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Customer Assistance Discount Program Changes and Update

Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee
Feb 2016

CLEAN, AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE ENERGY AND EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

Automatic Enrollment

The automatic enrollment process was implemented in 2012

- Households receive utility discounts if any person residing in the premise qualifies for any of the following programs:
  - Medicaid
  - Assistance from the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)
  - Travis County Hospital District Medical Assistance Program (MAP)
  - Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI)
  - Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
  - Telephone Lifeline Program

- Households that meet criteria are automatically enrolled in the Customer Assistance Discount Program (CAP) for 12 months
- At the end of 12 months, the household is reviewed for eligibility

Customer Assistance Discount Program

Discount	Sample Customer Benefit	Fiscal Year 15 Average Total	Fiscal Year 15 Average Enrollment
Drainage Fee	$4.91	$842,061.57	14,286
Community Benefit Charge (CAP)	$1.56	$768,071.67	41,143
Electric Bill Discount (10%)	$9.75	$4,812,972.74	41,148
Electric Customer Charge Discount	$10.00	$4,988,390.00	41,145
Water Customer Charge Discount	$7.44	$1,679,786.40	18,823
Water Volumetric Discount	$7.80	$1,752,857.74	18731
Water Tiered Fixed Discount	$6.34	$1,431,075.30	18,823
Waste Water Customer Charge Discount	$10.38	$2,250,701.00	18,073
Total	$58.18	**$18,526,916.42***	
Electric Portion	$21.41	$10,569,434.41	57.05%
Water Portion	$31.96	$7,114,420.44	38.40%
Watershed Protection Portion	$4.91	$842,061.57	4.55%
		$18,526,916.42*	

Unaudited Numbers

In FY16, the following changes were made to the automatic enrollment process to enhance the process and comply with new policy:

- Refined data match and screening algorithm
- Added screening for customers with large home improvement value
- Eliminated enrollment waitlist
- Added Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing to eligibility criteria (implementation in progress)

Improvements were made to the screening algorithm to provide better matching between Utility and County datasets

- i.e. Requires two data fields to have an exact match

- Implementation required 90 days

- Implemented on December 1, 2015

- Results
  - 4,000 customers screened out through tightened match process
  - Customers received letters
  - 600 presented documentation in order to continue discounts
  - 3,400 were removed from discount program due to ineligibility

Added additional screening to determine if the customer's home improvement value is less than $250,000.

- Implementation required 180 days
- Pilot started in October, full implementation started on December 23, 2015, requires 12 monthly cycles to complete

- Results

	Oct - 2015	Nov - 2015	Dec - 2015	Jan - 2016
Enrollments	42,488	39,369	38,956	38,054
Letters Sent	65	85	115	63
Enrolled	12	13	12	0
No Response	48	64	94	63
Removed	5	8	9	0

Updated the algorithm to automatically enroll <u>all</u> eligible households, removed the limit on maximum enrollment

- Previously total enrollment was limited by amount of funding
- A maximum enrollment amount was set for each type of benefit to ensure that each benefit type was given an allotment

- Implementation of required 30 days

- Implemented on February 1, 2016

Results

- In February, an additional 1,537 were enrolled

Note

- Based upon past enrollment levels, the elimination of a waitlist could increase spending beyond available CBC funds

Added Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing (VASH) to the Discount program eligibility criteria.

- Implementation requires 90 days
- Self enrollment was implemented on February 2, 2016
  - Training for VA Case Workers completed
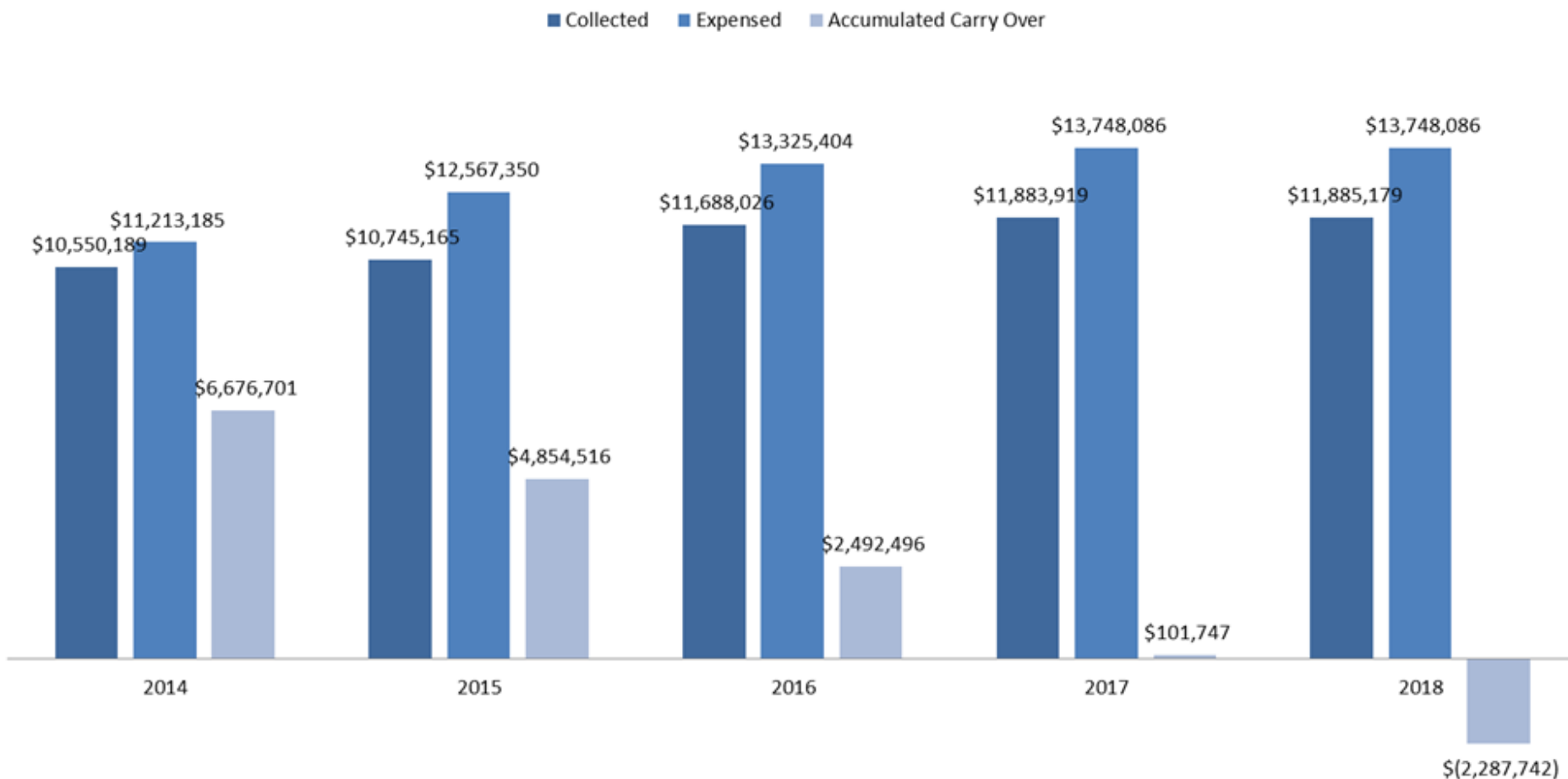- Automatic enrollment is currently planned for March 1, 2016 implementation

Note
  - Total of 400 VASH vouchers available in our community
  - Veterans who live in "all bills paid" complexes will not receive the discounts

- **Community Benefit Charge CAP Discount Forecast**
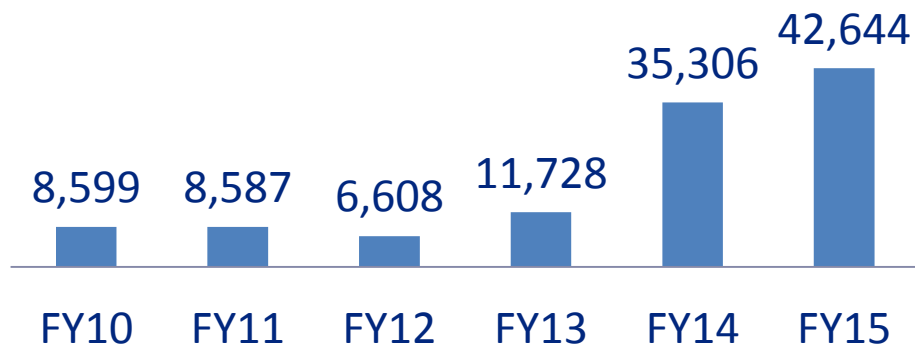

- **New Contract for Automatic Enrollment Vendor**

Questions

Thank you

Historical Discount Program Enrollment

Average Monthly Enrollment

FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15
8,599	8,587	6,608	11,728	35,306	42,644

Monthly Enrollment for FY15

Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
41584	42683	43474	42720	44831	45659	42554	42843	41680	41785	40987	40931