



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

HUGO WALL SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Environmental Finance Center

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## **New planning tool available for communities' water and wastewater infrastructure**

Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center (WSU EFC) announced the release of the new Community Sustainability Tool. The tool is a dynamic financial modeling program that uses information collected by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and other sources to predict the affordability of water and wastewater utility investments for communities. The tool uses estimates of income, population, employment trends and other information.

Iowa has more than xx public water and wastewater systems, many of which are faced with the challenges of funding new infrastructure needed to replace aging infrastructure. Financing and subsequent repayment of needed infrastructure replacement and renovations may place burdens on the utilities' customers to the point of not being economically sustainable in future years.

The Community Sustainability Tool is a Microsoft Excel based-tool that creates estimates of projected rates for water, wastewater and an overall summary for both services, if applicable. The model was developed for the EFC by Wichita State University professor Dr. Kenneth A. Kriz and his graduate assistant Debrapriya Banerjee. The tool's creates estimates for the future water utility rates and compares the community's predicted ability to sustain the funding in the coming years. The affordability predictor feature gives the tool a unique advantage over standard models of infrastructure investment tools.

"We believe the Community Sustainability Tool is a great planning resource for communities and others to use when faced with the challenges of ensuring safe, clean drinking water for their customers, as well as wastewater management to protect the environment for generations to come" said Dr. Kriz, former WSU professor who now works at the University of Illinois-Springfield.

Funding for the development and distribution of the tool was provided through a cooperative agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Community Sustainability Tool is available for free from the WSU Environmental Finance Center. To request a copy, please visit the center's website: [www.wichita.edu/efc](http://www.wichita.edu/efc) or contact Brian Bohnsack, EFC Program Manager, (316) 978-6421, [brian.bohnsack@wichita.edu](mailto:brian.bohnsack@wichita.edu).

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