



# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2024**

### **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATES THROUGH DECEMBER 2023**

Customer Engagement electric programs are funded by Assembly Bill (AB) 1890 that was adopted in 1996. The Bill requires publicly owned utilities to collect and spend public benefits charge funds in four areas: low-income assistance, energy efficiency and conservation programs, renewable energy, and research, development, and demonstration projects. The Water Conservation Surcharge, a 1.5% charge on water bills, funds water conservation rebates, education, and outreach programs.

The Customer Engagement Team processes a diverse range of assistance and rebate programming and provides significant education and outreach to support energy efficiency and water conservation for customers and the wider community.

#### **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT DECEMBER 2023 HIGHLIGHTS**

##### ***Residential***

- A. Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 2,465 customers from July 2023 through December 2023 totaling \$616,250
- B. Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) assisted 155 customers from July 2023 through December 2023 in the benefit amount of \$70,696.07
- C. Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program has processed 39 from July 2023 through December 2023, 16 participants for December

##### ***Commercial***

- A. Processed 29 large commercial rebates from July 2023 through December 2023, for a total of \$70,913.04 and 697,634.93.79 kWh saved
- B. Small Business Direct Install Program vendor, Richard Heath & Associates, completed 24 direct installation projects

##### ***Education***

- A. The education team had a full schedule of water and energy classes
- B. Attended the STEP Foundation Thank You breakfast
- C. Continued planning for Family STEAM nights

##### ***Communications***

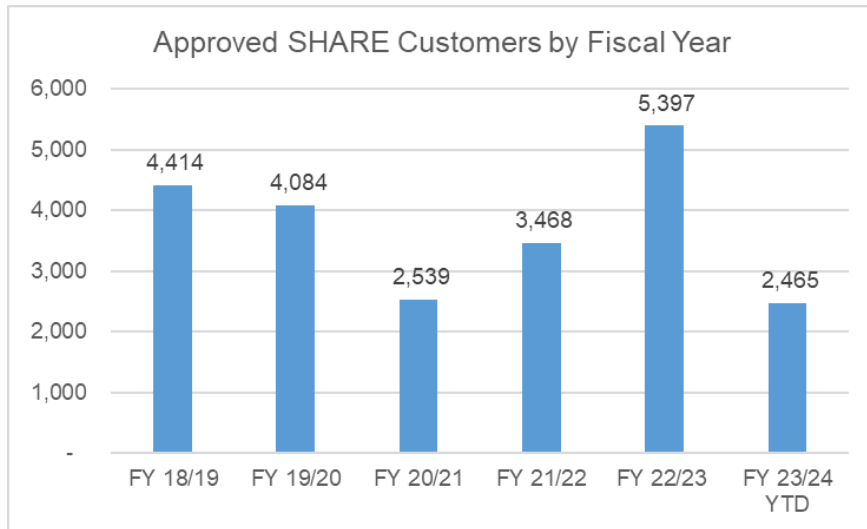
- A. Mailed public hearing notices to customers regarding the Water Conservation Surcharge
- B. Began working with Public Works to develop communications about the new Public Works SHARE program

- C. Customer email to residents - Holiday Greetings | Holiday Safety Tips | Paperless Billing | Energy Star Rebates | APPA Award | Holiday Hours.
  - Sent to 75k residents | 55% unique opens | 1% unique click rate
- D. Commercial emails - Holiday Greetings | Holiday Safety Tips | Paperless Billing | Energy Star Rebates | APPA Award | Small & Micro Business Grant | Holiday Hours.
  - Sent to 4.7k commercial accounts | 47% unique opens | 4% unique click rate

## RESIDENTIAL DETAIL

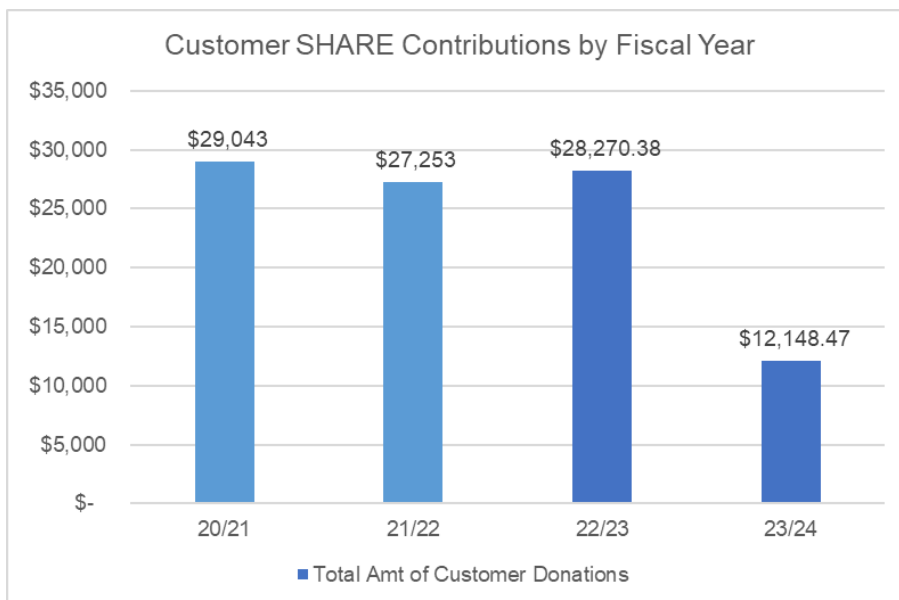
### **Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy - SHARE PROGRAM**

SHARE assisted 2,465 customers from July 2023 through December 2023, which reflects the total participant amount for the \$250 shut-off and/or deposit assistance credit.



## SHARE Customer Donations

RPU customers are able donate to the SHARE program to assist qualifying customers with their electric bills; the average customer donation is \$31 per year. Customer donations are promoted through back of utility bill, social media, and customer outreach.



### **Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP)**

ESAP was created to help low-income renters and homeowners access energy-savings home improvements at no-cost. From July 2023 through December 2023, the program has benefitted approximately 155 homes in the RPU service area, expending a total of \$70,696.07. The program helps customers access a range of efficiency measures such as A/C tune-ups, LED lightbulbs, electronically commutated motors, and HVAC motor upgrades as the most popular.

### **Residential Rebates**

From July 2023 through December 2023 a total of 1,638 residential energy rebates were processed, for a total rebate benefit of \$256,918.20.

<b>Residential Devices</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>RPU Rebates Provided to Customers</b>
Air Conditioning	242	\$140,596.48
Energy Star	545	\$44,369.99
Pool Pump	46	\$9,200.00
Tree Power	469	\$18,700.00
Weatherization	185	\$31,201.30
Recycling	151	\$12,850.00
<b>Energy Rebate Total</b>	<b>1,638</b>	<b>\$256,918.20</b>

From July 2023 through December 2023 the Used Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program has approved 39 rebate applications for a total of \$45,000.00. The EV Charger Rebate Program has approved 37 rebates for a total of \$16,687.00.

### **Water Efficiency Programs**

In June 2004, RPU adopted the 10-year Water Conservation Surcharge, it was again adopted in 2014; it assesses a rate of 1.5% of water usage charges for retail sales. The funds from the surcharge are used for conservation, education and water use efficiency programs, as well as research development and demonstration programs to advance science and technology with respect to water conservation.

RPU’s water rebate programs are processed via [www.SoCalWaterSmart.com](http://www.SoCalWaterSmart.com), Metropolitan Water District’s (MWD) rebate portal. All rebates issued to RPU water customers are paid out of the MWD budget, unless RPU elects to add additional funding to selected measures.

RPU pays an additional rebate for weather-based irrigation controllers, high efficiency sprinkler nozzles, hose bib irrigation controllers, leak monitoring devices and turf removal projects. From July 2023 through December 2023 a total of 152 residential water rebates were processed with total payout (RPU/MWD) of \$210,339.

<b>Residential Devices &amp; Turf</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>RPU Expenditure</b>	<b>MWD Expenditure</b>
Flow Monitor/Leak Detection Device	3	\$225	\$300
High-efficiency Clothes Washer (HECW)	62	\$0	\$5,270
Hose Bib Irrigation Controller	1	\$15	\$35
Rain Barrels	0	\$0	\$0
Residential Premium HET (from 1.6 gpf toilet)	4	\$0	\$240
Residential Turf Removal (per square foot)	31	\$67,752	\$125,142
Rotating Nozzle	1	\$192	\$128
Weather-based Irrigation Controllers (WBIC/WBICLL)	50	\$5,280	\$5,760
<b>Water Efficiency Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>\$73,464</b>	<b>\$136,875</b>

### ***Smart Irrigation Program***

Residential and business customers are helping to reduce water use and costs by installing smart irrigation controllers and high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles via the Smart Irrigation Program (SIP). The SIP provides a free irrigation assessment to evaluate water use and the corresponding efficiency opportunities and repair or replacement of up to \$300 of irrigation equipment. From July through mid-December, 128 customers have been assisted and 155 are scheduled.

### ***Waterwise Landscape Workshops***

Beginning in Fall 2023, a series of free landscape workshops designed to assist customers in being water efficient and environmentally considerate have been scheduled through Spring 2024. Designed and hosted in partnership with the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District, RPU offers the workshops on select Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon. The series focuses on climate-appropriate landscapes and irrigation systems.

## **COMMERCIAL DETAIL**

From July 2023 through December 2023, a total of 29 commercial rebates were processed (1 performance-based incentive, 8 lighting, 15 air conditioning, 3 weatherization, and 2 energy star) with a total payout of \$70,913.04 and a kWh savings of 697,634.93.

On January 10, 2023, City Council approved a range of consultant administered direct installation services for energy efficiency programs. The programs assist local businesses with efficiency measures such as outdoor lighting, refrigerated load and beverage storage, and direct installations.

In December 2023, the Small Business Direct Install and Outdoor Lighting Program conducted 19 audit visits at local businesses and a total of 24 direct installs were completed.

## **EDUCATION DETAIL**

In December, the education team taught 20 electricity classes at Bryant Elementary school in the Riverside Unified School District and McAuliffe Elementary School in the Alvord Unified School District, with a total of 636 participants. Additionally, 15 water conservation classes were taught at Valley View Elementary School in the Alvord Unified School District and Madison Elementary School in the Riverside Unified School District, with a total of 375 participants.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the team attended the Science Technology Education Partnership (STEP) Foundation Thank You breakfast at Bourns Inc., where RPU employees who contributed to the success of the summer learning labs were awarded certificates for their participation and support.

Continued planning and material purchases have been made for Family Science Technology Engineering Arts & Mathematics nights with the libraries.

## **COMMUNICATIONS DETAIL**

Below are the in-person events the CE Team participated in December 2023:

- 12/02 - Riverside Snow Day at Bordwell Park
- 12/05 - STEP Thank You Breakfast at Bourns Inc.
- 12/09 - Breakfast with Santa at Villegas Park
- 12/10- Monthly outreach at Janet Goeske Senior Center
- 12/16 - Winter Wonderland at Hunt Park

Key social media posts during the month of December 2023:

- 12/01 – Canyon Crest Booster Station Project
- 12/04 – SHARE Program
- 12/06 – Now Hiring
- 12/07 – RPU Event
- 12/08 – All Day Every Day
- 12/11 – Water Christmas Tree
- 12/12 - Weatherization Rebate
- 12/13 - Turf Replacement
- 12/14 - RPU Event
- 12/15 - Solar
- 12/18 - 311 Spanish App
- 12/19 - Holiday Hours
- 12/21 - Now Hiring
- 12/22 - RPU Spanish Billboard
- 12/25 - Merry Christmas
- 12/26 - Happy Kwanzaa

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- 3/9/24 - Truck-A-Palooza
- 3/13/24 - Monthly outreach at Janet Goeske Senior Center
- 3/21/ 24 - Family Science Technology Engineering Arts & Mathematics nights at Orange Terrace Library

Back of Bill messaging for March:

- Tree Power

## RPU - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS GALLERY

12/2/23 Snow Day Bordwell Park



12/5/23 STEP Thank You Breakfast at Bourns Inc.



12/9/23 Breakfast with Santa at Villegas Park



12/11/23 All Day Every Day Group Picture at the Cheech Marin Museum



12/16/23 Winter Wonderland at Hunt Park

