WASHINGTON COUNTY
WATER
CONSERVANCY
DISTRICT

DRAFT
Mar 26, 2025

Ultra Water Efficient (UWE) Development Standard

Doug Bennett | Conservation Manager



Objectives

- Encourage new single-family homes that use 33% less water than the current standard
- Voluntary program, no new code
- Adaptable to varying lot sizes
- Reduced regional water impact fees
- Avoid necessity of secondary water systems

Ensuring Performance

- Community association must integrate UWE requirements into governing documents
- Agreement between the district and association will prescribe how to address violations
- Water use over 8,000 gallons per month subject to surcharge



Indoor Measures

- WaterSense fixtures required
- Hot water management system required
- Encourage salt-free water conditioners (to reduce demand and protect reuse water quality)



Landscape

- No private lawns
- 2,000 square feet of drip-irrigated plants per home
- Irrigated areas must be within 25 linear feet of the exterior wall of the home



Pools, Spas & Water Features

- No private swimming pools
- Freestanding spas up to 100 SF with a permanent cover allowed
- Ornamental water features up to 25 square feet are allowed



Active Recreation Areas

- 15 homes required to establish a minimum 1,500 square foot communal lawn area. 100 square feet of lawn added per home
- For each square foot of lawn, one square foot of drip irrigated plants is allowed
- A municipality may develop a public park without restriction to scale



Community Water Play

- Where 15 or more homes are enrolled, 600 square feet of common pool, spa or splashpad may be installed
- For each additional home, 10 additional square feet of water surface may be added
- No single pool may be larger than an Olympic swimming pool (13,500 sf)
- Water play areas must be separately metered

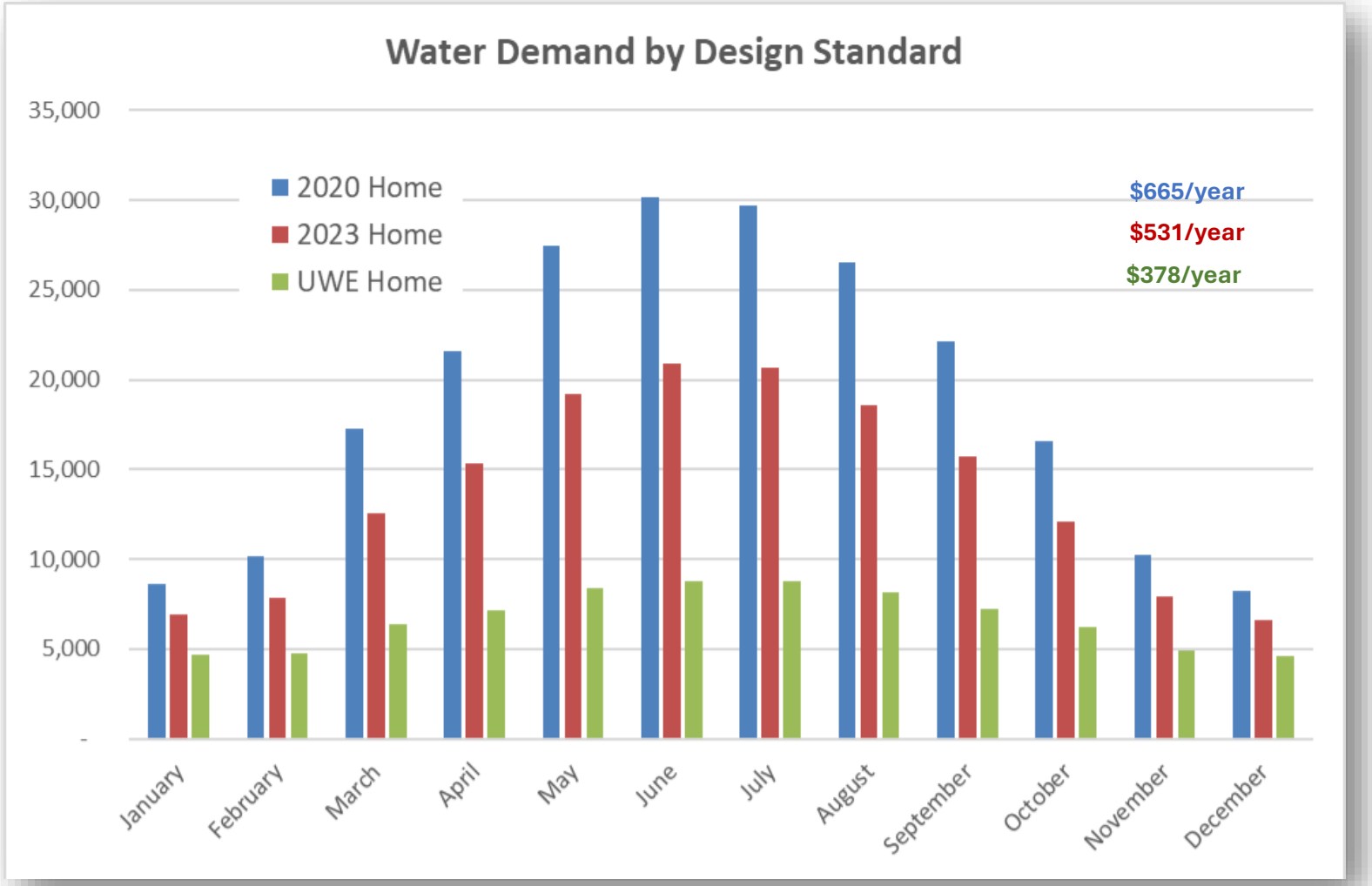


Ornamental Common Areas

Common area irrigated landscaping required by the jurisdiction will be drip irrigated, low and moderate water use landscape plantings.



Performance Estimates



Metered water use is projected at 96,000 gallons annually.

That's one-third less water than typical new homes and less than half as much as homes built five years ago.


Rendering
Questions?
WASHINGTON COUNTY
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RESULTS

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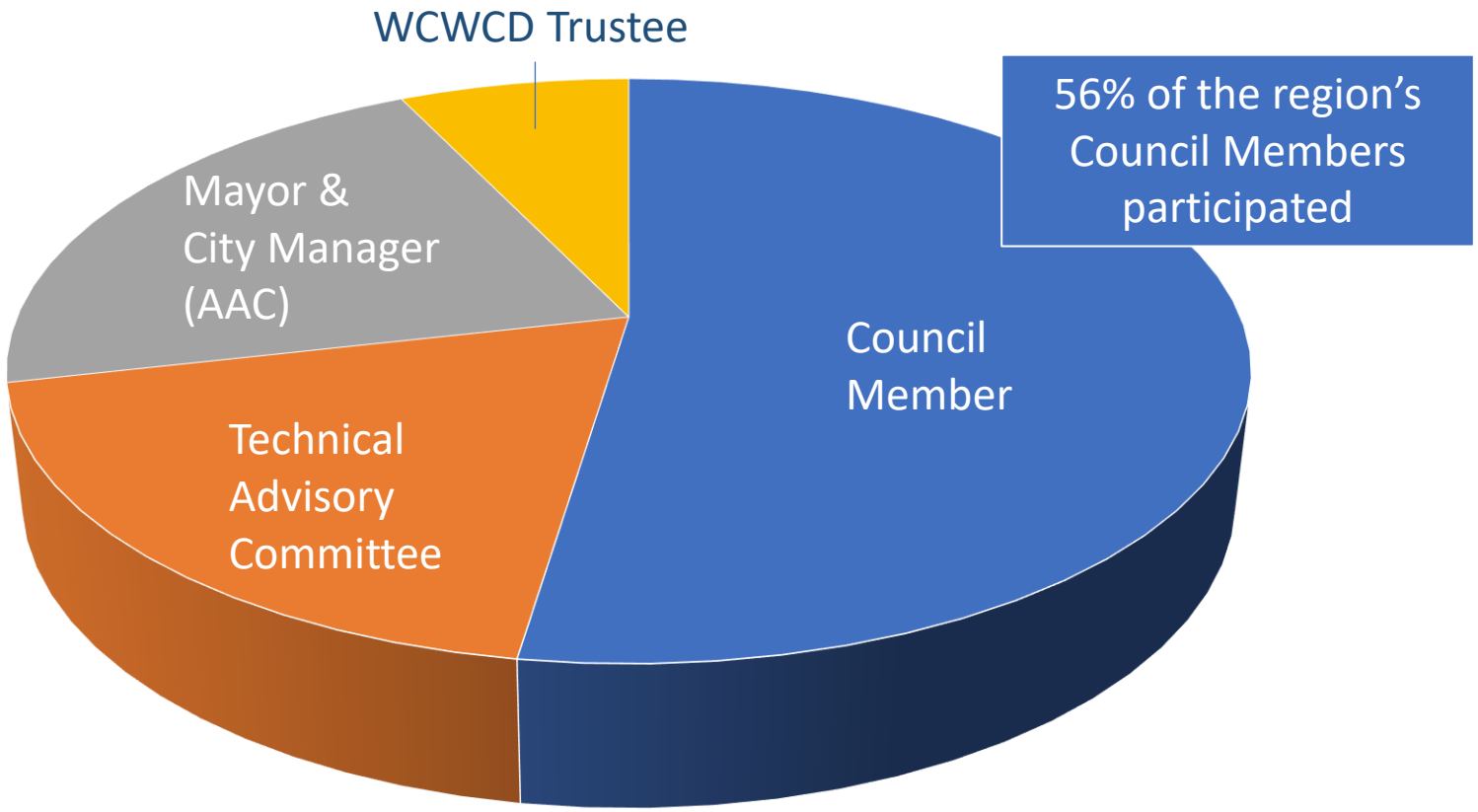
Water Shortage Contingency Plan Stakeholder Survey

About the Consensus Survey

- Input sought from city officials and technical professionals.
- Online survey instrument sent via email and available for five business days.
- Data will be used to advance decision-making at the district and municipal level.



Who responded?



N = 42

Section 1

Participants were asked in which stage of drought they would recommend initiating certain restrictions.

Average responses were rounded down.

What Stage of Drought?

Measure	Drought Committee Recommendation	Consensus Outcome (MEAN)	Suggested Strategy
Restrictions on watering frequency	1	2.2	Incremental approach
Increase incentives for lawn conversions	2	2.2	Incremental approach
Strengthen water rate penalties for high use	2	2.5	Incremental approach
Prohibit decorative water feature operation	2	2.5	Prohibition
Defer planting of new grass	2	2.6	Delay planting
Limit car washing frequency and/or methods	2	2.6	Reduce frequency by stage
Mandate reductions of golf course water use	2	2.7	Incremental approach
Prohibit use of mist systems	2	2.9	Exemption for safety of people and animals
Suspend issuing new swimming pool permits	2	2.9	Incremental approach
Limit building permits except critical facilities	3	3.3	Incremental approach
Allow only hand watering of plants	4	3.3	Handwatering or limited drip

What Stage of Drought?

	Drought stage to initiate
Allow only hand watering of plants	2.86
Limit building permits except critical facilities	2.81
Prohibit use of mist systems	2.62
Suspend issuing new swimming pool permits	2.62
Mandate reductions of golf course water use	2.62
Defer planting of new grass	2.48
Prohibit decorative water feature operation	2.43
Strengthen water rate penalties for high use	2.33
Increase incentives for lawn conversions	2.24
Limit car washing frequency and/or methods	2.24
Restrictions on watering frequency	2.24

As a group, city council members tended to support implementing measures at earlier stages.

Section 2

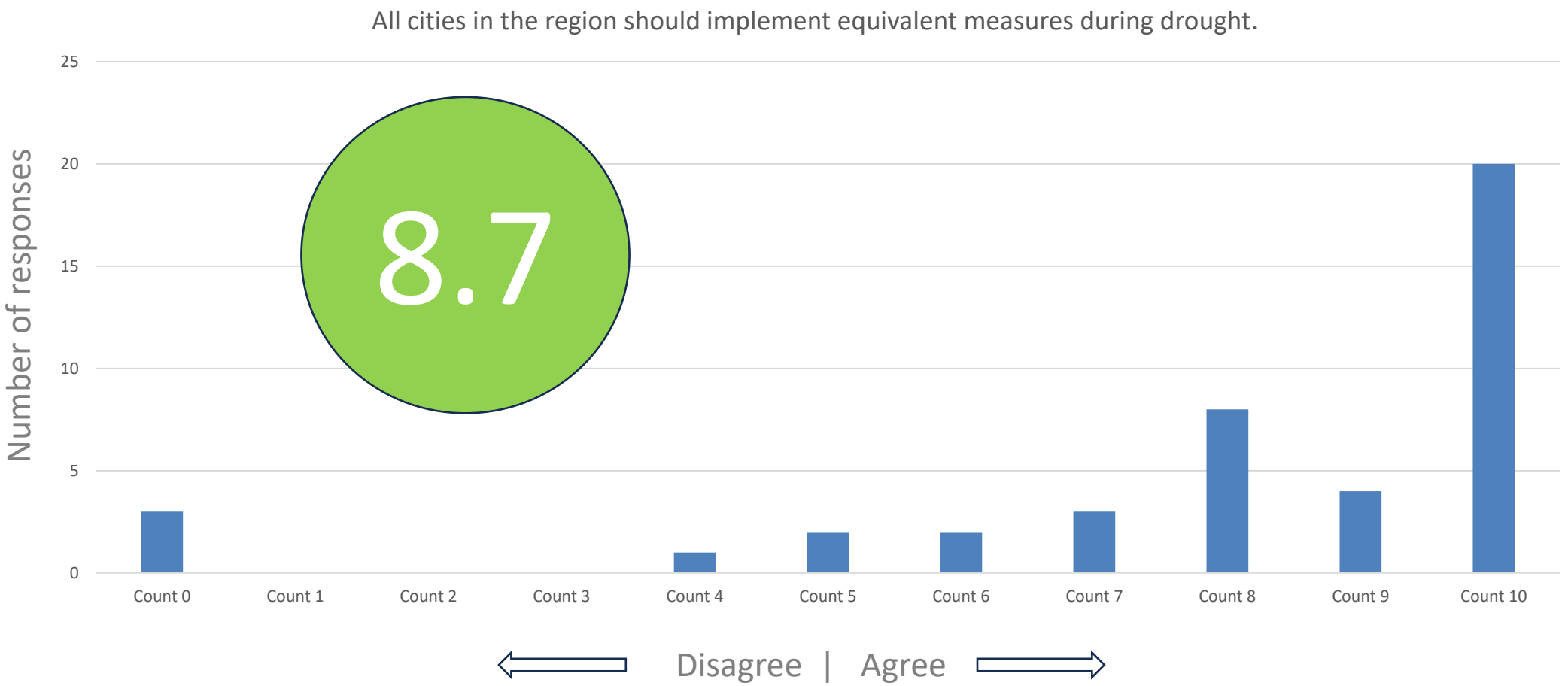
Participants were asked to mark their level of agreement with a statement.

Agreement = values over 5

Disagreement = values under 5

Representative comments selected to represent sentiment of respondents

All Cities in the region should implement equivalent measures during drought

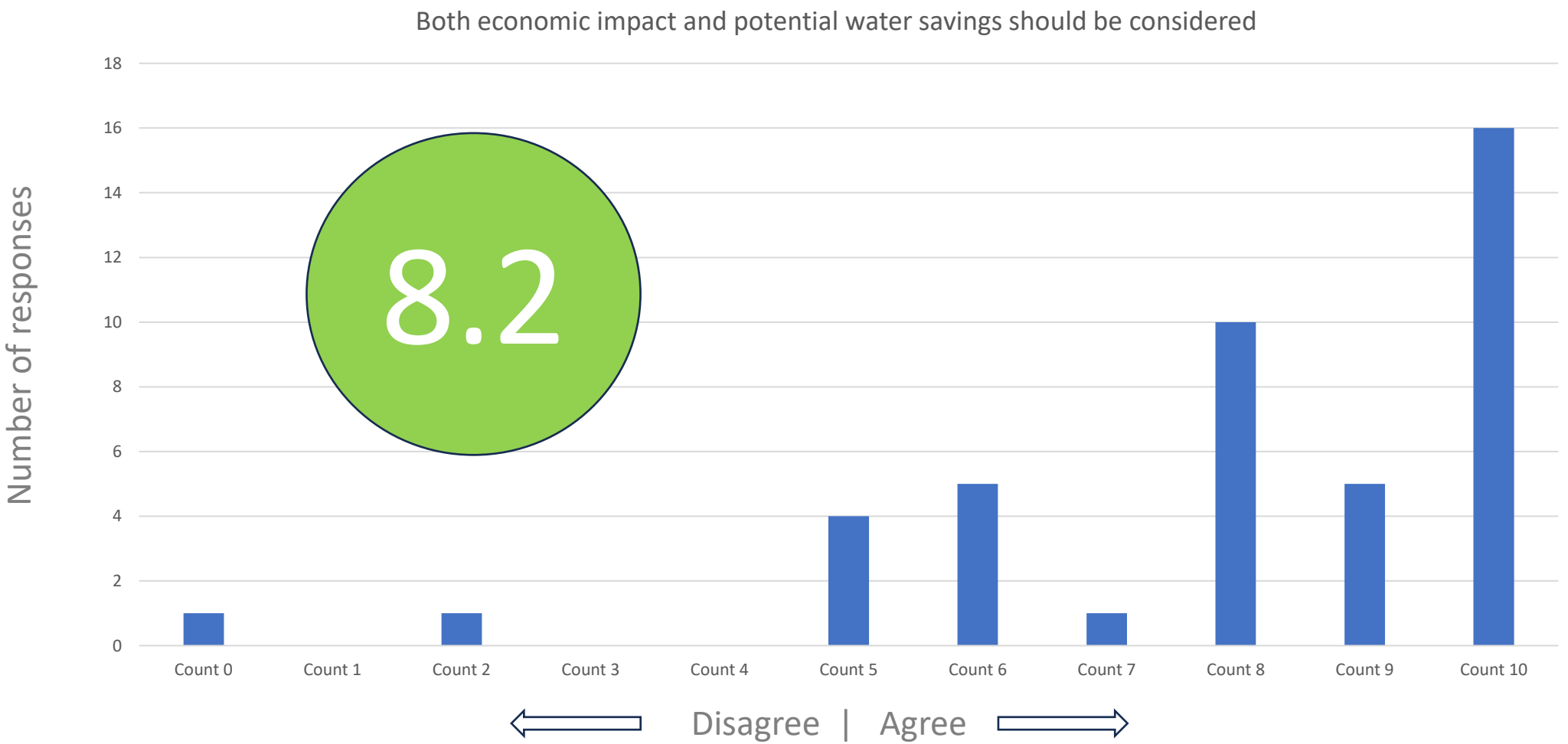


Prevailing sentiments

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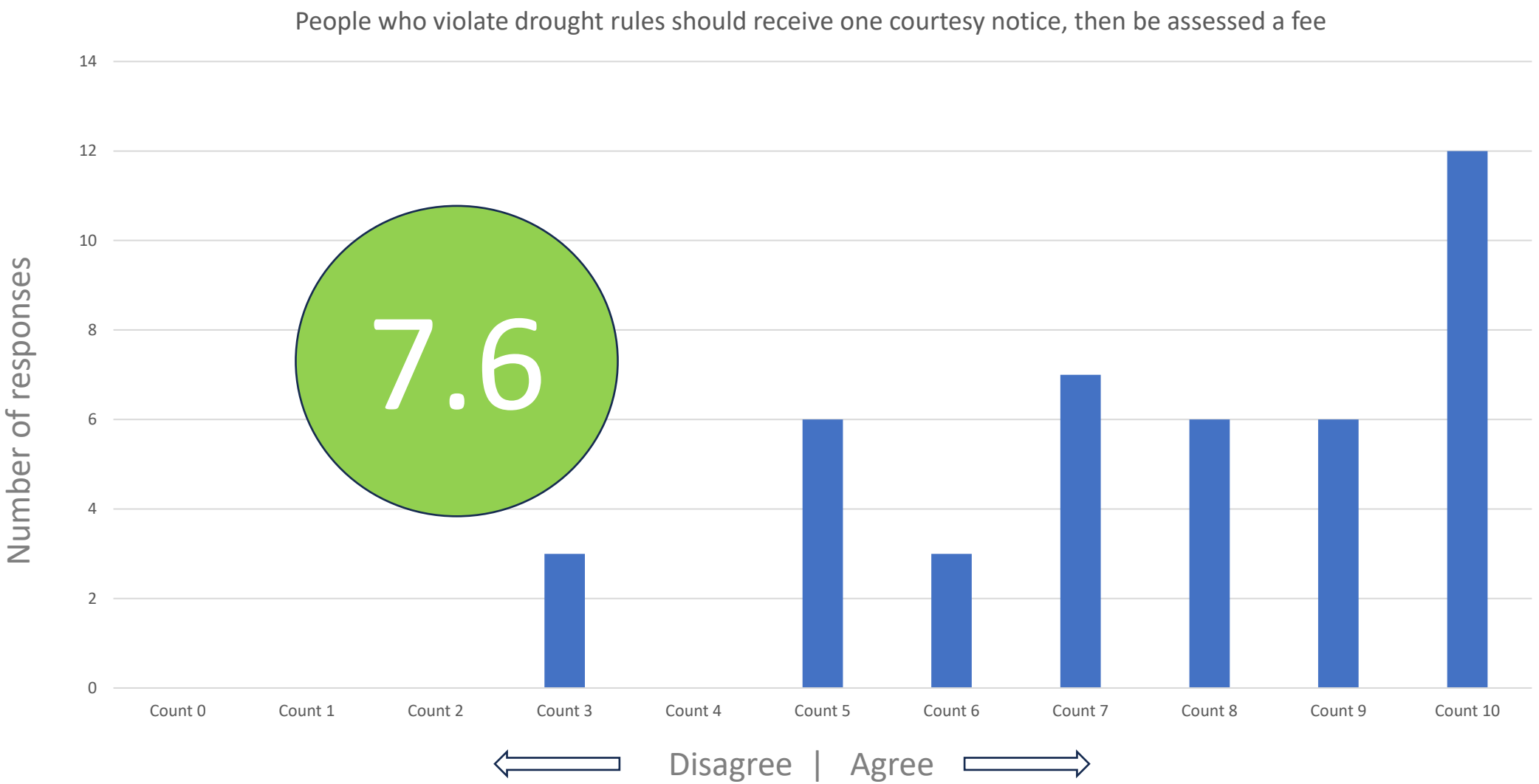
I agree with this until it gets to the last stage. At that point, economic impact should take a back seat.

Economic impact is important to keep our economy growing and people employed. Water needs trump that in an emergency, but we need to not forget the economic impact effects on people.

…concerns about economic impact must become less of a factor in taking drought mitigation actions in stage 2, and less again in stage 3, and less again in stage 4.

The economic impact should be weighed and considered, but also in conjunction with the broader economic impact of doing nothing.

People who violate drought rules should receive one courtesy reminder and then be assessed a fee.

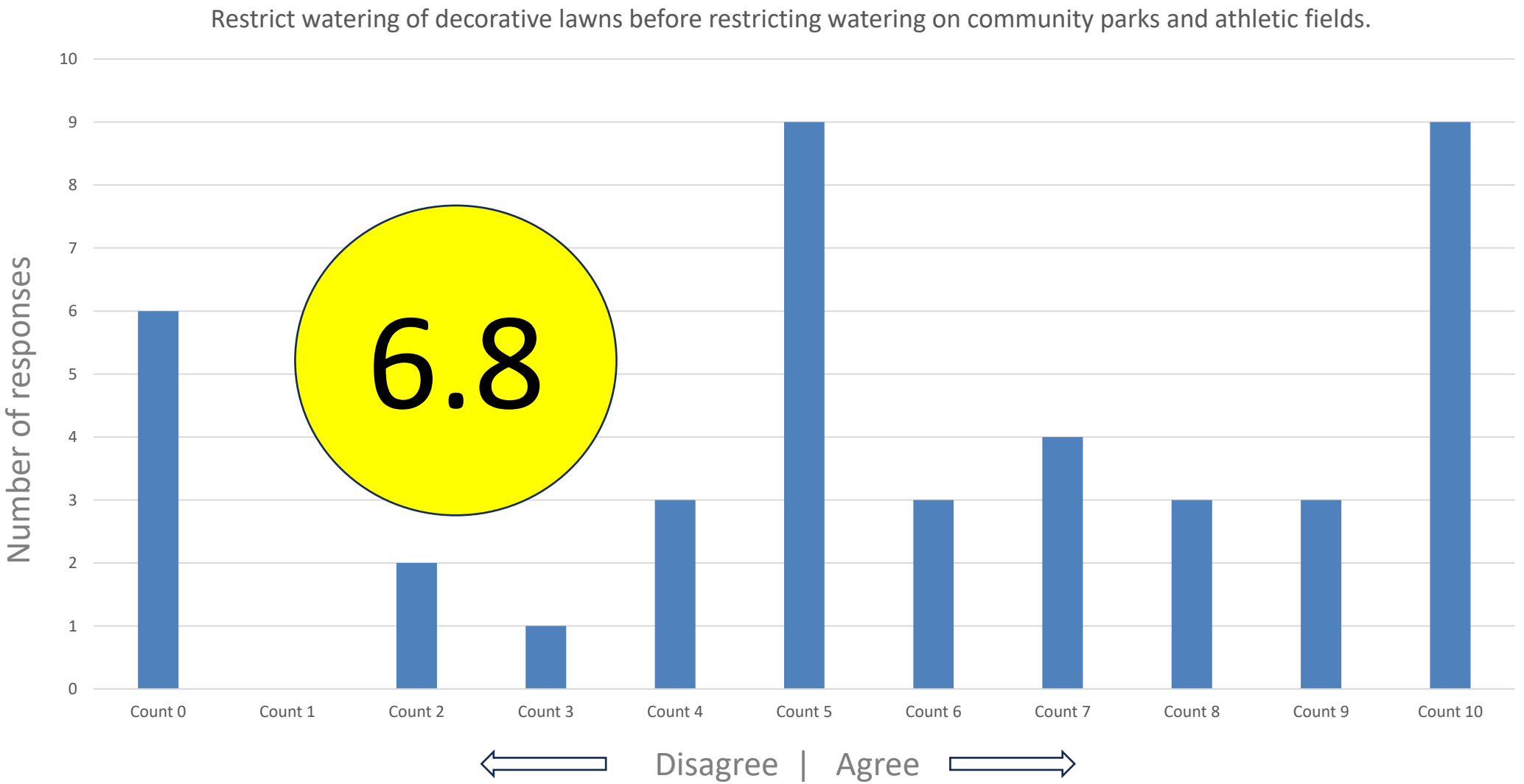


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I don't think citizens would like to see City facilities green, while their lawn is brown. While it makes sense, I don't think the optics would be good.

This may be a hard one to sell. I would hope people place more value in watering the parks and athletic fields.

Not exclusively. Cities should set the example in community parks where watering could be limited as they are not used for specific activities. Active athletic fields should continue to receive the water necessary to continue its purpose.

Golf courses should be allowed to make their own management decisions if they meet community water use reduction targets.



Prevailing sentiments

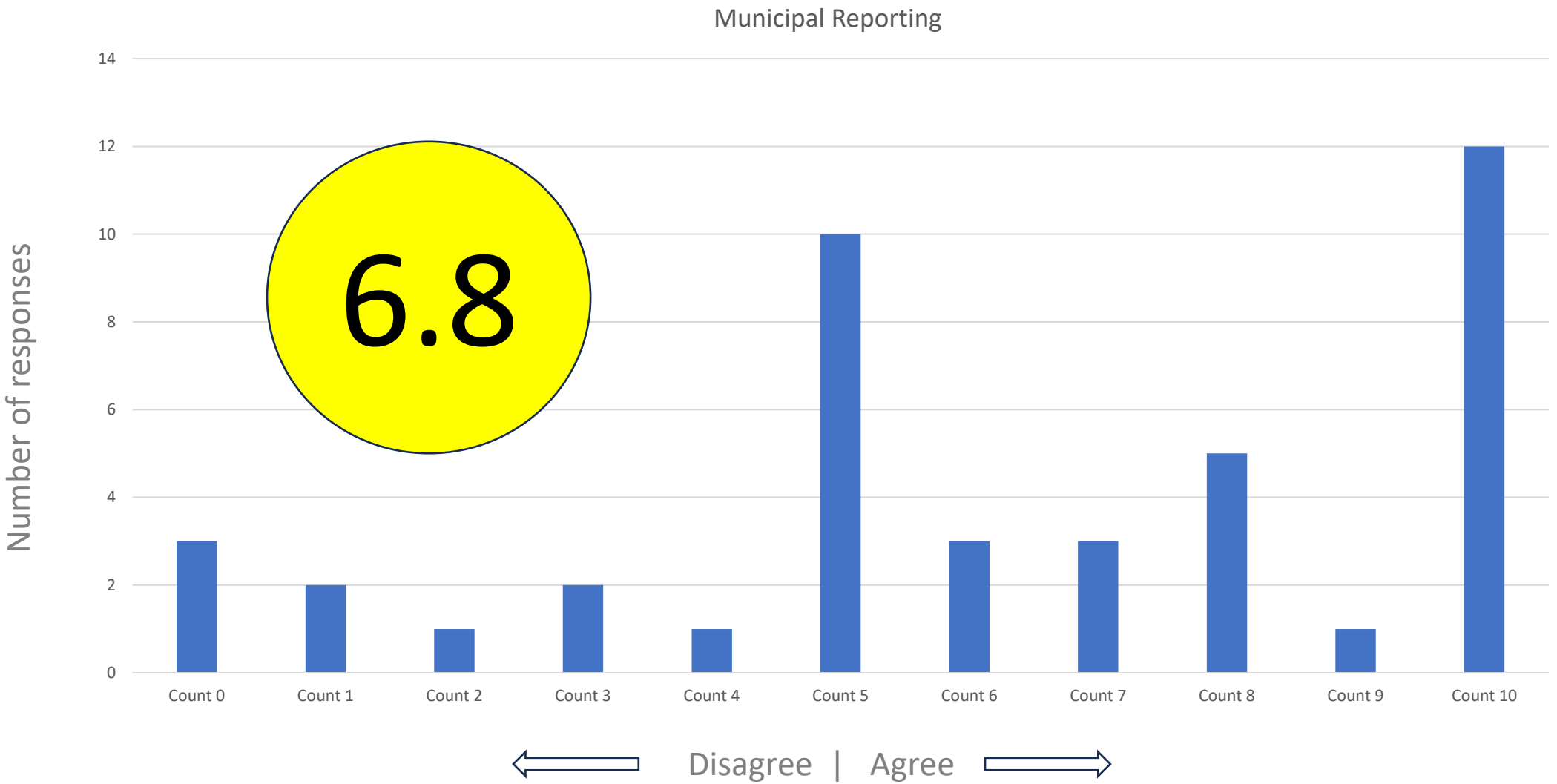
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Grass is grass - we are either all in or not. We can't start having exceptions. What will they do when there is no water?

Golf course water use needs to be reduced before residential water use. Although that can have a negative economic impact, residents should not be required to limit their use before golf course water use is limited.

I believe there is more than one solution to any problem. Set the restrictions and allow them the leeway to decide how they are going to comply.

Municipalities should periodically report water use reductions of city facilities



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Every month water data is shared. Is this not done already? Between state, county, and local requirements it becomes a full-time job just monitoring all the reports. More reporting is not needed.

…cities should set the example in water conservation. They should use the best technology to provide water efficiency. Reporting to the public in newsletters and communication with the citizens would go a long way set that example.

Conclusions

- Stakeholder consensus aligns well with most, but not all, proposed measures recommended by the technical committee.
- There is strong support for all cities to adopt a common plan.
- Golf course and public park policies lack clear consensus and merit more exploration.
- Measures with high economic impact were delayed until late stage drought by many respondents, but with understanding that if water use reductions aren’t achieved, economic impacts amplify.
- Sentiment on city reporting suggests value in communicating city efforts, but also desire to avoid creating new, mandatory reports.

Recommendations & Next Steps

- Where appropriate, the interagency drought committee will propose incremental measures that can begin in early drought stages before a complete prohibition.
- The interagency drought committee will meet with golf industry professionals to develop goal-oriented strategies.
- The district will assess public sentiment regarding prioritization of public and private lawn areas.



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