



# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE: AUGUST 8, 2022**

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

**CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATES THROUGH JUNE 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 JUNE 2022 HIGHLIGHTS**

*Residential*

- A. Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 3,468 customers July–June 2022 totaling \$1,189,781.
- B. Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) assisted 470 customers through June 2022 and expended \$265,428.55.
- C. Emergency Recovery Assistance Program (ERAP) from July 2021 through June 2022 approved 522 applications and \$208,756 in assistance
- D. RPU processed a total of 328 water rebates in collaboration with regional stakeholder Metropolitan Water District (MWD).
- E. Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program processed 88 applications with \$42,030.30 for customer benefits

*Commercial*

- A. Processed a total of 58 large commercial electric rebates July 2021 through June 2022 for a total of \$643,098.55 paid and 6,488,571 kWh saved.

*Education*

- A. Education program collaborated with Parks & Rec Splash camp for a day at the Garden.
- B. STEM PULL planning continues.
- C. Education Program tour of the new CARB facility in Riverside.

Communications

- A. Launched Restart program campaign with postcards, emails, social media posts, and handouts at customer counters
- B. Continued drought messaging with “Don’t Doubt the Drought” campaign
- C. Email to residential customers on 6/7 - Restart Program Now Available
- D. Email to residential customers on 6/16 - Water Quality Report Now Available
- E. Email to residential customers on 6/22 - Emergency Drought Regulations Adopted by State
- F. Email to commercial customers on 6/23 - Employee Spotlight – Greg Herzog | Don’t Doubt the Drought | Be a Power Partner | Investing in Our Future – Canyon Crest Cable Replacement | Mylar Balloons | 2021 Engineering Essay Contest

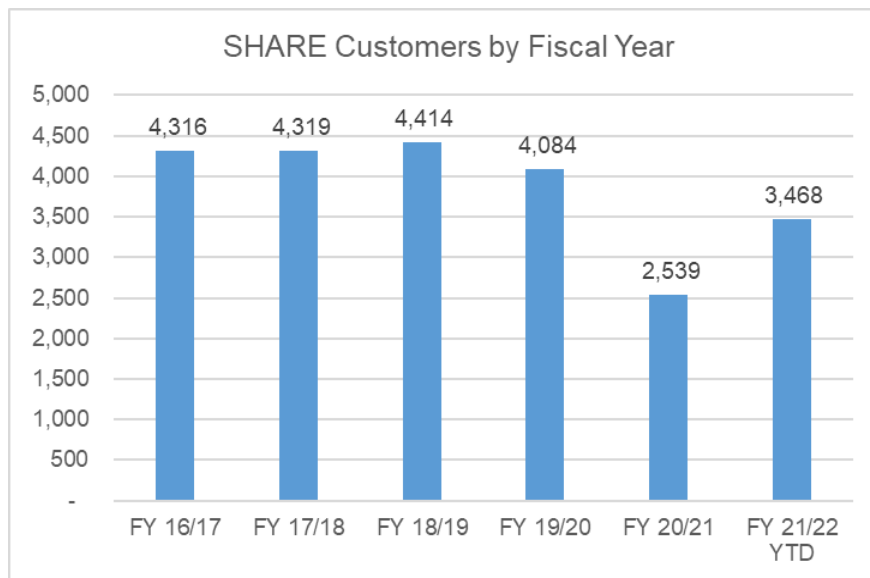
New and Emerging Programs

- A. Restart program began June 1<sup>st</sup> which is helping customers who are behind on their bills due to COVID. This program allows utility customers with a qualifying past due balance to sign up for an interest free, 18-month repayment arrangement, to bring their account current.
- B. Board and Council approved an increase in SHARE qualification to 250% of Federal Poverty Guidelines and increased monthly assistance to \$16 electric and \$3.25 water, effective July 1.
- C. Low-Income Home Water Assistance Program (LiHWAP) – Program enrollment was accepted with California Department of Community Services & Development (CSD) and Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP) for program implementation for June 2022.
- D. Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP), is now present at the Casa Blanca Customer Resource Center (CRC) on Tuesdays and Thursdays 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Through the month of June, CAP representatives have assisted a total of 81 walk-in customers at the CRC center.
- E. CE Team is formulating a comprehensive study of the equity of CE programs including a community needs assessment. Meeting with community partners to take this work forward.

## RESIDENTIAL DETAIL

### Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy - SHARE PROGRAM

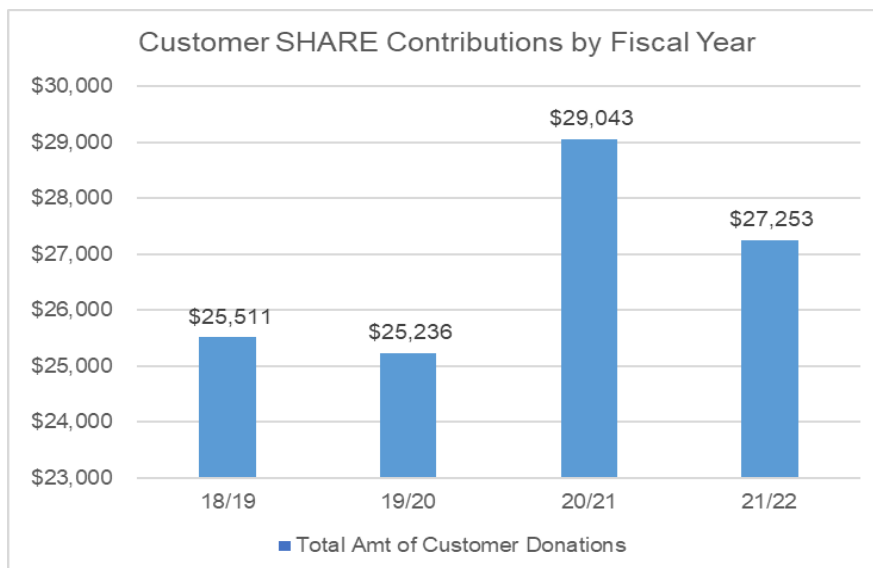
The Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 3,468 customers through June 2022.



On May 17, 2022, the City Council approved the fourth yearly SHARE enhancement increase for electric and water monthly credits. Effective July 1, 2022, electric monthly credits will increase from \$15.50 to \$16.00, and water monthly credits increase from \$3.00 to \$3.25. In addition to the monetary increase, the qualification criteria were also increased from 200% federal poverty guidelines to 250%, meaning that a family of 4 can have a household income of up to \$69,375 or less to qualify for SHARE.

### 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 June 30, 2022, customers have donated a total of \$27,253 and have provided emergency/deposit assistance to 109 customers.



### Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP)

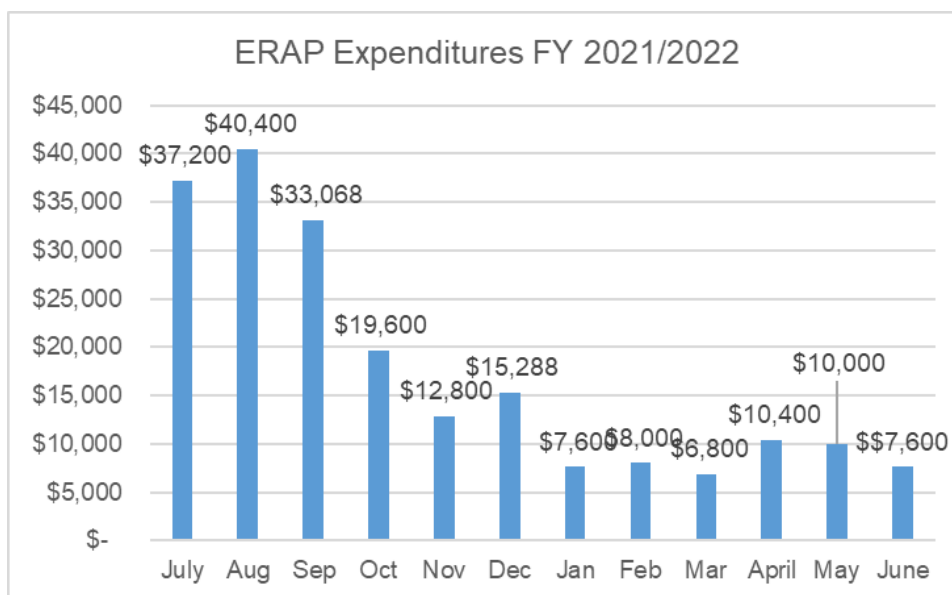
ESAP was created to help low-income renters and homeowners with energy-savings home improvements at no-cost; however, the program had been put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ESAP agreement has been amended and restated with SoCal Gas and was approved by Board on January 24, 2022, and by City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

Since March 1, 2022, the program has benefitted approximately 470 homes in the RPU service area, expending a total of \$265,428.55. 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 June 2022, 522 applications have been approved and \$208,756 has been expended on the program.



### Low-Income Home Water Assistance Program (LiHWAP)

LiHWAP is a temporary emergency program that helps low-income families with assistance on past due water and sewer bills. Program enrollment was accepted with California Department of Community Services & Development (CSD) and Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAP) for program implementation for June 2022. Since the launch of the program, LiHWAP has assisted 59 customers and \$31,323 has been paid in past due water and sewer bills.

**Residential Rebates**

From July 2021 through June 2022 a total of 8,380 residential energy rebates were processed for a total rebate benefit of \$773,927.87

<b>Residential Devices</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>RPU Expenditures</b>
Air Conditioning	484	\$328,650.00
Energy Star	1,387	\$115,250.00
Pool Pump	95	\$19,000.00
Tree Power	5,687	\$212,980.08
Weatherization	349	\$62,147.79
Recycling	378	\$35,900.00
<b>Energy Rebate Total</b>	<b>8,380</b>	<b>\$773,927.87</b>

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, 48 used EV rebates have been processed and approximately \$22,500 has been paid out, this also includes two low-income rebates.

A total of 33 EV Charger applications have been processed with a total payout of \$14,045.99. There have been 7 EV Adapter applications processed with a total payout of \$5,484.31.

RPU's water rebate programs are processed through Metropolitan Water District's (MWD) rebate portal: [www.SoCalWaterSmart.com](http://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, to June 30, 2022, a total of 328 residential water rebates were processed with total payout of \$243,438.00.

<b>Residential Devices</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>RPU Expenditure</b>	<b>MWD Expenditure</b>
High Efficiency Clothes Washer (HECW)	167	\$0.00	\$14,195.00
Residential Cistern Large	3	\$0.00	\$900.00
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)	20	\$39,341.00	\$78,682.00
Rotating Nozzle	11	\$1,644.00	\$1,096.00
Weather Based Irrigation Controller (WBIC) (each < acre)	123	\$14,760.00	\$92,400.00
<b>Water Conservation Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>\$55,745.00</b>	<b>\$187,693.00</b>

**COMMERCIAL DETAIL**

July 2021 through June 30, 2022, a total of 58 commercial rebates were processed (2 weatherization, 40 air conditioning, 3 energy star, 1 new construction and 15 lighting) with a total payout of \$643,098.55 and a kWh savings of 6,488,571.

Account management staff continues to work with key accounts on summer readiness and the Power Partners program to help with potential high summer loads and possible CAISO resource shortfalls. In addition, account management staff is reaching out to key accounts and commercial

customers regarding drought restrictions and organizing virtual informational meetings with key accounts to address customer specific needs and questions.

## **EDUCATION DETAIL**

The Education program collaborated with Villegas Park Splash Camp on June 14. 60 Students were engaged in soil education, a garden scavenger hunt, and they ended the day with making edible soil cups.

STEM-PULL scheduling and planning is underway. There will be speakers from the utility as well as surrounding utility agencies to speak to the students about sustainability, electrification, and renewable energy. Students will also engage in workshops learning about the engineering process and creating windmill blade designs. Students from Riverside and surrounding cities are set to attend the program at CBU.

The Education team attended a tour of the new California Air Resource Board campus in Riverside with Gordon Bourns. The tour consisted of looking at the emissions and chemistry labs on campus.

## **COMMUNICATIONS DETAIL**

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

- 6/08 – Riverside Summer Fest at Don Jones Park
- 6/14 – Educational Programing at Villegas Park Splash Camp
- 6/16 – Drought Presentation for the Kiwanis Club
- 6/23 – EDA Workforce Center- Monthly utility assistance program outreach
- 6/24 – Riverwalk Movie Night

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

- 6/06 - Restart program now available
- 6/10 - Tree Power reminder
- 6/13 - Go Paperless
- 6/14 - Waterwise garden Splash Camp
- 6/17 - Water conservation
- 6/19 - Juneteenth
- 6/28 - Cool centers open
- 6/29 - Water conservation

Back of Bill messaging for June included:

- Powerline safety
- Water quality report

Bill Inserts for June included:

- Water quality report
- Commercial automated refuse service

In June, the team helped launch the Restart program for residential and commercial customers and has been very involved with the state's new water restrictions and the City's response for water conservation.