



# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

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

#### **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATES THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2024**

Customer Engagement electric programs are funded by a 2.85% public benefits charge based on electricity usage established by Assembly Bill (AB) 1890 that was adopted in 1996. The legislation 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 is a charge that Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) no longer collects (per the City Council decision of 4/22/24), the Surcharge was a 1.5% charge on water bills. Surcharge funds will be used to fund RPU's portion of water conservation rebates, and water efficiency and conservation education and outreach programs. These programs will be provided until the Water Conservation Surcharge fund is fully expended.

The Customer Engagement Team provides and processes a diverse range of assistance and rebate programs; the team also conducts a wide range of education and outreach to support energy efficiency and water conservation for customers and the wider community.

#### **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT SEPTEMBER 2024 HIGHLIGHTS**

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

- A. Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 1,144 from July 2024 through September 2024 totaling \$286,000 in past-due assistance, monthly electric and water credits.
- B. Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) assisted 89 customers from July 2024 through September 2024 and expended \$149,946.00.
- C. Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program processed 17 applications.

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

- A. Processed a total of 19 large commercial rebates from July 2024 through September 2024 for a total of \$50,839.06 and 613,315 kWh saved.
- B. Small Business Direct Install Program vendor Richard Heath & Associates completed 33 direct installs.

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

- A. Family STEAM Day at Arlington Library.
- B. Classes have started for the new school year.
- C. Visted the learning center at Albert Robles Water Reclamation District

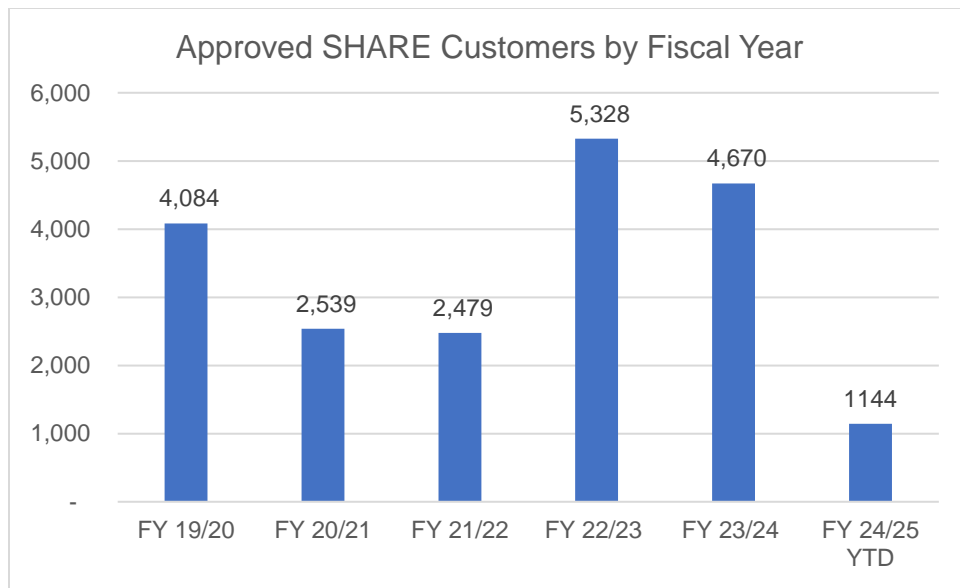
**Communications**

- A. Submitted approved sponsorships for January 2024 to May 2025
- B. Worked with Office of Communications (OOC) on messaging during sustained heat wave
- C. Prepared for October’s Customer Service Week
- D. Working with OOC created flyers and banners to support the Waterwise Workshop events
- E. Residential Email: 9/24
- F. Commercial Email: 9/27

**RESIDENTIAL DETAIL**

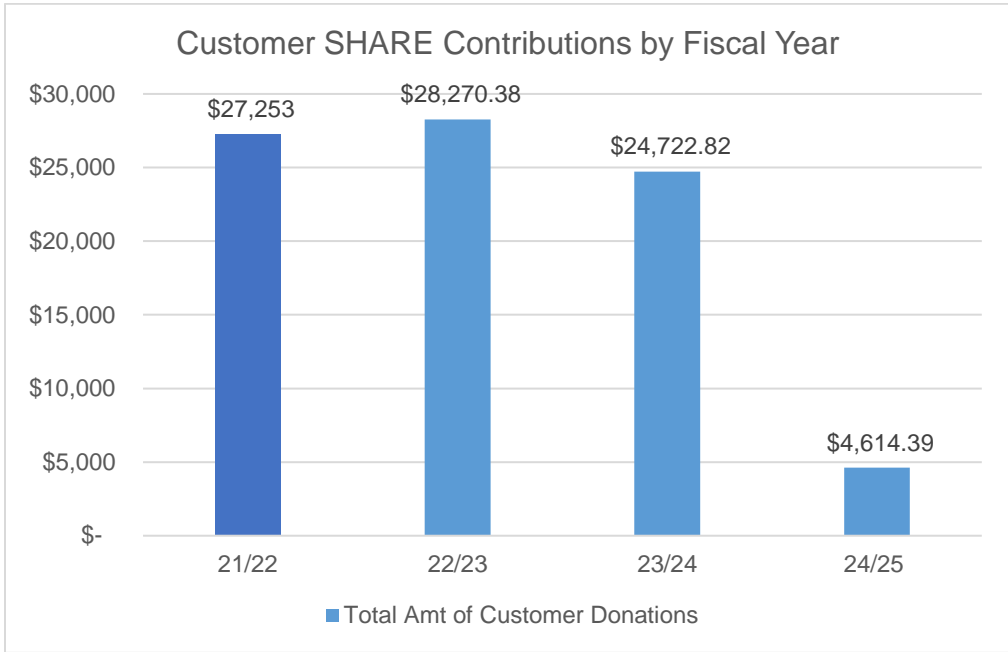
**Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy - SHARE PROGRAM**

The Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy (SHARE) program assisted 1,144 customers from July 2024 through September 2024, which reflects the total participant amount for the \$250.00 shut-off and/or deposit assistance credit.



**SHARE Customer Donations**

RPU customers can donate to the SHARE program that will help qualifying customers with their bills; the average customer donation is \$46.00 per year. Customer donations are promoted through back of utility bill, social media, and customer outreach.



**Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP)**

ESAP helps low-income customers access energy-savings home improvements at no-cost. From July 2024 through September 2024, the program has benefitted 89 homes in the RPU service area, expending a total of \$149,946.00. The program helps customers access a range of energy efficiency measures such as HVAC tune-ups, LED lightbulbs, Wi-Fi thermostats, and newly installed whole house fans as the most popular.

**Residential Rebates**

From July 2024 through August 2024 a total of 1,039 residential energy rebates were processed, for a total rebate benefit of \$238,586.83.

Residential Devices	Participation	RPU Expenditures
Air Conditioning	129	\$44,925.00
Heat Pump	41	\$112,175.95
Energy Star	269	\$23,300.00
Pool Pump	23	\$4,600.00
Tree Power	79	\$6,196.46
Weatherization	93	\$14,734.42
Recycling	100	\$8,850.00
A&G Recycling	305	\$23,300.00
<b>Energy Rebate Total</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>\$238,586.83</b>

From July 2024 through September 2024, the Used Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program has approved 17 rebate applications for a total of \$17,000. The EV Charger Rebate Program has approved 11 rebates for a total of \$4,877.99.

### Water Efficiency Programs

In June 2004, RPU adopted the 10-year Water Conservation Surcharge, it was again adopted in 2014; it assessed 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. At its meeting on April 16, 2024, the City Council voted to cease collecting the Water Conservation Surcharge. Programs and rebates funded by the Surcharge will only remain available until funds are exhausted.

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 2024 through September 2024 a total of 74 residential water rebates were processed with total payout (RPU/MWD) of \$100,896, representing annual water savings of 1,855,385 gallons.

Residential Devices & Turf	Participation / Devices	RPU Expenditure	MWD Expenditure
Flow Monitor/Leak Detection Device	3	\$225	\$300
High-efficiency Clothes Washer	27	\$0	\$2,295
Hose Bib Irrigation Controller	1	\$15	\$35
Premium HET (from 1.6 GPF toilet)	2	\$0	\$80
Rotating Nozzles	1 (66)	\$198	\$132
Turf Removal (per square foot)	14 (25,914)	\$40,788	\$51,828
Weather-based Irrigation Controllers (WBIC / WBICLL)	26	\$3,000	\$2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>\$44,226</b>	<b>\$56,670</b>

### WATERWISE WORKSHOPS



About 20 customers attended the Sept. 14 waterwise landscaping workshop held at the Kathleen M. Gonzalez Memorial Garden adjacent to the Casa Blanca Library.

## COMMERCIAL DETAIL

### *Energy Rebates*

From July 2024 through September 2024, a total of 19 commercial rebates were processed (4 lighting, 1 energy star, and 14 air conditioning) with a total payout of \$50,839.06 and a kWh savings of 613,315.

### *Direct Install Programs*

In September 2024, the Small Business Direct Install and Outdoor Lighting Program conducted 30 audit visits at local businesses and a total of 33 direct installs were completed.

### *Water Rebates*

From July 2024 through September 2024, 5 commercial accounts removed 53,000 square feet of turf with a rebate total of \$102,230; these projects represent annual water savings of 2,245,201 gallons. Additionally, one commercial account replaced 238 Premium High Efficiency Toilets (PHET) representing 814,303 gallons of water saved annually.

## EDUCATION DETAIL

Family STEAM Day was held on September 19, 2024, at the Arlington library. Students and their families were able to put electricity circuits together, do an oil spill clean-up activity, and learn all about wind turbines.

The education team conducted 5 water pollution classes with 137 students and 8 Water Cycle classes with 264 students.

On Friday, September 27, 2024, the educational team staff had the opportunity to tour the Water Replenishment District - Albert Robles Center, in Poco Rivera, CA, followed by an in depth waterwise landscaping workshop. The learning center provided information on field trips offered to students in their service area, where they hosted 3,000 elementary-aged students last school year. There was a scale model of the San Gabriel River which demonstrated how the reclaimed water process works in the district. Hosted by Association of Women in Water, Energy & Environment (AWWEE), the team learned how this unique facility was developed in a short three-year time frame.

## COMMUNICATIONS DETAIL

### *Email Communications*

- Residential email sent on 9/24. Content included: Ready Riverside Expo, Utilicare, Weatherization, High-Efficiency Toilets, Waterwise Workshops, RPU GM Announcement, Hispanic Heritage Month.
  - i. 72,000 emails sent
  - ii. 59,000 emails opened by customers
- Commercial email sent on 9/27. Content included: Ready Riverside Expo, High-Efficiency Toilets, Weatherization, Small Business Direct Install Program, Waterwise Workshops, RPU GM Announcement, Hispanic Heritage Month.
  - i. 5,100 emails sent
  - ii. 2,800 emails opened by customers

### *In-Person Events*

Below are the in-person events the CE Team participated in September 2024:

- 9/11 – SHARE Monthly Outreach Visit, Janet Goeske
- 9/14 – Waterwise Workshop, Janet Goeske
- 9/14 – Deafestival, Riverside City Breezeway
- 9/19 - Family STEAM Day, Arlington Library
- 9/21- Day for Kids-Boys and Girls Club, 4366 Bermuda Ave
- 9/21- Clean Up Riverside, 8095 Lincoln Ave
- 9/26- Riverside College Career Fair, Tyler Mall
- 9/28- Ready Riverside Public Safety Expo, Tyler Mall
- 9/28- Riverside Arts and Music Festival, White Park

### *Social Media Outreach*

Key social media posts during the month of September 2024:

- 9/02 – Happy Labor Day
- 9/03 - AC Energy Saving Tip
- 9/04 - Waterwise Workshop
- 9/05 - Excessive Heat Warning
- 9/05 - Energy Saving Tips
- 9/06 - Save Energy
- 9/07 - RPU Online Bill Pay
- 9/08 - Power Restored
- 9/09 - Cooling Centers
- 9/09 - Customer Services
- 9/10 - AC and Heat Pump Rebates
- 9/11 - September 11th
- 9/12 - All Day Everyday
- 9/14 - All Day Everyday Throwback
- 9/15 - Hispanic Heritage Month
- 9/16 - Now Hiring
- 9/17 - Promotion Announcement – David A. Garcia
- 9/18 - Ready Riverside Safety Expo
- 9/19 – Community Resource Center
- 9/20 - EV Rebates
- 9/24 - Utilicare Program
- 9/25 - Save Water
- 9/26 - Washer Rebates
- 9/27 - High Efficiency Toilet Rebate
- 9/28 - Water Rebates
- 9/28 - All Day Everyday

### **UPCOMING EVENTS – DECEMBER**

- 12/14 - Breakfast with Santa, Orange Terrace
- 12/14 - Winter Wonderland, Hung Park

Back of Bill messaging for December

- Public Benefits Dashboard



## RPU - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS GALLERY

Deafestival City Hall- 9/14/24



Waterwise Workshop, Casa Blanca Library- 9/14/24



Annual Customer Engagement Summit-Truckee, CA 9/18/24



Career Fair-Tyler Mall 9/26/24



Water Replenishment District Educational Tour - Albert Robles Center 9/27/24

