



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: JUNE 13, 2022

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATES THROUGH APRIL 2022

Customer Engagement is 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 Customer Engagement Team provides and processes a robust and diverse range of assistance and rebate programming; the team also conducts significant education and outreach to support these programs, as well as energy efficiency and water conservation messaging for customers and the wider community.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT APRIL 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Residential

- A. Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 2,980 electric customers July–April 2022 totaling \$999,256
- B. Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) assisted 250 customers through April 2022 and expended \$157,967.74
- C. Emergency Recovery Assistance Program (ERAP) from July 2021 through April 2022, approved 478 applications and \$191,156 in assistance
- D. RPU processed a total of 285 water rebates in collaboration with regional stakeholder Metropolitan Water District (MWD).
- E. Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program processed 55 applications with \$20,100 for customer benefits

Commercial

- A. Processed a total of 46 large commercial electric rebates July 2021 through April 2022 for a total of \$489,042 paid and 5,388,194 kWh saved

Educational

- A. Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Public Utilities Learning Lab (PULL) planning meetings for Summer 2022 are underway.
- B. 25 Electricity Classes were conducted with a total of 750 students.
- C. Student engineering essays were reviewed and first, second, and third place winners chosen.
- D. Soil Activity kits were a success. All 400 kits were gone by the first week of distribution!

Communications

- A. Celebrated Earth Month with email and social media content educating the public on ways to help protect the environment, as well as an in-person event held on April 23rd at the Customer Resource Center
- B. Ramped up drought messaging with a “Don’t Doubt the Drought” campaign
- C. Soft-launched digital versions of back of bill messaging and bill inserts on website
- D. Tested and linked new online form to Start/Stop utility service
- E. CWWAPP (California Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program) bill credit notification letters sent
- F. Re-certify email reminders sent to SHARE customers
- G. Email to residential customers on 4/22 - Arbor Day/Tree Power | LIHEAP | LED Streetlight conversion | Drought | ERAP
- H. Email to commercial customers on 4/28 - Arbor Day/Tree Power | Turf Replacement Rebate | LED Streetlight conversion | Drought

New and Emerging Programs

- A. Four RFP bids are pending final evaluation – bids are for programs including new energy efficiency and direct installation programs. Updates on these RFPs is to follow.
- B. Low-Income Home Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) – the new LIHWAP program is federally funded and provides water and wastewater payment assistance. RPU is currently working with the California Department of Community Services & Development (CSD) and Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP) for program implementation for May/June 2022. Promotion of this program will begin in May on social media and email messaging.
- C. Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP), is now present at the Casa Blanca Customer Resource Center (CRC) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Beginning in May, CAP’s presence at the CRC will be included in outgoing social media and email messaging.
- D. The CE Team is beginning a comprehensive review of Customer Engagement programs, with a specific view toward equity and is considering conducting a community needs assessment as part of this review.

CALIFORNIA ARREARAGE PAYMENT PROGRAMS

On July 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB 135, which created the California Arrearage Payment Program (CAPP), administered by the California Department of Community Services & Development for funding electric utility customer arrearages. RPU applied for CAPP assistance on behalf of electric customers who incurred a past due balance of 60 days or more on their energy bill during the COVID-19 pandemic relief period covering March 4, 2020, through June 15, 2021. On December 16, 2021, the following CAPP benefits were applied for RPU customers:

Account Type	Number Of Accounts	CAPP - Electric
Residential	11,923	\$ 9,202,891
Commercial	676	1,873,165
Total	12,599	\$ 11,076,056

On July 22, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB 148, which created the California Water and Wastewater Arrearage Management Program (CWWAPP) to administer funding for water/wastewater utility customer arrearages. The State Water Resources Control Board is administrating these programs. RPU applied for CWWAPP assistance on behalf of water customers who incurred a past due balance of 60 days or more on their energy bill during the COVID-19 pandemic relief period covering March 4, 2020, through June 15, 2021. On December 22, 2021, the following CWWAPP benefits were applied for RPU customers:

Account Type	Number Of Accounts	CWWAPP - Water
Residential	4,264	\$1,757,642
Commercial	126	123,160
Total	4,390	\$1,880,802

Wastewater

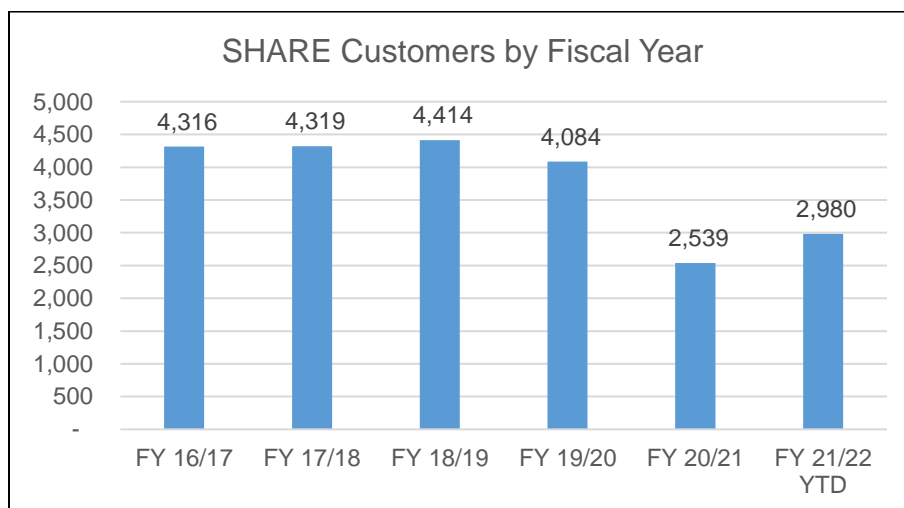
The State Water Resources Control Board started the CWWAPP program for wastewater arrearages on February 9, 2022. On February 22, 2022, RPU applied for CWWAPP assistance on behalf of wastewater customers who incurred a past due balance of 60 days or more on their energy bill during the COVID-19 pandemic relief period covering March 4, 2020, through June 15, 2021. On April 28, 2022, the following CWWAPP benefits were applied for RPU customers:

Account Type	Number Of Accounts	CWWAPP - Wastewater
Residential	7,012	\$ 2,193,630
Commercial	83	100,816
Total	7,095	\$2,294,446

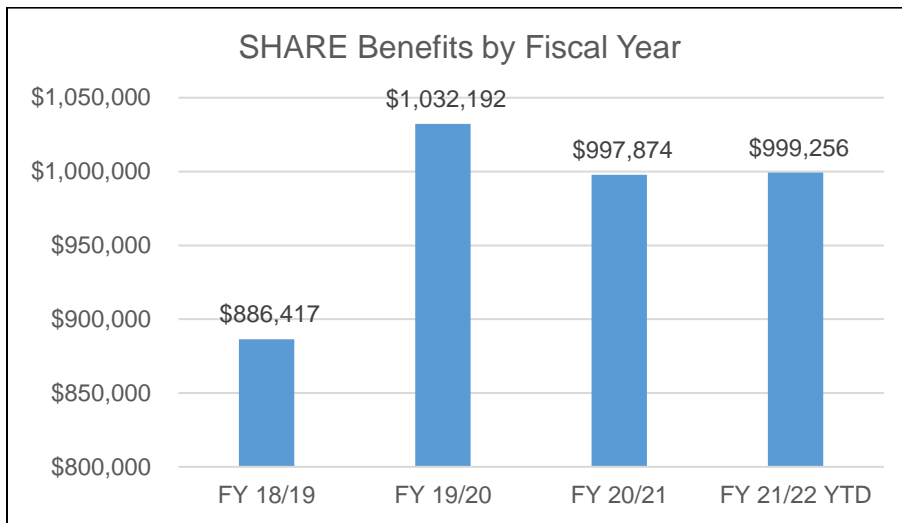
RESIDENTIAL

Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy - SHARE PROGRAM

The Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy (SHARE) program assisted 2,980 customers through April 2022.

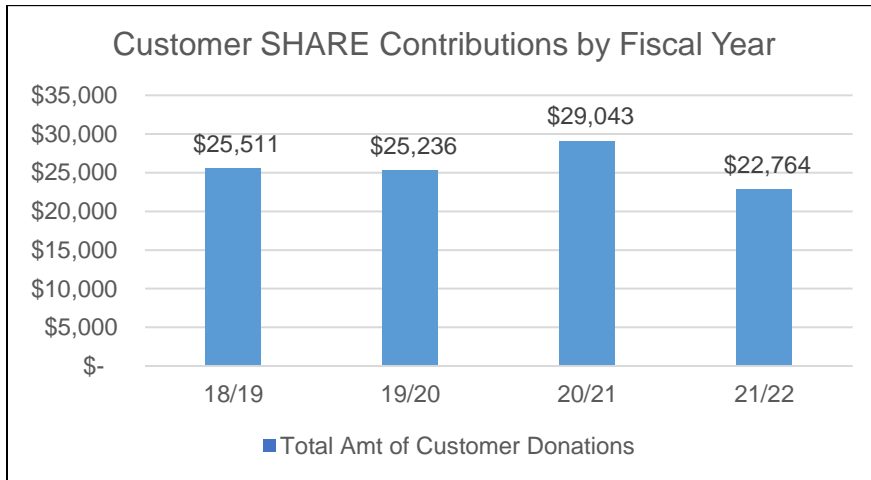


On April 25, 2022, the Board of Public Utilities voted to recommend that the City Council approve the fourth yearly SHARE enhancement. On May 17, 2022, this item was unanimously approved by the City Council.



SHARE Customer Donations

RPU customers can donate to the SHARE program and the average customer donation is \$28.00 per year. Customer donations are promoted through back of utility bill, social media, and customer outreach. From July 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022, customers donated a total of \$22,764 and have provided emergency/deposit assistance to 91 customers.



Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP)

ESAP was created to help low-income renters and homeowners with energy-savings home improvements at no-cost. The program was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ESAP agreement has been amended and restated with SoCal Gas, and was approved by the Board of Public Utilities on January 24, 2022. On February 8, 2022, this item was unanimously approved by the City Council.

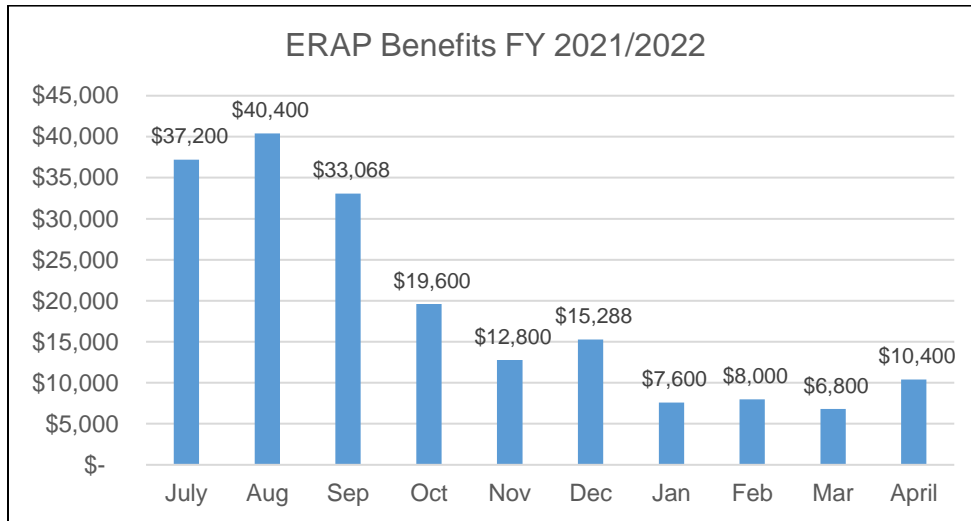
Since March 1, 2022, ESAP has benefitted approximately 250 homes in the RPU service area, expending a total of \$157,967.74. The program continues to help our customers and with an interest list of over 2,000 customers, participation looks set to remain strong over the coming months.

Emergency Recovery Assistance Program (ERAP)

ERAP was created to assist residential electric customers who have been unemployed, furloughed, or experienced a reduction in work hours due to COVID-19. ERAP launched on

May 20, 2020, and will end 90 days after the City is no longer under the present Emergency declaration.

From July 2021 through April 2022, 478 applications have been approved and \$191,156 has been expended on the program.



Residential Rebates

From July 2021 through April 2022, a total of 6,189 residential energy rebates were processed for a total rebate benefit of \$612,110.16.

Residential Devices	Participation	RPU Expenditures
Air Conditioning	395	\$256,725.00
Energy Star	1,307	107,625.00
Pool Pump	89	17,800.00
Tree Power	3,726	142,260.15
Weatherization	306	52,950.01
Recycling	366	34,750.00
Energy Rebate Total	6,189	\$612,110.16

On August 9, 2021, the Board of Public Utilities voted to recommend that the City Council approve the Electric Vehicle Rebate Program, and on October 12, 2021, this item was unanimously approved by the City Council. To date, 42 used EV rebates have been processed and approximately \$17,500 has been paid out, including two low-income rebates.

A total of 20 EV Charger applications have been processed with a total payout of \$7,500. Five EV Adapter applications have been processed, with a total payout of \$2,407.74

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

RPU pays an additional rebate for weather-based irrigation controllers, high efficiency sprinkler nozzles, and turf removal projects. From July 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022, a total of 285 residential water rebates were processed with total payout of \$173,140.

Residential Devices	Participation	RPU Expenditure	MWD Expenditure
High Efficiency Clothes Washer (HECW)	152	\$0.00	\$12,920.00
Residential Cistern Large	2	0.00	600.00
Residential Cistern Medium	1	0.00	300.00
Residential Premium HET (from 1.6 gpf toilet)	3	0.00	120.00
Residential Turf Removal (per square foot)	15	23,170.00	46,340.00
Rotating Nozzle	10	1,542.00	1,028.00
Weather Based Irrigation Controller (WBIC) (each < acre)	102	12,240.00	74,880.00
Water Conservation Total	285	\$36,952.00	\$136,188.00

COMMERCIAL

From July 2021 through April 30, 2022, a total of 46 commercial rebates were processed (one weatherization, 25 HVAC, 10 energy star, one new construction and nine lighting) with a total payout of \$489,042 and a kWh savings of 5,388,194.

EDUCATION

April 2022 Highlights:

- Concepts of wind energy were shared with over 300 participants at the Spring Eggstravaganza at Ryan Bonaminio Park on April 9.
- On April 23, the CE team, led by the Education section, held the first ever Earth Day event at the CRC and the Kathleen Gonzalez Waterwise Garden. It was attended by over 200 participants, who participated in activities such as the garden scavenger hunt and learning about waterwise landscape and garden practices. There were also more than 20 booths hosted by various city departments, local organizations, and non-profits.
- The connection between soil, insects and aquifers was shared with children and families at the Riverside Insect Fair at the Main library on April 30, where over 500 edible aquifer/dirt cup kits were given out.
- 19 virtual classes on electricity were taught in April with a total of 570 students, each of whom received science kits for circuit building, electromagnetic motors, and power generation models.

COMMUNICATIONS

Below are the in-person events the CE Team participated in during the month of April 2022:

- 4/2 – Spring Egg hunt at Villegas Park
- 4/9 – Spring Eggstravagana at Ryan Bonamino Park
- 4/13 – Janet Goeske Center - Monthly utility assistance program outreach
- 4/20 – Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) Open House
- 4/23 – Earth Day at Casa Blanca Customer Resource Center
- 4/27 – Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce Job and Resource Fair at Tyler Mall
- 4/28 – Employment Development Agency (EDA Workforce Center) - Monthly utility assistance program outreach

- 4/29 - Job and Resource Fair at EDA Workforce Center
- 4/30 – Insect Fair at Riverside Main Library
- 4/30 – Riverside Rotary Club Show and Go Car Show Downtown Riverside

Key social media posts during the month of April 2022 include:

- 4/1 - Earth Month Kickoff
- 4/6 - Don't Doubt the Drought
- 4/8 - Water Main Break
- 4/11 - Announcement of new Board of Public Utilities Chair David Crohn, Vice Chair Rebecca Goldware, and Member Nipunjeet Gujral
- 4/14 - Mulch and tree planting tips
- 4/19 - Electric vehicle rebate
- 4/23 - Earth Day event
- 4/27 - Don't Doubt the Drought – Water conservation tips

Back of Bill messaging for April included:

- Recycling and proper disposal of toxic items
- Energy and water conservation
- Eating and shopping local to reduce emissions
- Earth Month and protecting the environment

In the Summer 2022 issue of Explore Magazine (a Parks, Recreation & Community Services printed and digital publication), RPU messaging was included on:

- Updates on Advanced Metering Infrastructure or AMI (Smart Meters) and Streetlight projects
- Flex Alerts
- Drought messaging

The CE Team also launched a new public awareness campaign, Don't Doubt the Drought. This campaign is intended to remind the public about the ongoing drought California is experiencing and the importance of conserving water. The Don't Doubt the Drought campaign will continue running throughout the year in various digital and print channels, as well as promotion at in-person events.

