, how important is this topic to you? 1 is most important; 5 is least important.
Utilities should be financially stable	<p>The utilities need to charge rates that are sufficient to cover the cost of operating the systems, including staff salaries, and making necessary repairs and improvements.</p> <p>The utilities should pursue outside sources of funds, including grants, and low interest federal funds, for infrastructure projects when possible.</p>		
Utilities are able to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies	<p>The utilities should prepare for natural disasters such as floods, fires, and severe weather and other emergencies such as pipe or water main breaks by assessing the risks of these occurring and having a response plan.</p> <p>Communication between the utility and customers before, during, and after the disaster is important.</p>		
Water system infrastructure should be checked regularly	<p>The utilities should have a good understanding of the condition of the infrastructure that makes up the drinking water and sewer systems and have a plan to maintain the system.</p> <p>The utilities should regularly measure how the drinking water and sewer systems are working by monitoring such things as pressure, flow, water quality, or sewer spills.</p>		
Utilities ask for and respond to community feedback	<p>The utilities should reach out to customers and other stakeholders to understand their level of satisfaction with their water services, their concerns, and to provide information about the drinking water and sewer systems.</p> <p>The utilities need to respond to customers and other stakeholder feedback and share those responses with the community.</p>		
Utilities support sustainable community development	<p>The utilities take an active role in supporting community economic development and sustainability, including efficient use of water and energy and protection of the natural environment.</p>		
Additional topics	<p>What other areas of utility operation, safe drinking water, and/or sewer systems are of interest to you that are not included above? Please add your additional topics below and provide your prioritization on these topics.</p>		