

Knoxville Water and Energy for All Coalition

Select Research Findings

May 2021



Research Team

- Roger Colton with Fisher, Sheehan, and Colton (Belmont, MA)
- Erin Rose and Beth Hawkins with Three³, Inc. (Knoxville, TN)
- Forest Gregg with DataMade (Chicago, IL)

Research Methods

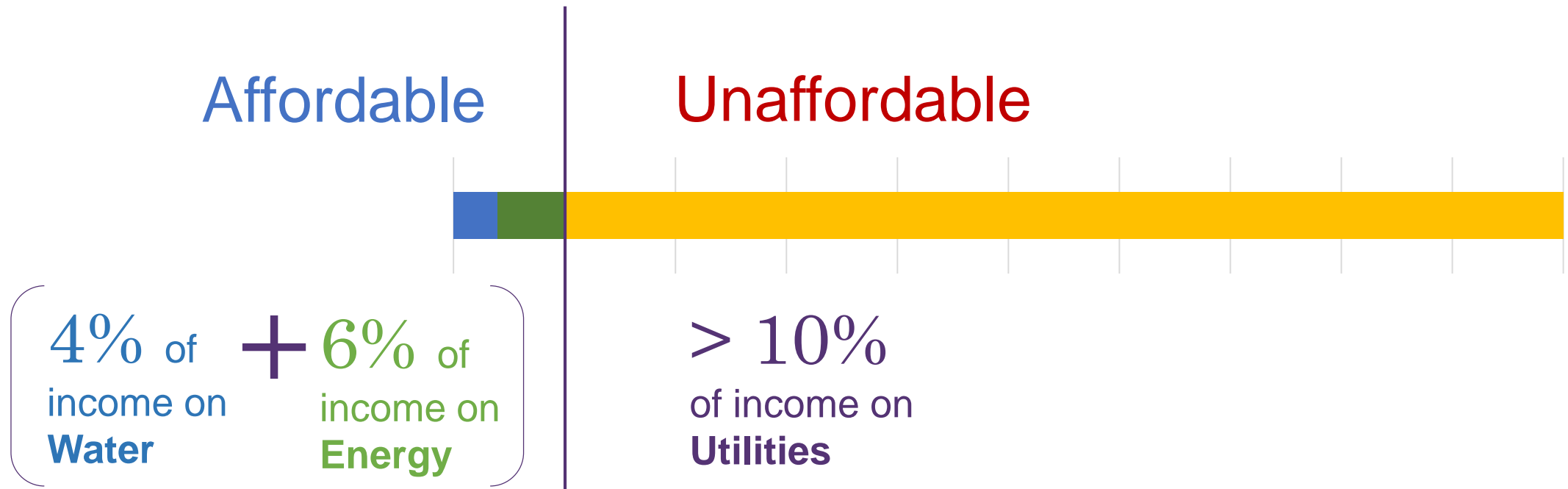
- KUB provided a complete record of disconnect and past due account data for census tracts in their service territory.
- Majority of findings are limited to the census tracts within Knoxville that receive all four KUB services: electric, gas, water, and sewer.
- Each researcher used KUB data supplemented by income, demographic, and other data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau.
- For information on the methods used by each of the researchers, please visit www.knoxvillewea.org/



Knoxville Utility Burden

10%

A household is **utility burdened** if its KUB costs for **electric, gas, water, and sewer** are **greater than 10%** of the household's **annual income**.



ALL

Knoxville Households living below 150% poverty are likely utility burdened.

Unaffordable Utilities

Poverty Level	Income (2020)	Utility Burden Range
40-50%	\$8,620	27-47%
50-99%	\$17,240	15-30%
100-124%	\$21,550	15-27%
125-149%	\$23,791	10-21%
150-184%	\$31,894	5-15%
185-199%	\$34,840	5-15%

**23% of
ALL Knoxville
Households are
utility burdened**

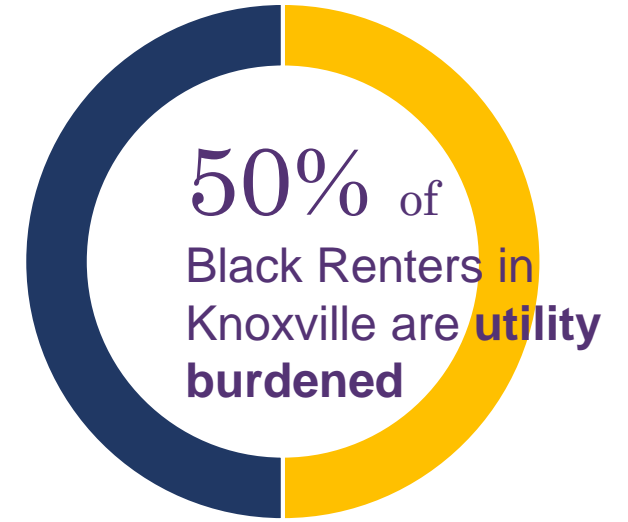
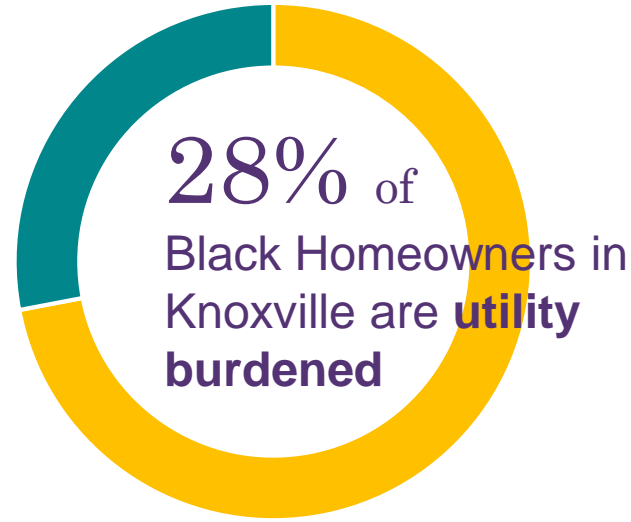
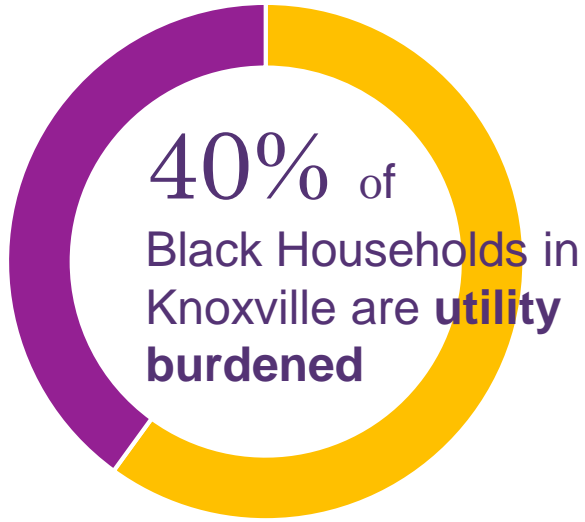


20% of Knoxville Homeowners are utility burdened

28% of Knoxville Renters are utility burdened

By Race and Homeowner

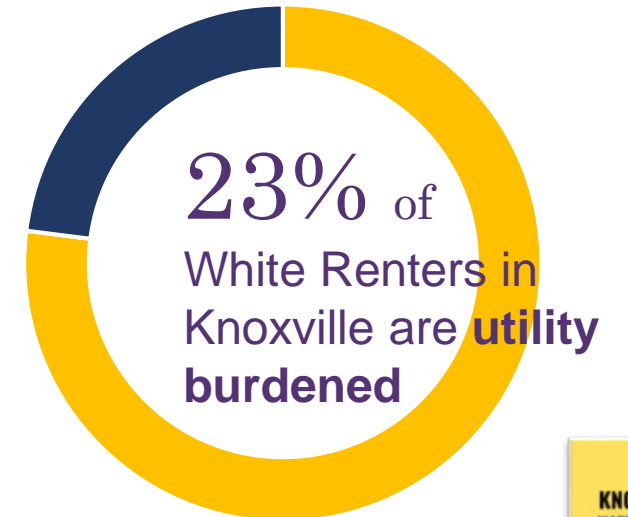
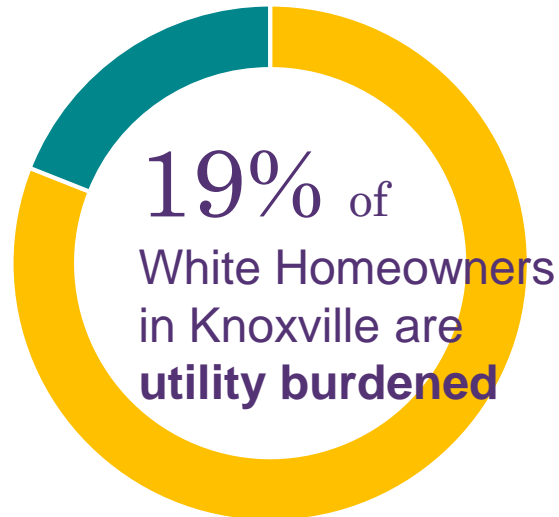
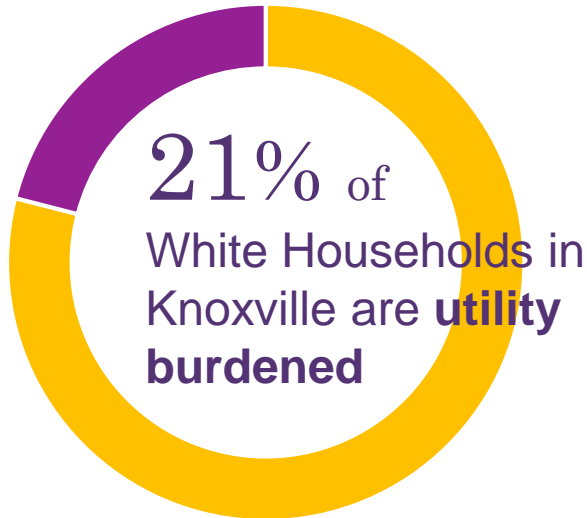
Renter



Compared to

Compared to

Compared to

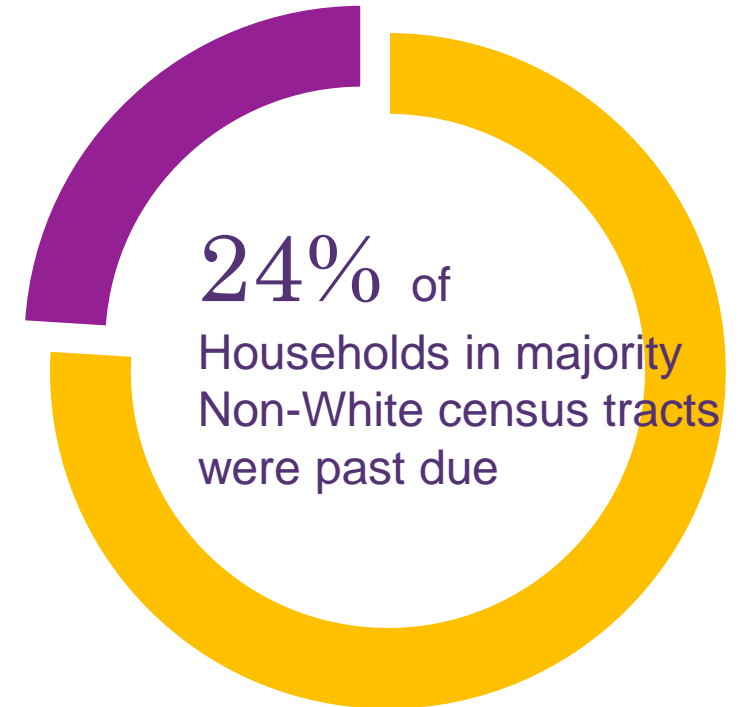
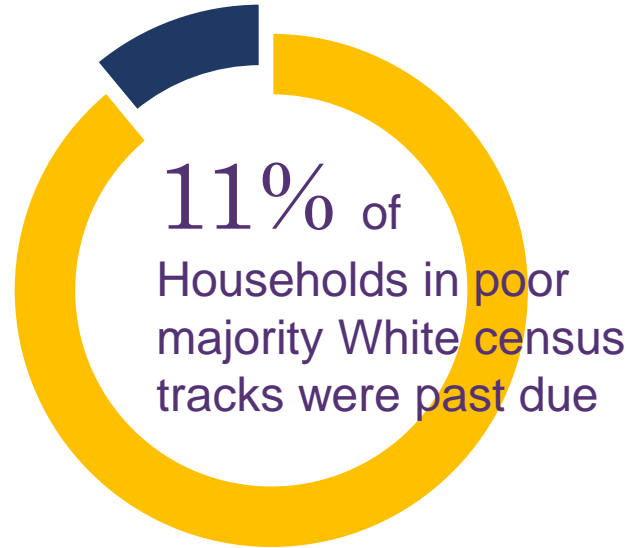
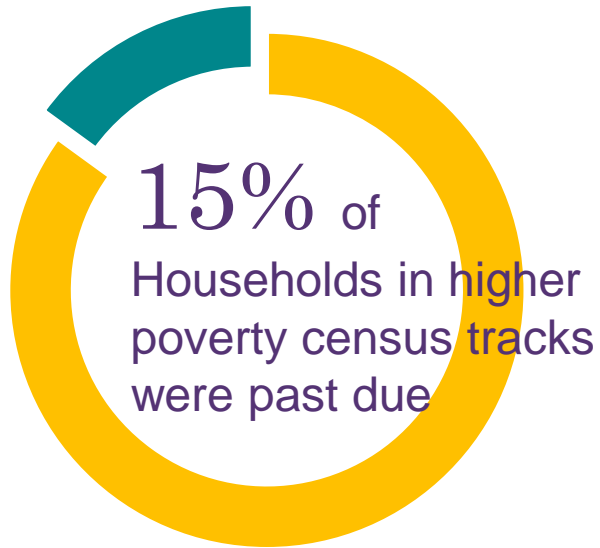




KUB Past Due Accounts and Disconnections

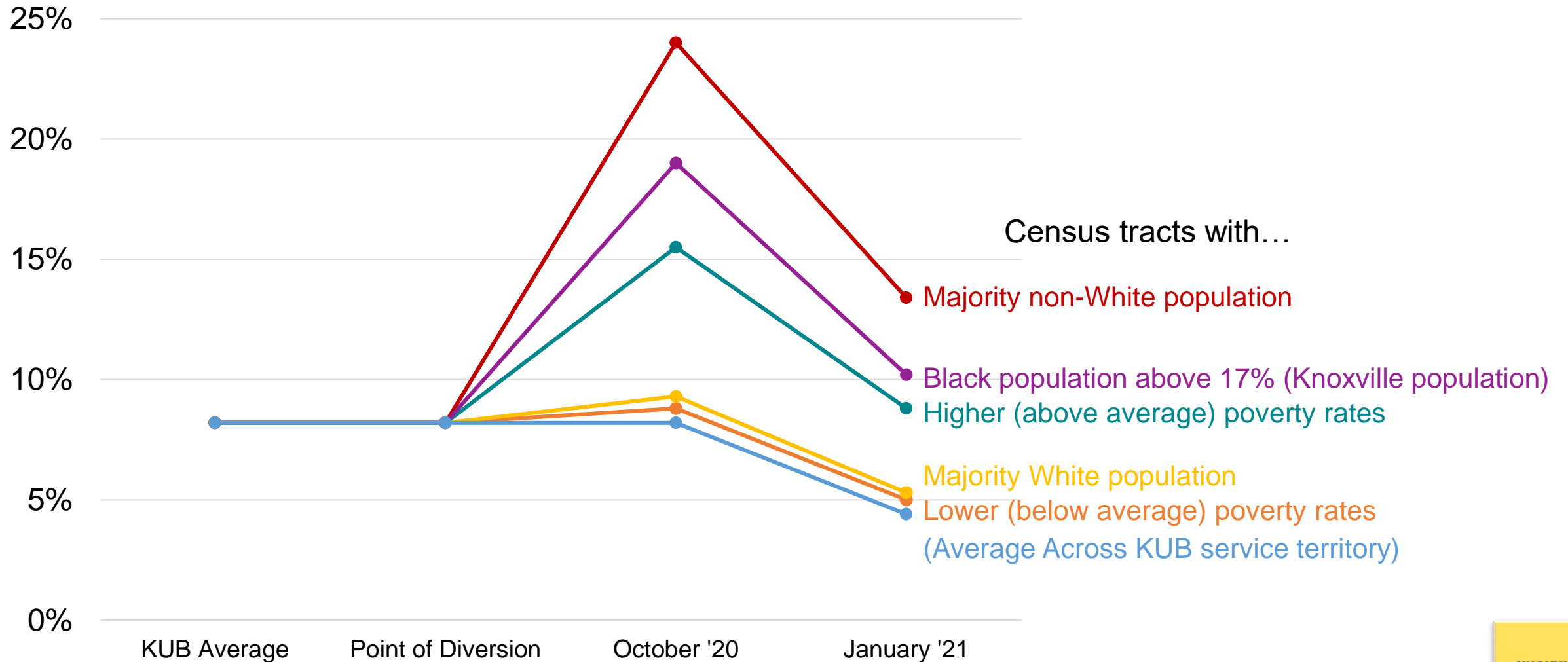
PAST DUE

Despite utility bill assistance, many low-income households remained **PAST DUE** on their KUB accounts when disconnections restarted in October 2020.



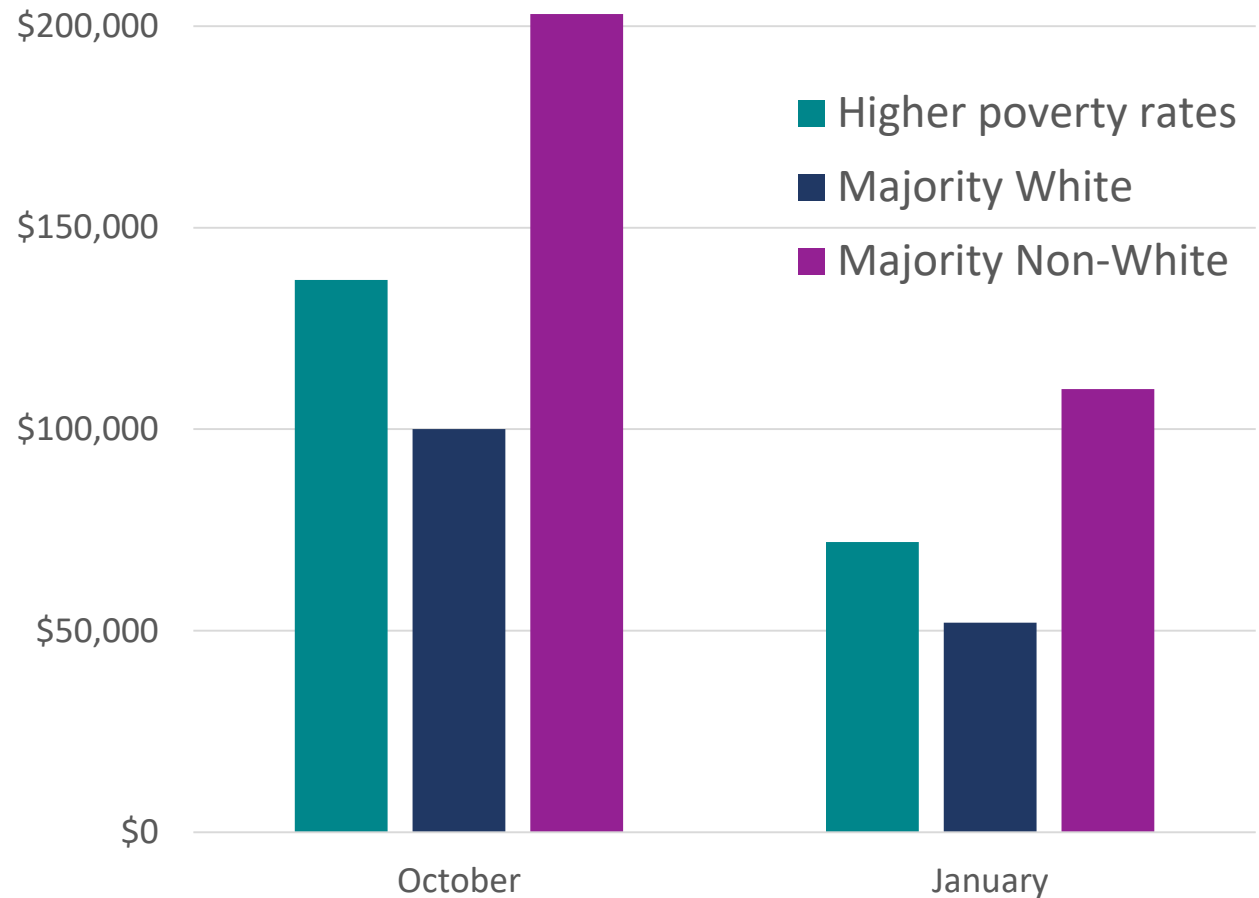
PAST DUE:

Average Percentage of Households in Census Tracts with PAST DUE KUB Accounts in October 2020 and January 2021



2X

Communities of Color owed 2 times more in past due accounts in October 2020.



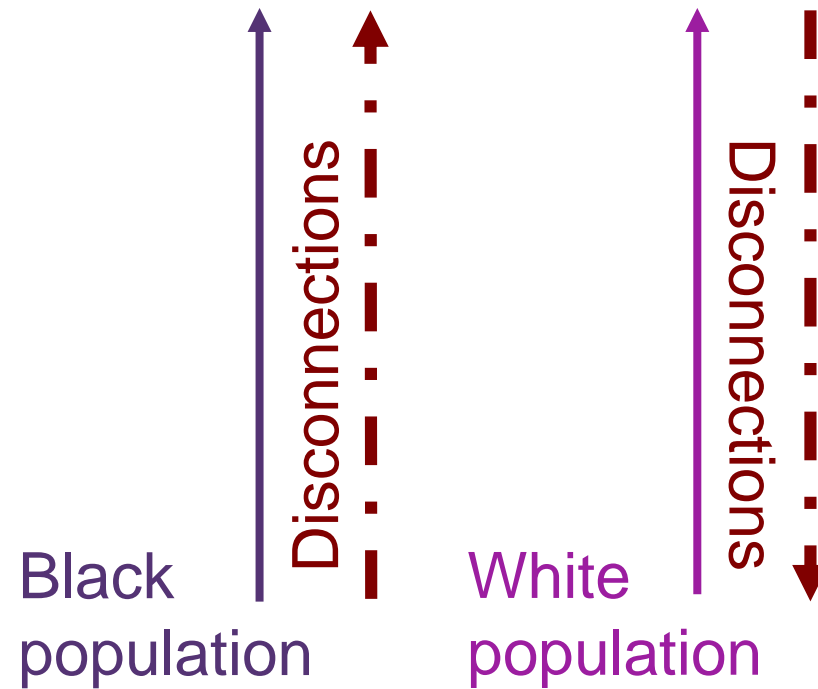
On average, households in majority Non-White census tracts in Knoxville owed about \$200,000 in collective debt to KUB in October 2020; compared to about \$100,000 owed by poor, majority White population census tracts.

3,000

Knoxville homes were **DISCONNECTED** from water and energy after KUB lifted its moratorium on disconnections during the pandemic; between October 2020 and February 2021.

200%

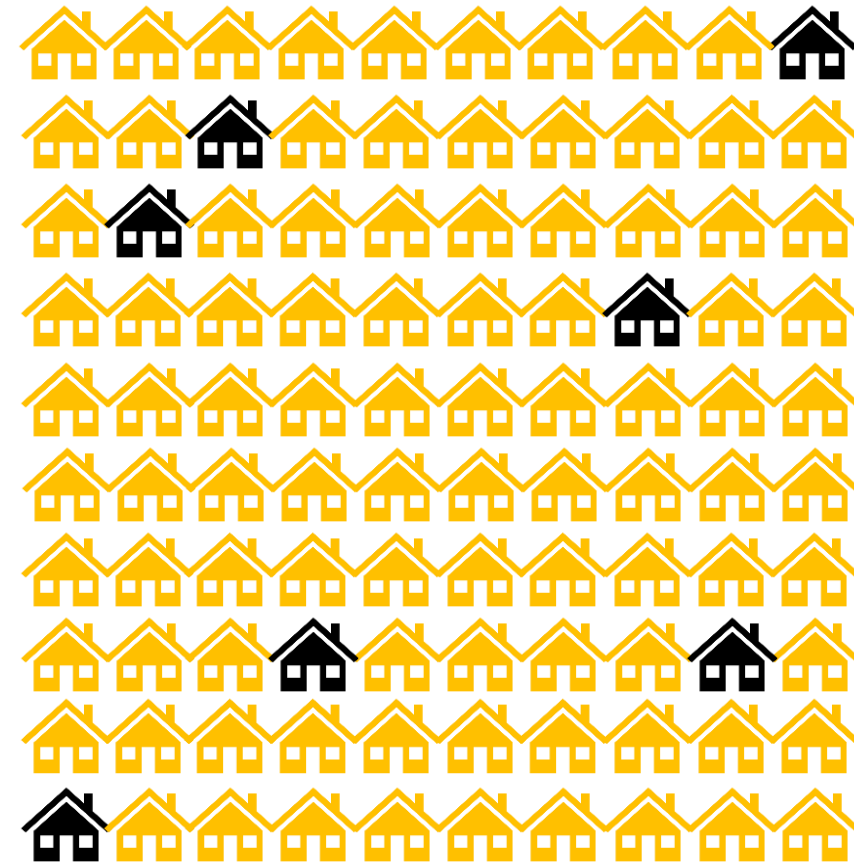
KNOXVILLE
Communities of Color are 200% more likely to be **DISCONNECTED** from power and water.



Across the KUB service territory, as the Black population in a census tract **INCREASES**, so does the disconnection rate. However, as the White population increases, the disconnection rate **DECREASES**.

1 in 15 Homes

In the census tract with the highest disconnection rate of 6.8%, approximately 1 in 15 homes were disconnected from power and water.

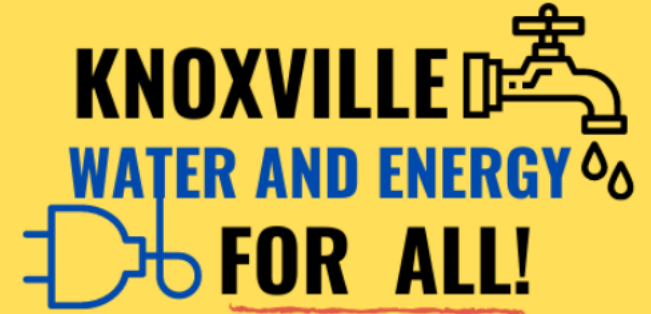


(October 2020 – February 2021)

Save the date!

KWEA Summit

June 24th @ 5:30pm



Join us to discuss and advance affordable utilities for all of Knoxville. Discover how you can be part of the solution!



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KnoxvilleWEA.org



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