

# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE:** DECEMBER 11, 2019

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

**ITEM NO:** 13

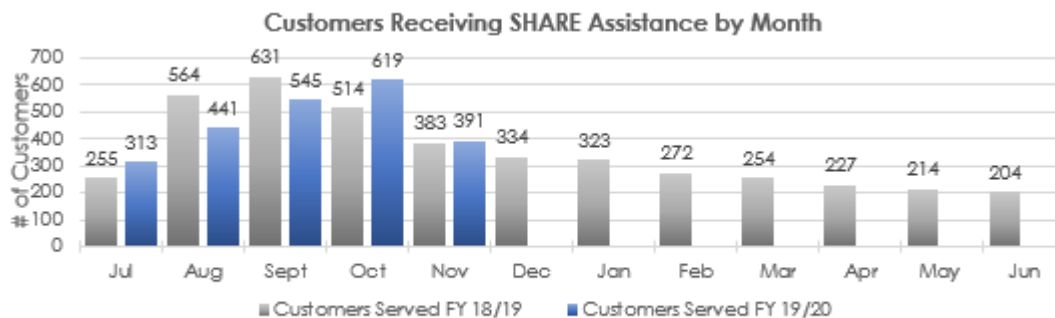
### **General Manager's Report on SHARE Program Participation and Customer Resource Center (CRC) Utility Assistance Programs July through November 2019**

#### SHARE Program

The SHARE program provided assistance to over 4,400 electric customers and over 1,300 water customers for fiscal-year 18/19.

Enhancements for fiscal-year 19/20 include allowing customers that participate in other Federally funded programs such as: Cal-Fresh, SNAP, CalWorks/TANF, LI-HEAP, MediCal/Medicaid, Healthy Families A&B, National School Lunch Program, SSI, WIC or the Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance to bring their current year award letter to easily qualify for SHARE. Additionally, the monthly assistance increase was approved by Board June 10, 2019 and by Council July 2, 2019. Effective July 3, 2019, qualified customers can receive \$14.50 per month for their electric bill and \$2.50 for their water bill. The SHARE program maintained the once-annual \$150 assistance to customers but has limited it to either deposit assistance or emergency assistance for customers that receive a disconnection notice but are unable to pay.

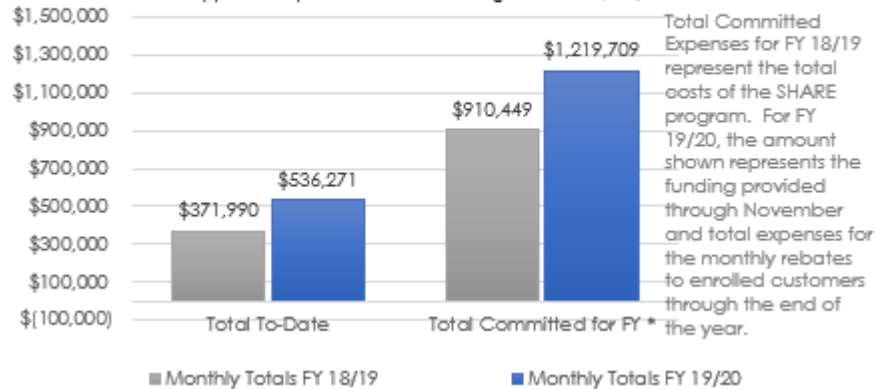
Over the first year of the enhanced program, the total number of customers approved for SHARE assistance was 4,414. This represented a year-over-year increase of 2% when compared to 4,319 customers served between July 2017 and June 2018. Participation continues to trend similar to prior years despite increasing outreach. Staff believes that this is due to the current economic conditions. The number of customers served July 2019 through November 2019 is 2,309, a 2% decrease from the previous year.



In FY 18/19, the SHARE program cost varied month to month, the monthly average per customer increased as more customers enrolled in the monthly rebate programs. Expenses associated with the rebates per customer are spread throughout the year as customer receive their monthly rebates. The amount expended per customer as of the end of FY 18/19 was \$225.64 (the amount includes monthly payments for enrolled customers through the end of the current fiscal year). Through November, the amount expended per customer is \$232.25.

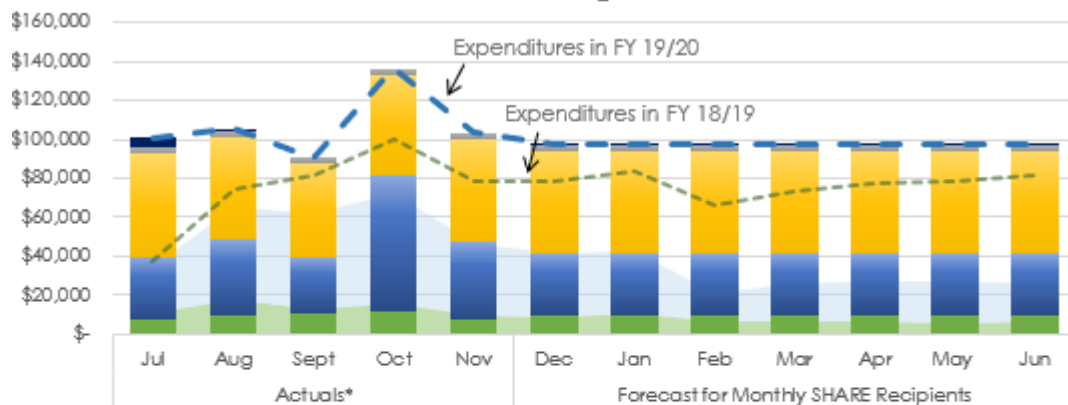
### Year-to-date and Annual Total Rebates and Expenses for SHARE Program for FY 18/19 and 19/20

Approved Expenditure for SHARE Program in FY 19/20 \$2.8 Million



The chart below provides detail on the history and current progress of the SHARE program participants, expenditures, overhead costs and program goals. CAP administrative expenses are shown in green with the lighter color representing FY 19/20. In November 2019, there was a 22 percent difference in costs between the monthly electric rebate and the flat emergency/deposit assistance (shown as light blue for FY 18/19 and darker blue for FY 19/20). This reflects the monthly payments (shown in yellow) increasing as participation increases throughout the year.

### Comparison of FY 18/19 and FY 19/20 (to-date) Expenses Associated with the SHARE Program



#### Legend for FY 19/20

- Monthly Totals FY 19/20
- CAP Estimated Administrative Fees (\$27 / Application Approved)
- Advertising and Marketing Costs
- Deposit and Emergency Assistance (\$150)
- Electric Monthly (\$14.50/month)
- Water Monthly (\$2.50/month)

#### Legend for FY 18/19

- Monthly Totals FY 18/19
- CAP Estimated Administrative Fees (\$27 / Application Approved)
- Deposit and Emergency Assistance (\$150)

\* CAP Administrative Fee for FY 19/20 is Estimated based on Approved Applications.

### Casa Blanca Customer Resource Center

The Customer Engagement division opened a location at the Casa Blanca Customer Resource Center (CRC). Customers have the ability to apply for SHARE, rebate programs and utilicare on-site and have any questions or concerns immediately answered. This location provides an alternative location for customers who would have been required to go to the Community Action Partnership (CAP) office located near downtown on Iowa Street as in the past. Since the soft opening date on July 15, 2019, a total of 557 customers have been approved for SHARE at the CRC in addition to the 1,752 customers who have been approved through the traditional application process at CAP. The table below is the break down of customer visits at the CRC:

Total Customers	SHARE Approved	SHARE Inquiry	Rebate Application	Utilicare	Other
174	121	10	24	7	12

Customer Engagment is also working closely with Customer Service to assist in increasing SHARE and rebate applications at the CRC. Customers that enter the payment center seeking utility payment assistance are directed to the processing center to receive immediate assistance.

### Community Outreach

Since March 2019, staff has participated in over 25 community and neighborhood outreach events and made contact with upwards to over 1,800 customers. All Customer Engagement staff will participate in the upcoming events in each ward to provide information on utility assistance, rebate programs, energy efficiency and water conservation.

To further increase participation, staff is working with the Office of Communications to develop a campaign promoting SHARE. The campaign will be promoted through City social media channels, bill inserts and postcard mailers.

### Energy Savings Assistance Program

The Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) served 83 homes during November and has served approximately 1,749 customers during Fiscal Year 2019/20 to date.

The most popular measure is the LED light bulb, over 14,000 have been installed in customer's homes.

As of November 19, 2020, City Council approved a \$500,000 increase to the ESAP program for FY 19/20.