



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATES THROUGH JULY 2024

Customer Engagement electric programs are 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 Water Conservation Surcharge is a charge that RPU no longer collects (per the City Council decision as 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 (while the Water Conservation Surcharge has funds available) water conservation for customers and the wider community.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT JULY 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Residential

- A. Sharing Households Assist Riverside's Energy (SHARE) program assisted 294 in July 2024 totaling \$73,500 in past-due assistance, monthly electric and water credits.
- B. Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) assisted 36 customers in July 2024 and expended \$48,855.00.
- C. Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program processed 1 application.

Commercial

- A. In July 2024, there are several commercial rebates in pending status and will be finalized for payout in the upcoming weeks.
- B. Small Business Direct Install Program vendor Richard Heath & Associates completed 15 direct installs.

Education

- A. STEM in Public Utilities Learning Labs 2024.
- B. STEM FUNDamentals 2024.
- C. Planning for the new school year has begun.

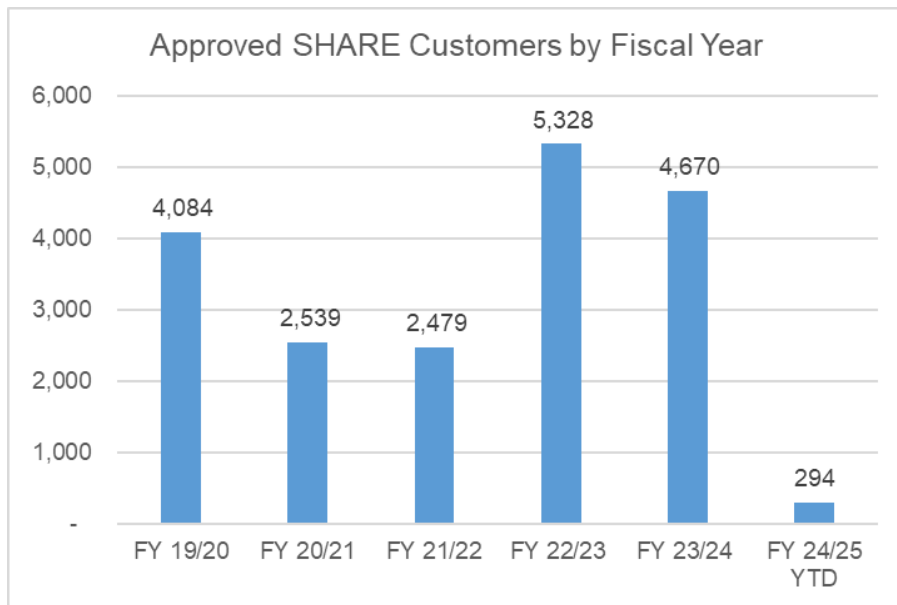
Communications

- A. Updated utility tags, forms, and website to reflect changes to fees
- B. Updated website to reflect changes to meter costs
- C. Updated SHARE page to reflect changes in assistance amounts
- D. Updated website to reflect enhancement of Heat Pump rebate
- E. Created new commercial case study highlighting our Commercial Turf Replacement program
- F. Hosted Good Morning Riverside event with GRCC and shared an update about RPU and our commercial programs
- G. Mailed postcard to 100 commercial customers promoting Turf Replacement Program
- H. Mailed postcard to 14 commercial customers promoting Outdoor Lighting Program
- I. Residential Email: 7/23
- J. Commercial Email: 7/18

RESIDENTIAL DETAIL

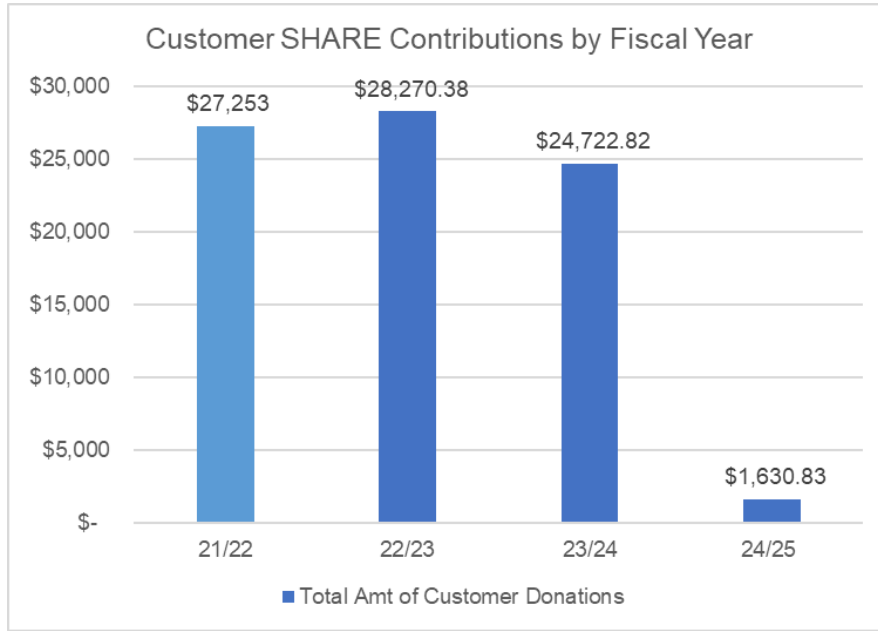
Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy - SHARE PROGRAM

The Sharing Households Assist Riverside’s Energy (SHARE) program assisted 294 customers in July 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 \$31.00 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. In July 2024, the program has benefitted 36 homes in the RPU service area, expending a total of \$48,855.00. The program helps customers access a range of efficiency measures such as A/C tune-ups, LED lightbulbs, Wi-Fi thermostats, and HVAC motor upgrades as the most popular.

Residential Rebates

For July 2024 a total of 214 residential energy rebates were processed, for a total rebate benefit of \$20,830.69.

Residential Devices	Participation	RPU Expenditures
Air Conditioning	19	\$4,550.00
Heat Pump	2	\$500.00
Energy Star	76	\$6,400.00
Pool Pump	27	\$1,000.00
Tree Power	34	\$2,479.90
Weatherization	22	\$3,000.79
Recycling	20	\$1,850.00
A&G Recycling	14	\$1,050.00
Energy Rebate Total	214	\$20,830.69

In July 2024 the Used Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program has approved 1 rebate application for a total of \$1,000. The EV Charger Rebate Program has approved 1 rebate for a total of \$399.00.

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, 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. In July 2024 a total of 26 residential water rebates were processed with total payout (RPU/MWD) of \$78,672; representing annual water savings of 975,407 gallons or 3-acre feet.

Residential Devices & Turf	Participation / Devices	RPU Expenditure	MWD Expenditure
Flow Monitor/Leak Detection Device	2	\$150	\$200
High-efficiency Clothes Washer	9	-	\$765
Premium HET (from 1.6 gpf toilet)	2	-	\$280
Turf Removal (per square foot)	8 (16,107)	\$23,556	\$48,321
Weather-based Irrigation Controllers (WBIC / WBICLL)	5	\$3,240	\$2,160
Total	26	\$26,946	\$51,726

Smart Irrigation Program

Residential and business customers are helping to reduce water use and costs by installing smart irrigation controllers and high-efficiency sprinkler nozzles via the Smart Irrigation Program (SIP). The SIP, which provides a free irrigation assessment to evaluate water use and the corresponding efficiency opportunities and repair or replacement of up to \$300 of irrigation equipment, celebrated a high-level of participation and funds fully expended for Fiscal Year 23-24. Residential customers assisted was 260; commercial accounts were 5. Approximately 7 million gallons of water were saved for the year representing 9,419 acre-feet of water.

COMMERCIAL DETAIL

Energy Rebates

In July 2024, there are several commercial rebates in pending status and will be finalized for payout in the upcoming weeks.

Direct Install Programs

In July 2024, the Small Business Direct Install and Outdoor Lighting Program conducted 24 audit visits at local businesses and a total of 15 direct installs were completed. The Refrigerated Load Program has completed refrigeration efficiency upgrades at 35 businesses with an additional 13 businesses approved and ready to start upgrades.

Water Rebates

For July 2024, one commercial account removed 446 square feet of turf with a payout of \$2,230; this project represents annual water savings of 18,893 gallons or .06-acre feet.

EDUCATION DETAIL

The Team conducted their 7th annual STEM in Public Utilities Learning Lab program, held July 8 through the 12th, 2024 at California Baptist University. A total of 40 students completed the program. Students took facilities tours at the Utility Operation Center, Riverside Energy Resource Center and Elsinore Valley Municipal Water wastewater treatment plant. Students also got to watch a demonstration of RPU's lineman at work. Students were also able to take a tour and engaged in hands-on projects such as creating their own mini-grid, electricity circuits, and wind turbine blades.

The winning projects included:

First place: Phoebe Heng and Zacary Lewis. For their project: Methane Cells

Second Place: Crystal Rosales, Thiago Duron, Jared Jara, Nayan Bhakta for their project: Altium Energy Storage.

Third place: Justin Diep Robert Flores Byran Molina Rivas, and Saanvi Nukala. For their project: Predictive Intelligence Consultant (PIC).

STEM FUNdamentals middle school summer academy was held on July 23 through the 25th, 2024 at Bourn's Technology Center. A total of 28 students completed this year's program. Students spent three full days applying STEM knowledge to the topic of water conservation. Learning about the role of city planning, public spaces and landscape engineering, students worked in teams to design turf replacement projects for one of Riverside's local parks, utilizing the turf rebate program criteria.

The winning projects included:

First Place: Team 3- Andrew Hernandez, Anthony Taeascio, Zariah Grayson, Mayuri Kiran

Second Place: Team 5- Jeffery Zou, Naman Bhakta, McKenzie Rodriguez, Viviane Tang

Third Place: Team1- Daniella Nee, Kristoffer Oey, Jocelyn Gonzalez

Planning for the new 2024-2025 school year has begun. Planning includes updating our education website to match our programs, emailing teachers to schedule classes for the year, and purchasing materials for our upcoming classes.

COMMUNICATIONS DETAIL

Email Communications

- Residential email sent on 7/23. Content included: Energy Conservation Tips During Hot Weather, Air Conditioning Tune Up Rebate, SHARE, Scam Alerts, 311 App, Open Job Opportunities.
 - i. 77,500 emails sent
 - ii. 53,500 emails opened by customers
- Commercial email sent on 7/18. Content included: Energy Conservation Tips During Hot Weather, Air Conditioning Rebates, Scam Alerts, 311 App Open Job Opportunities.
 - i. 5,000 emails sent

- ii. 3,250 emails opened by customers

In-Person Events

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

- 7/3/24 – Independence Day BBQ- Janet Goeske
- 7/3/24 – Concerts for Heros- Riverside National Cemetery
- 7/10/24 – Concerts in the Park, Fairmount Park
- 7/10/24 – SHARE Community Outreach, Janet Goeske Senior Center
- 7/11/24 – Good Morning Riverside with the Camber- Mission Inn Hotel
- 7/13/24 – 22nd Annual Backpack Giveaway & Resource Fair- Bordwell
- 7/16/24 – SHARE Community Outreach, Victoria Springs
- 7/17/24 – Concerts in the Park, Fairmount Park
- 7/18/24 – CAP 3rd Annual Community Partnership Open House
- 7/19/24 – AUSD Resource Workshop, Wells Middle School
- 7/20/24 – Miracles and Dreams Backpack & School Supply Giveaway, Main Library
- 7/24/24 – Summer Concerts in the Park, Fairmount Park

Social Media Outreach

Key social media posts during the month of July 2024:

- 7/02 – Fireworks Illegal
- 7/03 – Outdoor Lighting Program
- 7/04 – Independence Day Office Closure
- 7/04 – Happy 4th
- 7/06 – Call 311 for Scammers
- 7/09 – Contact Customer Service Via Email
- 7/10 – Street Maintenance
- 7/11 – Thank you Line workers
- 7/12 – Cooling Centers
- 7/12 – Riverside Hawaiian Shirt Day
- 7/12 – Power Outage
- 7/12 – Workplace Safety
- 7/15 – Power Outage Map
- 7/16 – Website Maintenance
- 7/17 – SHARE
- 7/18 – Now Hiring
- 7/19 – Global Outage
- 7/22 – Paperless Billing
- 7/24 – Pool Pumps
- 7/25 – Water Plants Early for Summer
- 7/26 – All Day Every Day
- 7/27 – Irrigation Controller
- 7/30 – Flex Alerts

UPCOMING EVENTS – OCTOBER

- 10/12 - Love Riverside Serve Day, Location TBD
- 10/17 - Family STEAM, Marcy Branch Library
- 10/20 - Mission Inn Run, Downtown Riverside

Back of Bill messaging for October

- Be Prepared – Public Safety Power Shutoff

RPU - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS GALLERY

7/8/24 STEM PULL, California Baptist University-Gordon and Jill Bourns College of Engineering



7/11/24 Good Morning Riverside, Mission Inn Hotel



7/13/24 22nd Annual Backpack Giveaway and Resource Fair Bordwell Park



7/19/24 Iron Sharpens Iron Alvord Unified School District Resource Fair, Wells Middle School



7/20/24 Miracles and Dreams Back to School Event, Main Library



7/23/2024- STEM FUNDamentals- Bourns Technology Center



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT FISCAL YEAR 23/24 HIGHLIGHTS

Awards

- November 2023: Won American Public Power Association (APPA) Public Power Communications Award for Web and Social for our All Day Every Day Campaign
 - Campaign featured images of the diverse RPU team in the field and in the office working hard for the community
 - Promoted on website, emails, billboards, and banners

Events/ Outreach

- New Content
 - Commercial Case Studies
 - Examples that can be shared with commercial customers to show how they can save energy and water
 - Ways to Save Page
 - Interactive page to show visitors where they can lower their utility costs
 - Outage Tips for Pets
 - Additional outage tips to help customers keep their pets safe and comfortable during an outage
 - Heat Pumps
 - Additional information added to the website to educate customers on heat pumps
 - Welcome Kits for New Businesses
 - Sustainable promotional items and information for select new commercial customers
 - Braille and Large Format Print Materials
 - Created versions of SHARE and Utilicare applications, assistance flyer, and rebate brochure in Braille and Large Print formats for our visually impaired customers
- Internal Guides
 - Sustainable Buying Guide
 - Tips and best practices for RPU employees to source sustainable promotional materials
 - Best Practices for Colorblind Appropriate Presentations
 - Tips and best practices for RPU employees to create presentations and materials that are accessible to colorblind people
- Events
 - 92 community events
 - Public Outreach - Rates Meetings
 - 7/31/2023
 - 8/3/2023
 - 8/8/2023
 - Earth Day and Insect Fair event on 4/20/2024
 - Good Morning Riverside event on 7/11/2024
- Emails
 - Residential
 - 11 emails sent to an average of 76,600 customers each send
 - Commercial
 - 11 emails sent to an average of 4,800 customers each send
- Social Media
 - Posting Monday – Saturday on the social platforms below:

- Instagram – 3,502 Followers
- X (Formerly Twitter) - 2,541 Followers
- Facebook – 12,350 Followers

Outreach 23/24	
Community Events	92
Monthly Resource Visits	85
Social Media Posts - Monday – Saturday	18,393 Total Followers
Email Messaging – Total Sent	896,100

Educational Classes 23/24	
Water Conservation	147
Water Pollution Solution	9
Energy Sector	151
23-24 School Yr. Student Participants	8,903
STEM Participants	68

Low-Income Assistance

SHARE Monthly Credits Expenditures	
Electric	\$1,172,232.00
Water	\$104,392.25

SHARE Past Due Assistance	
Approved Customers	4,670
Expenditures	\$1,167,500.00

ESAP	
Homes Served	398
Expenditures	\$455,740.57
kWh Savings	437,972

Commercial Direct Install Programs

Outdoor Lighting Program	
Business Served	116
Expenditures	\$907,197.54
kWh savings	703,268.35

Small Business Direct Install	
Business Served	206
Expenditures	\$716,753.31
kWh savings	864,922.00

Refrigerant Load

Refrigerant Load Program	
Business Served	35
Expenditures	\$144,191.86
kWh savings	733,866.08

Electric Rebate Programs

Residential Rebate Program	
Customers	14,038
Expenditures	\$ 974,928.56
kWh savings	2,958,420

Commercial Rebate Program	
Customers	127
Expenditures	\$ 450,732.65
kWh savings	4,863,559.5

Water Rebate Programs

Commercial Rebate Program	
Customers	189
Expenditures	\$84,600
CCF savings	3.8 million gallons

New Programs/ Agreement Renewals

- 6/11/24- Agreement renewal with Community Action Partnership for SHARE
- 6/25/24-Expansion of the Residential Heat Pump Program

Water Programs Summary & Highlights for FY 23-24

Turf removal was a highlight for the RPU Customer Engagement Team with 84,973 square feet of turf removed on the residential side representing nearly 4 million gallons saved annually; for commercial turf, seven accounts replaced a total of 89,915 square feet, saving more than 3.8 million gallons. One of the accounts was the Los Amigos HOA, saw the removal of 30,000 square feet, replacing it was climate-appropriate landscaping; the conversion of turf is saving the HOA 1.2 million gallons of water per year.



Five free waterwise landscape workshops, which are designed to assist customers in being water efficient and environmentally sound, were offered attracting approximately 20 residents on average. Designed and hosted in partnership with the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District (RCRCD), RPU offered the workshops on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon on two fall/winter dates and three winter/spring options. A newly added workshop with a tour element was held in collaboration with the UCR Master Gardeners and Bourns, Inc. The Spring workshop was given outdoors at the Bourns Inc. facility where a decade ago several acres of turf were removed and replaced with climate-appropriate landscaping



Kerwin Russell of the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District (RCRCD) teaches the RPU Waterwise Workshop at the Janet Goeske Senior Center, Sept. 30, 2023 (above). Below left – workshop held at the Kathleen M. Gonzales Water-wise Garden and Casa Blanca Library; below right – RPU Waterwise Workshop at Bourns Inc.



Commercial Devices & Turf FY 23-24	Participation / Devices	RPU Expenditure	MWD Expenditure
Premium HET (from 1.6 gpf toilet)	180	\$0	\$7,200
Turf Removal (per square foot)	89,915 sq ft	\$84,600	\$56,400
--- participants	7		
Weather-based Irrigation Controllers (WBIC/WBICLL)	1	\$0	\$420
Total	189	\$84,600	\$64,020