



The Latest in the Wisconsin State Legislature

Government Affairs Seminar

February 19, 2026

League of Wisconsin Municipalities



Agenda for Today

1. Quick Recap of the 2023-2024 Session
2. League's 2025-2026 Legislative Agenda
3. Recap of the 2025-2027 State Budget
4. The Latest in the 2025-2026 Session
5. Drones Over Public Utilities Survey
6. Engaging in Legislative Advocacy
7. Relevant State Agency Updates
8. Brief Overview of Legislative Process
9. Questions, Comments, and Ideas



Municipalities are Economic Engines



72%
OF THE STATE'S
POPULATION



89%
OF THE STATE'S
MANUFACTURING
VALUE



153
OF THE STATE'S
155 HOSPITALS



90%
OF THE STATE
COMMERCIAL
PROPERTY VALUE



NEARLY ALL
THE STATE'S
AIRPORTS AND
COMMERCIAL
PORTS



60%
OF THE STATE'S
DAIRY
PROCESSORS

Legislative Session Calendar

2025

January						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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2026

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League's 2023-2024 Session Recap

- The League lobbied on 71 Assembly and Senate companion proposals
 - With one bill in each chamber, that's 142 total bills
- 38 (76) of the 51 (102) bills we supported were signed into law
 - **That's a 75% success rate!**
- 6 bills supported by the League were vetoed
- 0 bills opposed by the League were signed into law

A Great Year for Local Funding

2023 Wisconsin Act 12 provided a **historic investment** in shared revenue with **\$575 million** in total new funding

One penny of the state sales tax, or more than \$1.5 billion annually, is dedicated to local governments with growth in shared revenue payments tied to growth in the sales tax

Each unit of local government received a minimum of a 20% increase in shared revenue

A notable component of Act 12 includes supplemental shared revenue payments which may be spent on public safety, public works, courts, and transportation expenses



2025-2026 Legislative Agenda



MUNICIPAL AGENDA 2025-2026 Legislative Session



Looking Back and Planning Ahead

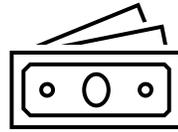
The 2023-2025 Biennial Budget and 2023-2024 Legislative Session were very impactful for the League of Wisconsin Municipalities' members. Through the Legislature's initiative, we saw the first progress in over two decades in funding for local governments, increases in transportation funding, a historic investment in housing, funding for the emerging contaminant PFAS, and more. We thank the Legislature for the incredible groundwork that was laid last session and appreciate the bipartisan movement on issues that matter to cities and villages.

Moving forward, the League is looking to build on last session's strong foundation. From infrastructure to inflation and housing to economic development, Wisconsin municipalities are looking to once again partner with the state to address critical needs we're seeing in communities of all sizes throughout our state. With new solutions that will be proposed this session comes new opportunities for population and economic growth and an increase in the quality of life for Wisconsinites.

The League looks forward to productive legislative discussions, working in partnership with stakeholders, and creative problem solving in the 2025-2026 Legislative Session.



Infrastructure



Inflation



Housing



Economic Development



Community-First Decision-Making

Recap of the 2025-2027 State Budget



316 W. Washington Ave., Suite 600
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-267-2380
Fax: 608-267-0645
Email: league@lwm-info.org
Website: lwm-info.org

For Immediate Release
June 5, 2025

Contact: Toni Herkert, Government Affairs Director, at 608-267-2380 or therkert@lwm-info.org

League of Wisconsin Municipalities Applauds the Joint Finance Committee's Action on the Environmental Improvement Fund

Toni Herkert, the Government Affairs Director of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, released the following statement on the Joint Finance Committee's unanimous approval of \$732,250,100 in revenue obligation bonding authorization for the Environmental Improvement Fund during this afternoon's executive session. The Environmental Improvement Fund contains the Clean Water Fund Program, which provides below market interest rate loans to municipal wastewater utilities for capital projects, and the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program, which provides below market interest rate loans to municipal drinking water utilities for capital projects.

Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

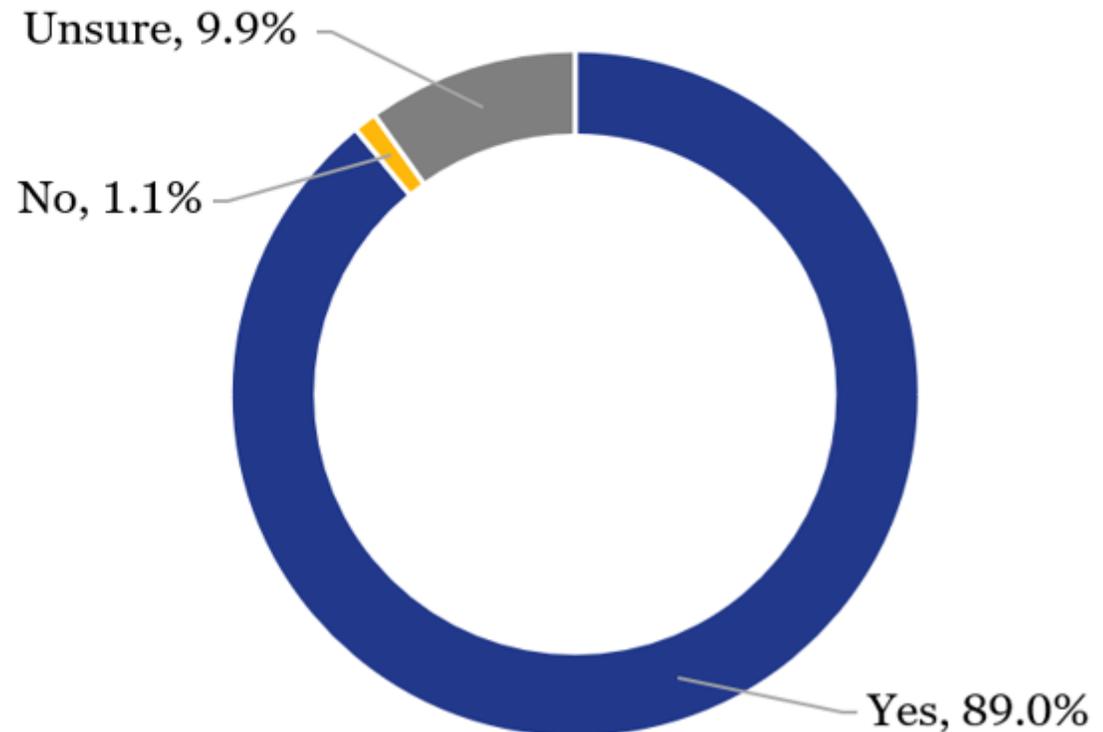
Survey Respondents: 91 water and wastewater utility and public works professionals

- Average municipal population of the respondents: 9,467 residents
- Number of counties with municipalities that responded: 47 counties

Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

1. Would you like to see unauthorized drones restricted from flying over municipal utilities?

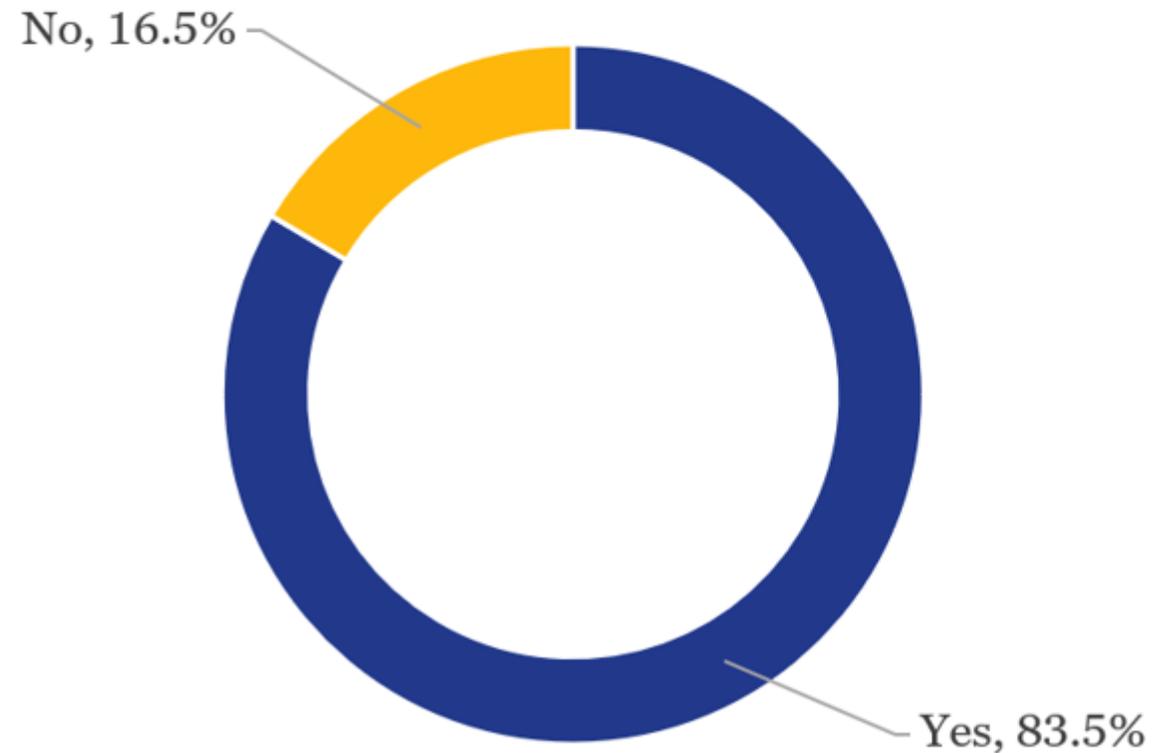
Yes	81
No	1
Unsure	9



Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

2. Are you concerned about the possibility of inexperienced operators flying drones over public utility facilities in Wisconsin potentially harassing workers or inadvertently crashing and causing injuries or damage to infrastructure?

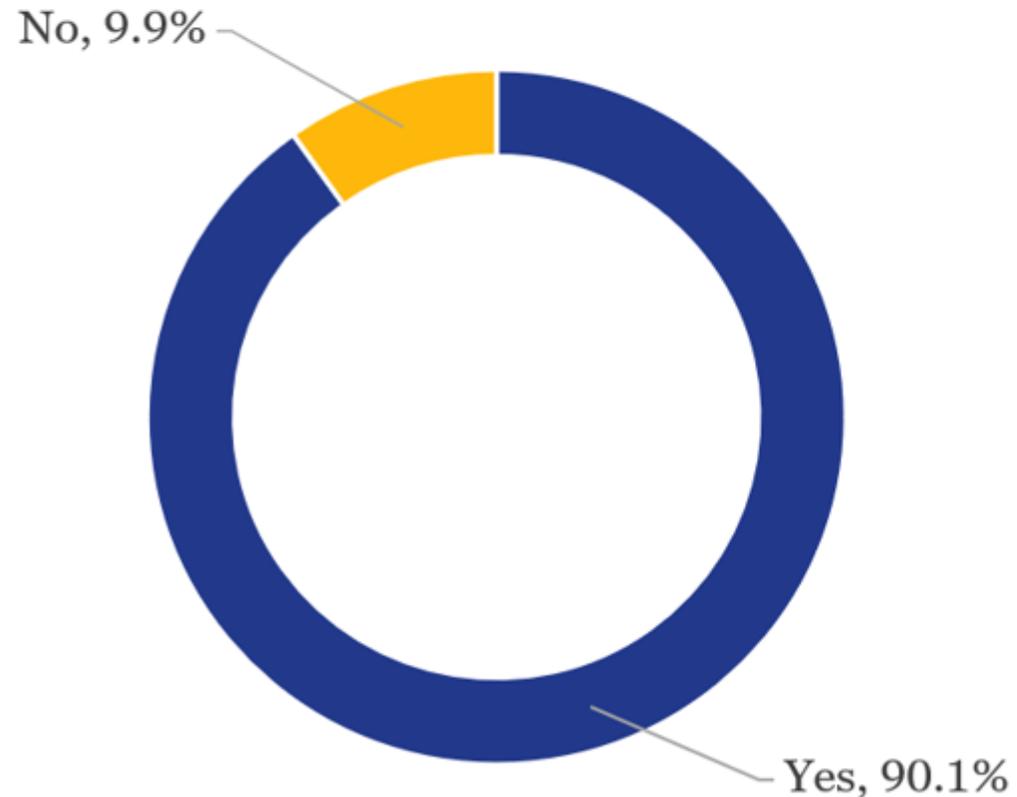
Yes	76
No	15



Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

3. Are you concerned about the possibility of malicious actors flying drones over public utility facilities in Wisconsin potentially leading to theft, vandalism, sabotage, or terrorist events or other security concerns?

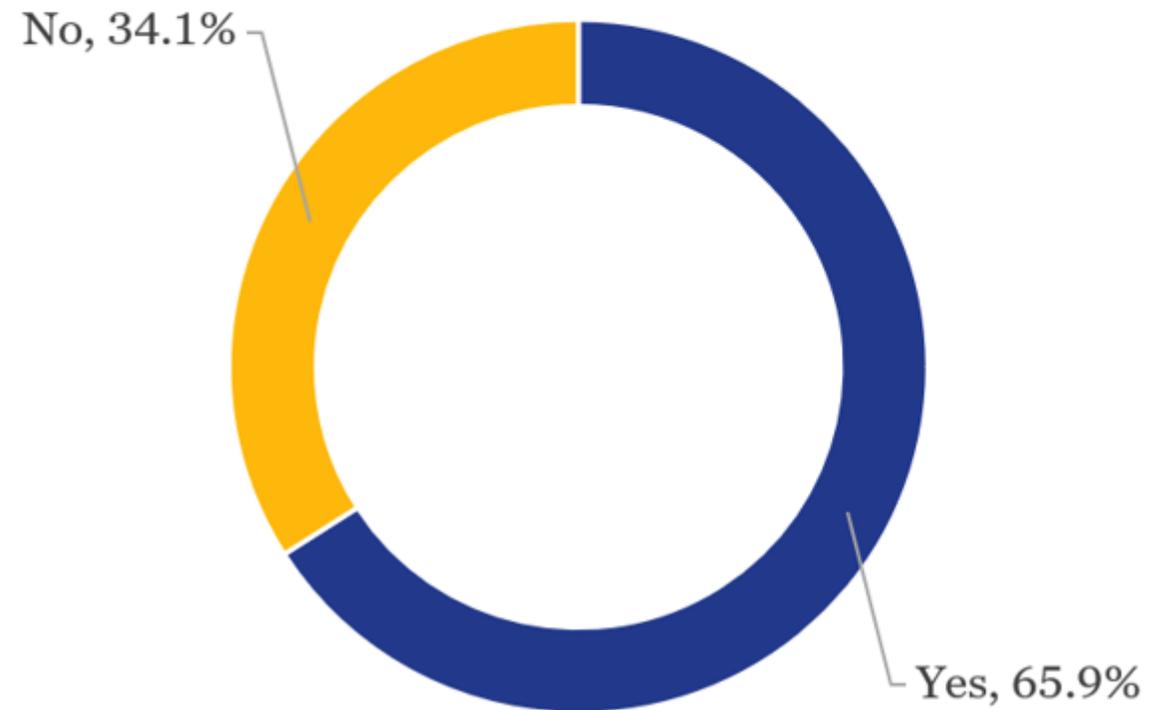
Yes	82
No	9



Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

4. Has your municipal utility, either through the municipality or utility itself or through a contracted party, utilized drones for official business?

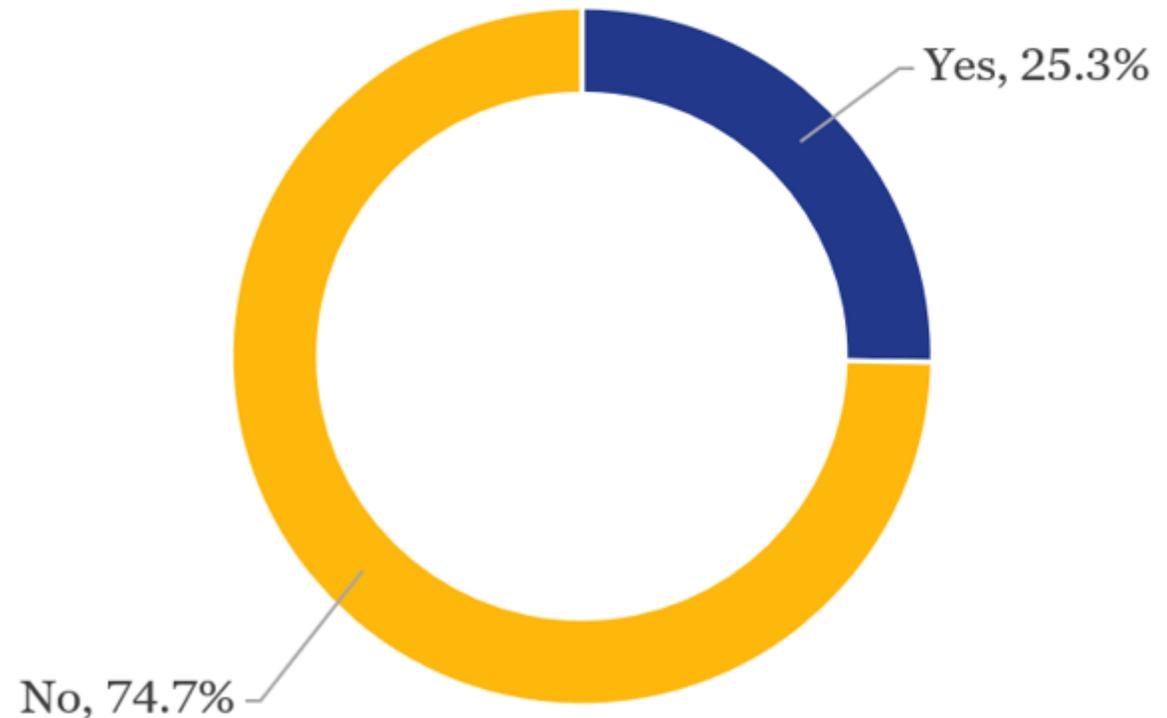
Yes	60
No	31



Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

5. Do you have or have you heard concerns with unauthorized or unexpected drone flights over your municipal utility?

Yes	23
No	68



Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

6. If you have any further details on these concerns you would like to share, please briefly write those below.

Question was marked as optional in survey. Quotes below are selected from responses.

- Utilities are in place for the public safety and use benefit: to the customer. I have concerns over sabotage or other acts of terrorism. It has already been displayed in cyber attacks.
- In the past we had a drone crash into one of our water towers. It didn't cause any damage to the water tower, but we needed to go up to retrieve it while the catwalk were covered in snow and ice. We decided that we would never entertain doing that again under those conditions. Having a rule would help back us up when we refuse to retrieve something that shouldn't be there in the first place.
- Although it hasn't been an issue yet, it would be ideal to prevent it from becoming one. Most things a drone cannot hurt but falling into a mixing basin or oxidation ditch in the wastewater treatment plant is of real concern. Obviously injuries are another issue.

Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

6. If you have any further details on these concerns you would like to share, please briefly write those below.

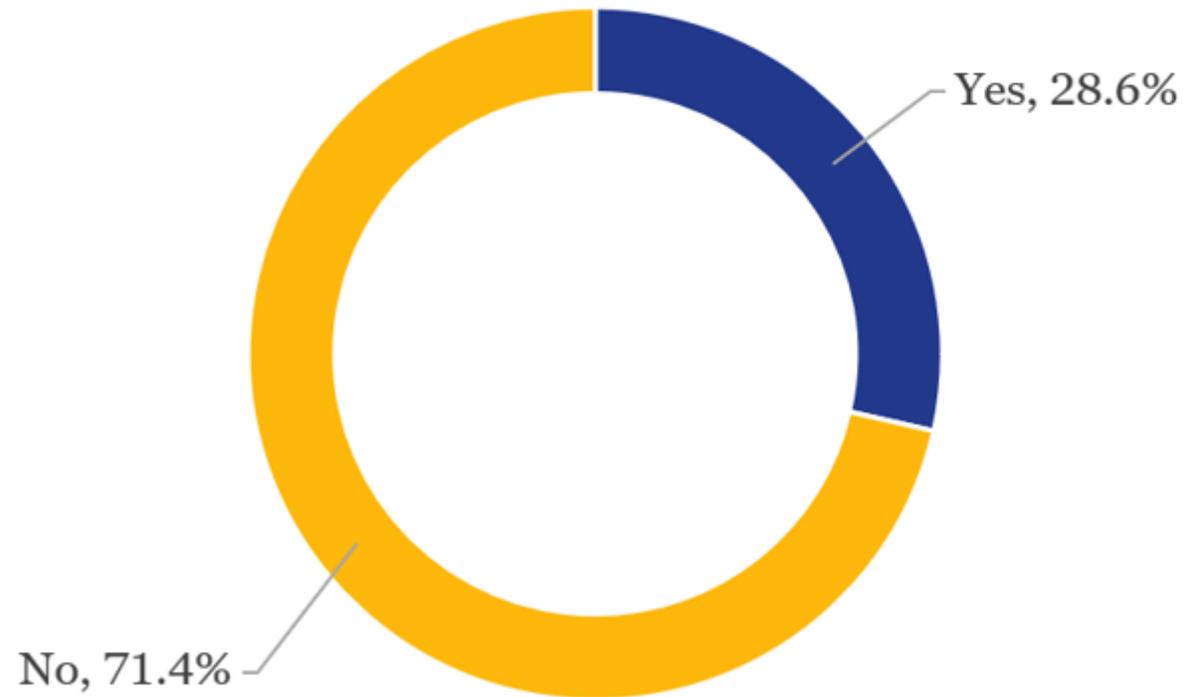
Question was marked as optional in survey. Quotes below are selected from responses.

- We have been called to retrieve drones from trees. We have not sustained any damage to our facilities so far.
- Being on the shoreline of Lake Michigan our treatment plants have a lot of foot traffic from the general public. Being able to decipher which drone flights are recreational and which ones could be conducting surveillance for nefarious activities is very difficult. Prohibiting these flights above utilities would eliminate the need for utility employees to try and determine which are innocent and which have bad intentions.
- Area of concern would include, Security & Surveillance Risks, Physical Safety Hazards, Contamination Concerns, Privacy & Data Protection and Operational Disruptions

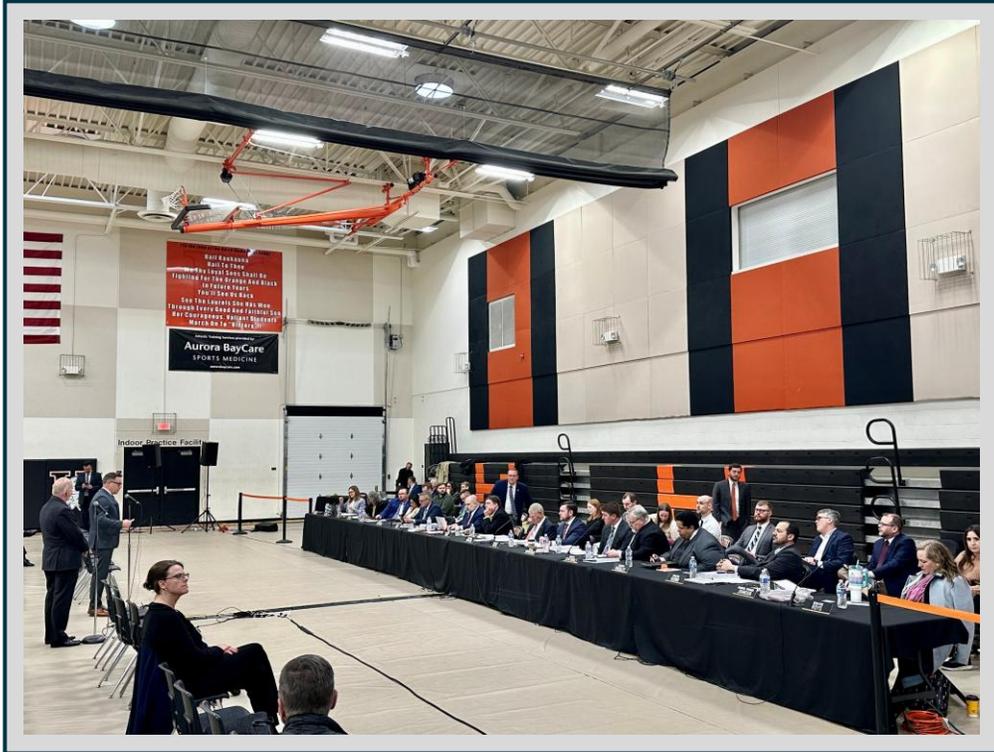
Drones Over Public Utilities Survey

7. Have you heard concerns from municipal utility peers in Wisconsin about unauthorized or unexpected drone flights over their municipal utility?

Yes	26
No	65



Staying Engaging in the Legislative Process



1. Attend legislative listening sessions
2. Provide testimony at public hearings
3. Contact your legislators on issues important to your municipality
4. Get to know your legislators and become a resource on local issues
5. Stay plugged in with the League to keep up-to-date on resources and issues

ANY QUESTIONS ON HOW TO ENGAGE - REACH OUT!

Relevant Agency Updates

MDV Reauthorization

Water Quality Trading

Clean Water Fund IUP

Lead and Copper Rule

- DG-04-24



316 W. Washington Ave., Suite 600
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-267-2380
Fax: 608-267-0645
Email: league@lwm-info.org
Website: lwm-info.org

March 3, 2025

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Permits Section – WQ/3
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

Submitted via email to DNRphosphorus@wisconsin.gov

Re: League of Wisconsin Municipalities Comments on the Phosphorus Multi-Discharger Variance

DNR WPDES Permitting Team,

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities (League) appreciates the opportunity to submit written comments strongly in support of the Phosphorus Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV). We ask that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proceed with submitting a request to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requesting reauthorization of the MDV.

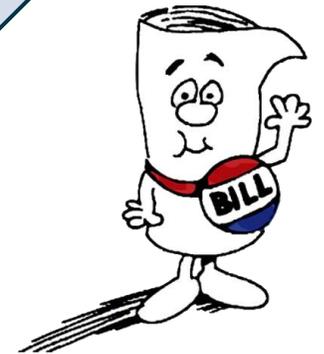
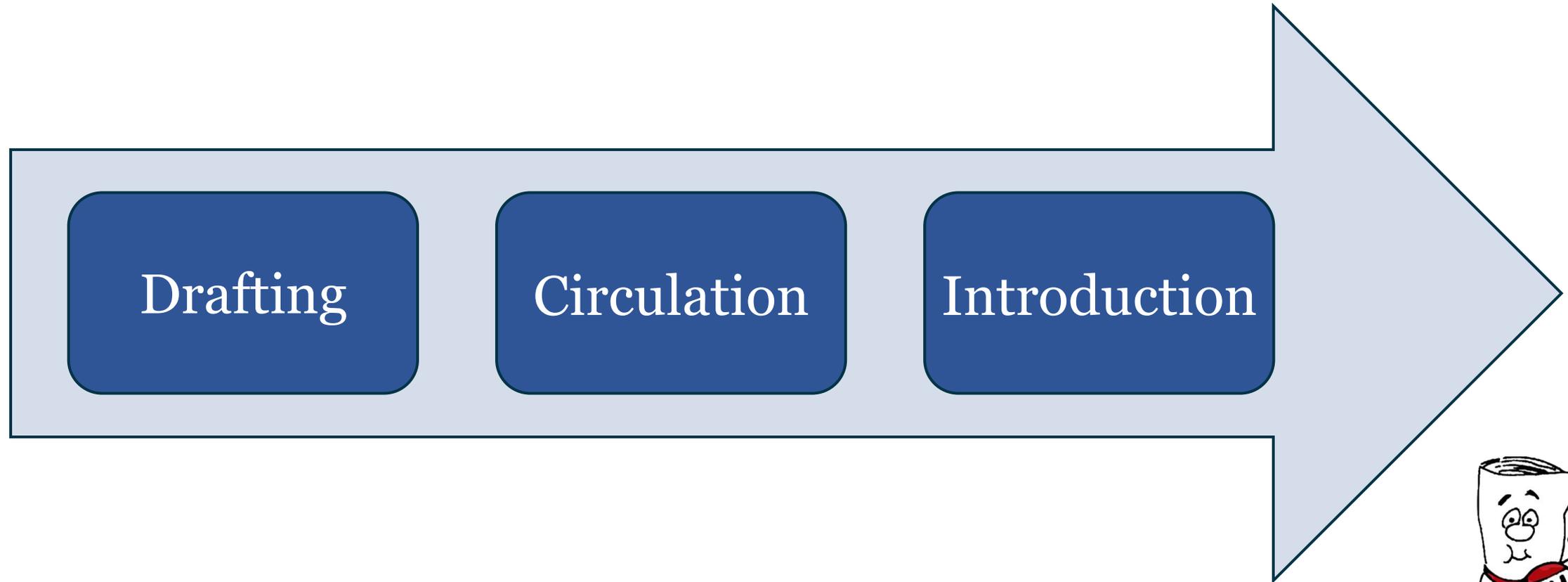


Legislative Updates

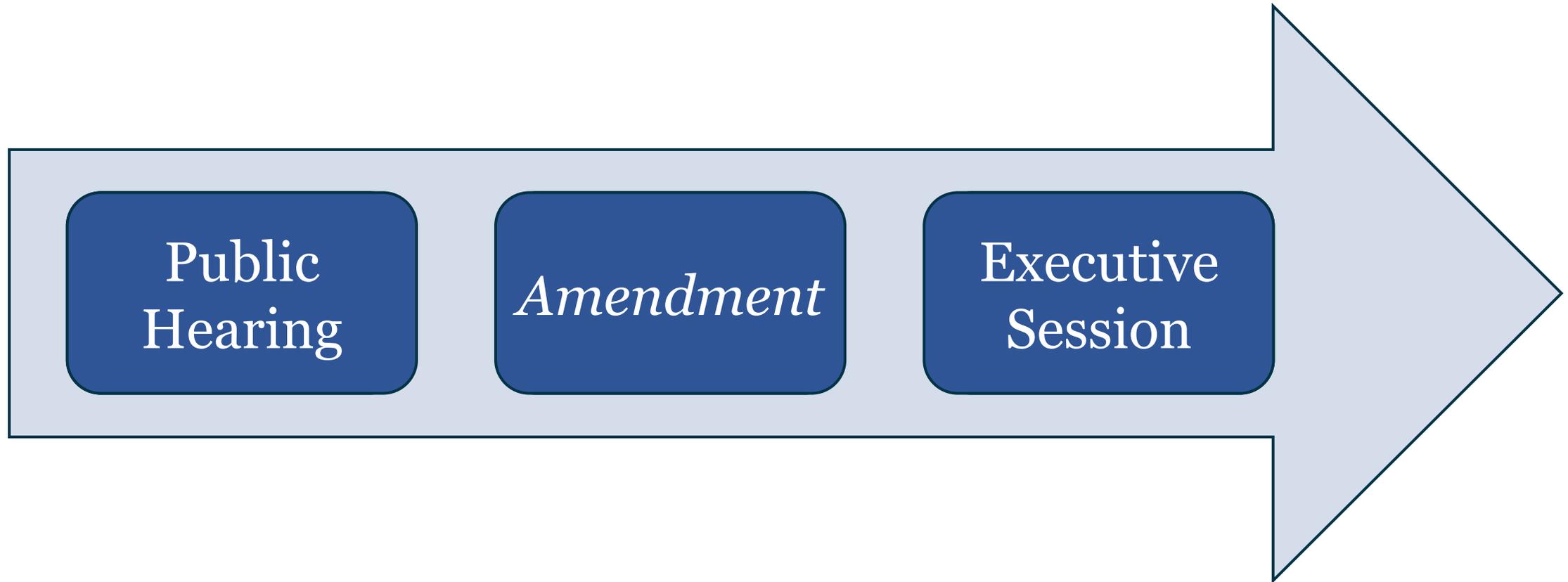
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Legislative Process - First Steps



Legislative Process - Committee



Legislative Process - Final Steps

Senate /
Assembly
Debate

Senate /
Assembly
Vote

Governor's
Signature
or Veto



Questions or Comments

Nick Zavos
Assistant General Counsel
nzavos@lwm-info.org

Toni Herkert
Government Affairs Director
therkert@lwm-info.org

Evan Miller
Government Affairs Specialist
emiller@lwm-info.org

lwm-info.org

