RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES **DATE: MAY 23, 2022**

SUBJECT: RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES SAFETY PROGRAM UPDATE

ISSUE:

Consider receiving an update on the Riverside Public Utilities Safety Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board of Public Utilities:

1. Receive an update on the Riverside Public Utilities Safety Program; and

2. Provide direction on the frequency of program updates to the Board.

DISCUSSION:

This update on the Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) Safety Program highlights the department's strong emphasis for the safety of all RPU's team members. RPU considers safety to be essential for success in accomplishing our mission. Through our values of teamwork, integrity, professionalism, and safety, the Safety Team, with the support of the RPU Executive Team, promotes a strong safety culture at all levels of RPU. To support safety, the RPU Safety Team has clear objectives, effective processes, and shares information using an improved safety dashboard. By providing tools, training, and programs throughout the year, RPU strives to ensure that all team members have the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to work safely.

Creating a safety culture at RPU begins and ends with the 500+ employees who provide safe and reliable water and electric service to our customers. RPU team members do this every day, which is why they often have the best ideas for how to work more safely. In 2022, RPU adopted a utility-wide safety coordinator approach to staffing our safety program. Five staff from RPU were assigned as safety coordinators within their respective divisions. These assignments will create a more engaged safety culture across RPU.

In the last four years, RPU Safety has reported below the national average for OSHA reporting injuries of 8.26 in similar organizations. RPU's reporting yearly average is comparable with the average reported from Publicly Owned Utilities, Public Agency of Safety Management for local utilities, and the American Public Power Authority averages for recordable injuries in organizations similar to RPU.

The Safety Team reports directly to RPU's Deputy General Manager. This reporting level demonstrates the importance of safety in our organization. The Safety Team is led by the Safety and Training Manager. In support of the Manager, the team has a Safety Specialist, and a Physical Security Officer. At the division level and to focus efforts, the safety team has added five safety representatives. This greater coverage will result in an increase of safety for all RPU.

Implemented safety processes demonstrate RPU's commitment to a robust safety culture every day and at all levels of the organization. Team members meet daily for safety "tailboard" meetings where they can discuss safety requirements and needs for each of the assigned task. These daily safety tailboard meetings are led by direct supervisors ensuring safety in RPU is achieved by example. Calendar year 2020 and 2021 added extreme challenges to the Safety Program because of restrictions for meeting in-person. Staff adjusted the meetings with physically distant and remote alternatives but interaction and collaboration were affected during the pandemic.

Each month, Team Members participate according to their division schedules in Safety Training, Safety Committees, and Regulatory Compliance Safety Training. RPU Safety and Training Manager directly supports all RPU with Incident Investigation and Analysis, Safety Training tailored to the needs of each division, and correction or elimination of identified hazards.

Every quarter, the RPU executive team and the safety team meets in the RPU Safety Steering Committee. This Committee provides strategic direction to accomplish the safety goals of the organization. During the Safety Steering Committee all suggestions for safety improvement are discussed and evaluated for possible implementation.

In 2021, RPU's safety metrics reported 32 OSHA reported incidents. Of these, 14 were restricted duty incidents and 6 were away from work incidents. The top five injuries were strains, cumulative injuries, COVID-19, sprains, and lacerations. For 2021, the benchmark for OSHA reportable rates in similar industries to RPU was 8.26. The OSHA reportable rate for RPU in 2021 was 6.29.

RPU has improved the Safety Dashboard with OSHA Metrics Reports, Division Safety Risk Levels, Nature of Injures, Type of Incidents by month, and Claims Cost. Moving forward, the RPU Security Governance Committee will review these metrics regularly to develop objectives to improve our performance as measured by these metrics. Development of leading metrics, such as training hours, frequency of tailboard meetings, and safety audits will require us to create uniform processes and recording across the department. That work will be undertaken in the coming months and reflected in future reports as the data becomes available.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The RPU Safety Program Update contributes to **Strategic Priority No. 5 – High Performing Government** and **Goal 5.5** - Foster a culture of safety, well-being, resilience, sustainability, diversity, and inclusion across the city organization.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – Compliance with safety training regulations protects RPU's team and infrastructure serving and benefiting the community.

2. **Equity** – RPU's safety program is supportive of the City's racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, identity, geographic, and other attributes of diversity and is committed to

advancing the fairness of treatment, recognition of rights, via equitable safety training.

3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – RPU's safety program supports the correction and elimination of safety hazards reducing the risk levels and associated cost from potential injuries.

4. **Innovation** – RPU is keeping abreast of safety training, updates, and metrics to prepare for any potential impacts to RPU and the city.

5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – RPU continues to improve safety and security of its facilities to ensure its infrastructure and staff are resilient to safety threats.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this update.

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Attachment:	Presentation