

Survey of South Carolina Electrical Ratepayers

Topline Report – October 10, 2018

Clout Research conducted a telephone survey of electrical ratepayers statewide in South Carolina regarding electricity suppliers and issues related to Santee Cooper. The survey was conducted Sept. 26 – Oct. 1, 2018, and included 804 respondents in both landline and cell phone-only households across the state. The survey carries a confidence interval of 95% and a margin of error of +/- 3.45 percentage points.

Q1. From which company do you get your electricity?

Q1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. SANTEE COOPER	96	12.0	12.0	12.0
	2. SCE&G	233	28.9	28.9	40.9
	3. DUKE ENERGY	198	24.6	24.6	65.5
	4. ELECT CO-OP	169	21.0	21.0	86.6
	5. OTHER/NOT SURE	108	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q2. IF NOT SANTEE COOPER - Are you familiar with Santee Cooper, South Carolina's state-owned electric utility?

Q2					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. YES	234	29.1	33.1	33.1
	2. NO	403	50.1	56.9	90.0
	3. NOT SURE	71	8.8	10.0	100.0
	Total	708	88.0	100.0	
Missing	System	96	12.0		
Total		804	100.0		

3. Are you familiar with the failed VC Summer Nuclear project in Jenkinsville, South Carolina - a joint partnership of Santee Cooper and South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G) to build two new nuclear power plants, which was shut down because of cost overruns and mismanagement?

Q3					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. YES	388	48.3	48.3	48.3
	2. NO	322	40.0	40.0	88.3
	3. NOT SURE	94	11.7	11.7	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

4. Do you believe the state of South Carolina should own a power company like Santee Cooper - OR - do you believe that electric utilities should be owned by private companies like SCE&G and Duke Energy – OR – does it not really matter to you – OR – are you not sure?

Q4					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. OKAY FOR STATE TO OWN	208	25.9	25.9	25.9
	2. UTILITIES SHOULD BE PRIVATE	231	28.7	28.7	54.5
	3. DOESN'T MATTER	172	21.4	21.4	75.9
	4. NOT SURE	194	24.1	24.1	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Over the next few months, you might hear that a private company wants to buy Santee Cooper from the state of South Carolina. Please tell me whether the following information would make you more likely to support such a sale OR whether you would oppose such a plan, OR whether it makes no difference to you:

Q5. As it stands right now, without a sale of Santee Cooper, that utility’s nuclear project failure will potentially cost each Santee Cooper customer \$13 per month for the next 40 years - a total of \$6200 from each customer, on top of the \$540 million customers have already paid in. Knowing this about Santee Cooper’s financial situation, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q5					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	343	42.6	42.6	42.6
	2. LESS LIKELY	274	34.1	34.1	76.8
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	187	23.2	23.2	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q6. Santee Cooper has over \$4.5 billion in debt related to the failed VC Summer project, and \$4 billion more in debt beyond that - Santee Cooper will eventually have to raise electric rates to pay off that debt, or seek a bailout from taxpayers. Knowing this about Santee Cooper’s financial situation, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q6					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	445	55.3	55.3	55.3
	2. LESS LIKELY	217	27.0	27.0	82.3
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	142	17.7	17.7	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q7. A private company would pay down Santee Cooper’s \$8 billion in debt and prevent the debt from being passed on to customers, meaning customers would have lower power bills. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q7					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	578	71.9	71.9	71.9
	2. LESS LIKELY	101	12.5	12.5	84.4
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	126	15.6	15.6	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q8. An outright sale of Santee Cooper would have the benefit of getting state government out of the electric utility business. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q8					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	485	60.3	60.3	60.3
	2. LESS LIKELY	147	18.3	18.3	78.6
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	172	21.4	21.4	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q9. If Santee Cooper is to be sold, a fair and reasonable value of the utility must be determined. Would you prefer that a professional, unbiased and independent financial or auditing firm be hired to assess Santee Cooper’s value for sale, OR would you prefer that price be set by the state legislature, OR would you prefer the value simply be determined by whatever amount potential buyers are willing to pay?

Q9					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. AUDITOR SHOULD SET PRICE	468	58.2	58.2	58.2
	2. STATE LEG SHOULD SET PRICE	142	17.6	17.6	75.8
	3. MARKET SHOULD SET PRICE	194	24.2	24.2	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q10. If Santee Cooper is sold to a private company, public lands and waterways, including Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, would be preserved and protected. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q10					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	574	71.4	71.4	71.4
	2. LESS LIKELY	101	12.6	12.6	84.0
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	129	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q11. If Santee Cooper is sold to a private company, Santee Cooper customers could receive refunds on the \$540 million they've already paid for the failed VC Summer nuclear project. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q11					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. MORE LIKELY	544	67.7	67.7	67.7
	2. LESS LIKELY	106	13.1	13.1	80.8
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	154	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

Q12. Now, based on everything you already knew about Santee Cooper, and including everything we have covered on this phone call, would you say that you believe the state of South Carolina should own a power company like Santee Cooper - OR - do you believe that electric utilities should be owned by private companies like SCE&G and Duke Energy – OR – does it not really matter to you – OR – are you just not sure?

Q12					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. OKAY FOR STATE TO OWN	144	17.9	17.9	17.9
	2. UTILITIES SHOULD BE PRIVATE	358	44.5	44.5	62.5
	3. DOESN'T MATTER	115	14.4	14.4	76.8
	4. NOT SURE	186	23.2	23.2	100.0
	Total	804	100.0	100.0	

SPECIAL CROSSTABS ANALYSIS – Santee Cooper and Co-Op Electrical Customers v. All Other Electrical Customers:

ENERGY SUPPLIERS					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. SANTEE COOPER & CO-OP CUSTOMERS	265	33.0	33.0	33.0
	2. ALL OTHER CUSTOMERS	539	67.0	67.0	67.0
Total		804	100.0	100.0	

3. Are you familiar with the failed VC Summer Nuclear project in Jenkinsville, South Carolina - a joint partnership of Santee Cooper and South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G) to build two new nuclear power plants, which was shut down because of cost overruns and mismanagement?

Q3 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q3	1. YES	Count	122	266	388
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	46.0%	49.4%	48.3%
	2. NO	Count	91	231	322
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	34.3%	42.9%	40.0%
	3. NOT SURE	Count	52	42	94
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	19.6%	7.8%	11.7%
Total		Count	265	539	804
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

4. Do you believe the state of South Carolina should own a power company like Santee Cooper - OR - do you believe that electric utilities should be owned by private companies like SCE&G and Duke Energy – OR – does it not really matter to you – OR – are you not sure?

Q4 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q4	1. OKAY FOR STATE TO OWN	Count	74	134	208
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	27.8%	24.9%	25.8%
	2. UTILITIES SHOULD BE PRIVATE	Count	71	160	231
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	26.7%	29.7%	28.7%
	3. DOESN'T MATTER	Count	45	127	172
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	16.9%	23.6%	21.4%
	4. NOT SURE	Count	76	118	194
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	28.6%	21.9%	24.1%
Total		Count	266	539	805
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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Q5. As it stands right now, without a sale of Santee Cooper, that utility’s nuclear project failure will potentially cost each Santee Cooper customer \$13 per month for the next 40 years - a total of \$6200 from each customer, on top of the \$540 million customers have already paid in. Knowing this about Santee Cooper’s financial situation, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q5 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q5	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	116	227	343
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	43.6%	42.2%	42.7%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	83	191	274
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	31.2%	35.5%	34.1%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	67	120	187
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	25.2%	22.3%	23.3%
Total		Count	266	538	804
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q6. Santee Cooper has over \$4.5 billion in debt related to the failed VC Summer project, and \$4 billion more in debt beyond that - Santee Cooper will eventually have to raise electric rates to pay off that debt, or seek a bailout from taxpayers. Knowing this about Santee Cooper's financial situation, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q6 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q6	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	175	270	445
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	66.0%	50.2%	55.4%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	45	171	216
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	17.0%	31.8%	26.9%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	45	97	142
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	17.0%	18.0%	17.7%
Total		Count	265	538	803
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q7. A private company would pay down Santee Cooper's \$8 billion in debt and prevent the debt from being passed on to customers, meaning customers would have lower power bills. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q7 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q7	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	191	387	578
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	72.1%	71.8%	71.9%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	20	81	101
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	7.5%	15.0%	12.6%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	54	71	125
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	20.4%	13.2%	15.5%
Total		Count	265	539	804
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q8. An outright sale of Santee Cooper would have the benefit of getting state government out of the electric utility business. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q8 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q8	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	156	329	485
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	58.9%	61.0%	60.3%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	47	101	148
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	17.7%	18.7%	18.4%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	62	109	171
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	23.4%	20.2%	21.3%
Total		Count	265	539	804
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q9. If Santee Cooper is to be sold, a fair and reasonable value of the utility must be determined. Would you prefer that a professional, unbiased and independent financial or auditing firm be hired to assess Santee Cooper's value for sale, OR would you prefer that price be set by the state legislature, OR would you prefer the value simply be determined by whatever amount potential buyers are willing to pay?

Q9 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q9	1. AUDITOR SHOULD SET PRICE	Count	183	285	468
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	69.3%	52.9%	58.3%
	2. STATE LEG SHOULD SET PRICE	Count	36	105	141
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	13.6%	19.5%	17.6%
	3. MARKET SHOULD SET PRICE	Count	45	149	194
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	17.0%	27.6%	24.2%
Total		Count	264	539	803
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q10. If Santee Cooper is sold to a private company, public lands and waterways, including Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, would be preserved and protected. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q10 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q10	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	205	369	574
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	77.4%	68.6%	71.5%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	17	84	101
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	6.4%	15.6%	12.6%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	43	85	128
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	16.2%	15.8%	15.9%
Total		Count	265	538	803
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q11. If Santee Cooper is sold to a private company, Santee Cooper customers could receive refunds on the \$540 million they've already paid for the failed VC Summer nuclear project. Knowing this, would you be more or less likely to support the sale of Santee Cooper to a private entity?

Q11 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation					
			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q11	1. MORE LIKELY	Count	172	372	544
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	64.9%	69.1%	67.7%
	2. LESS LIKELY	Count	30	75	105
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	11.3%	13.9%	13.1%
	3. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE	Count	63	91	154
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	23.8%	16.9%	19.2%
Total		Count	265	538	803
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Q12. Now, based on everything you already knew about Santee Cooper, and including everything we have covered on this phone call, would you say that you believe the state of South Carolina should own a power company like Santee Cooper - OR - do you believe that electric utilities should be owned by private companies like SCE&G and Duke Energy – OR – does it not really matter to you – OR – are you just not sure?

Q12 * Santee-Co-Ops Crosstabulation

			Santee-Co-Ops		Total
			Santee-Co-Ops	All Other Customers	
Q12	1. OKAY FOR STATE TO OWN	Count	46	98	144
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	17.3%	18.2%	17.9%
	2. UTILITIES SHOULD BE PRIVATE	Count	118	240	358
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	44.4%	44.6%	44.5%
	3. DOESN'T MATTER	Count	44	72	116
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	16.5%	13.4%	14.4%
	4. NOT SURE	Count	58	128	186
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	21.8%	23.8%	23.1%
Total		Count	266	538	804
		% within Santee-Co-Ops	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

About Clout Research

Clout Research is a national opinion research firm based in Columbus, Ohio, specializing in helping candidates, issue groups, corporations, and local agencies understand the audience. Clout leverages more than 30 years of experience in research and communications expertise.

Clout Research has worked for some very high-profile clients, candidates and organizations in America over the years, including U.S. Senators, congressmen, and Presidential campaigns, local governments, and non-profit organizations. We have developed one of the leading records for accuracy in opinion research in the corporate, non-profit, and political space in recent cycles.

Clout research conducted several hundred voter opinion polls during the 2016 election cycle, with results that were the most accurate in company history and among the best in the national industry. In the weeks before the November 8 General Election, Clout conducted 41 ballot tests in districts or states around the country, and in 39 of those tests, Clout properly identified the winning candidate or ballot issue outcome.