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**WSU Environmental Finance Center releases financial planning tool for Louisiana communities to help plan for water utility infrastructure investments**

Today, the Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center announced the release of the Louisiana Community Sustainability Tool. The Tool is a free, user-friendly planning resource that helps utilities, municipalities, states, and other organizations assess if their community's water/wastewater rates can potentially support future infrastructure investments. Visit [www.wichita.edu/communitysustainabilitytool](http://www.wichita.edu/communitysustainabilitytool) to learn more about WSU’s Community Sustainability Tool.

Many communities throughout the country face difficult decisions about updating or replacing aging drinking water and wastewater utility infrastructure so that they can continue to provide customers with compliant, safe drinking water and sewage treatment. These investments are expensive and take careful planning by community decision makers.

“The Louisiana Community Sustainability Tool is a planning resource for community leaders, mayors, public works directors and community members. When it is time to upgrade or improve water or wastewater infrastructure, this tool can help communities understand their ability to pay for these large investments over time.” said Tonya Bronleewe, Director of the Environmental Finance Center. “One of the biggest benefits of this tool is that the calculations are targeted to each community, since no two communities are the same.”

The Louisiana Community Sustainability Tool uses a combination of user data and program-generated forecasts to broadly forecast the future average water and/or wastewater bill needed to sustain utility infrastructure investments. It shows the ability to sustain infrastructure investments in relation to the community’s forecasted median household income. The Tool can be used as a decision-making guide for further investigation into a community’s proposed water and wastewater utility infrastructure investments.

The Tool is free and available at the Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center’s website ([www.wichita.edu/efc](https://www.wichita.edu/efc)) or by contacting the Environmental Finance Center (efc@wichita.edu).

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**About Wichita State University Environmental Finance Center**

The **WSU Environmental Finance Center (EFC)** is one of 10 Environmental Finance Centers located across the country that provide communities with professional training, technical assistance and applied research to bolster efforts to manage the costs of environmental protection for the public.

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