




Customer Bill Management

NBU Board Meeting
February 25, 2021

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Project Description

- Help residential customers manage their utility bills
 - Proactively educate customers who may not have been educated on rate changes
- Create easy to digest informational tools to educate customers on ways to reduce non-essential water usage
- Create a suite of tools available to empower customers to take charge of their utility usage

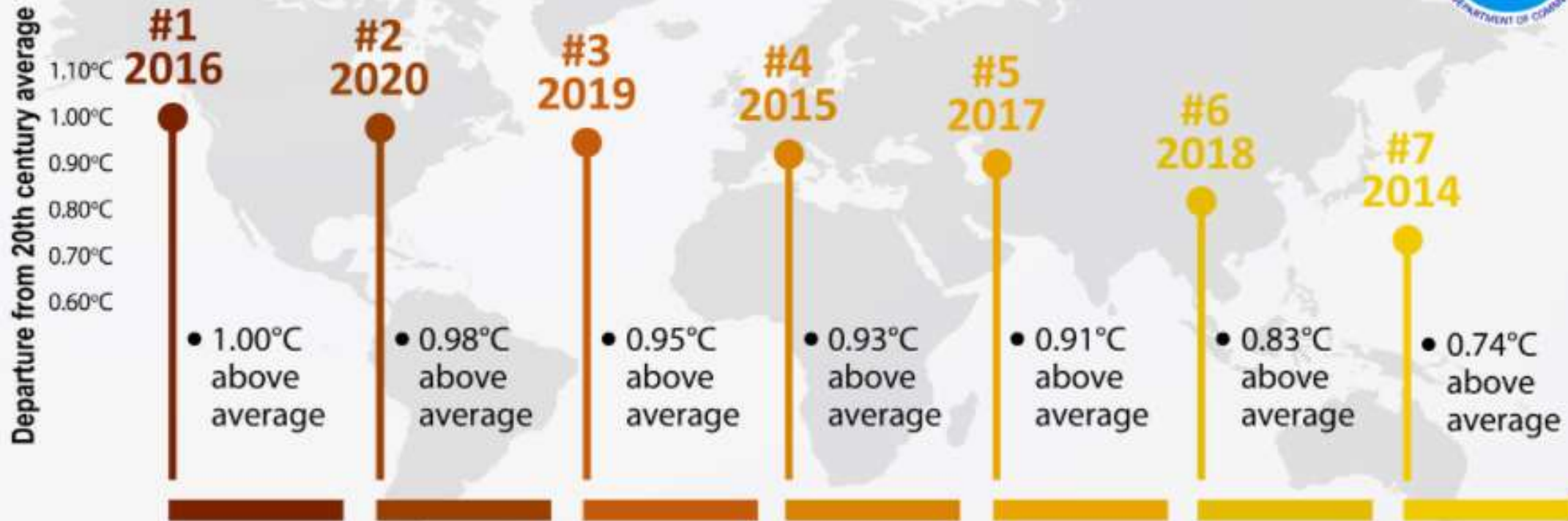
Project Team

- Project Manager: **Justin Stroupe**
- Core Working Group:
 - **Melissa Krause**
 - **Carlos Salas**
 - **Andrew Cummings**
 - **Stephanie Guerra-Hill**
 - **Elias Adame**
 - **Pam Quidley**
 - **Jenna Mathis**
 - **Shanna Wiley**
 - **Kelly Dahlem**
 - **Jacob Cleland**
 - **Jason Theurer**
 - **Mardi Garcia**

Data, Data, Data

- In order to create educational tools for our customers, we first had to understand how they were using the services we provide and what was driving costs.
- Primary drivers or cost
 - Weather
 - High usage patterns
 - Water rate increase

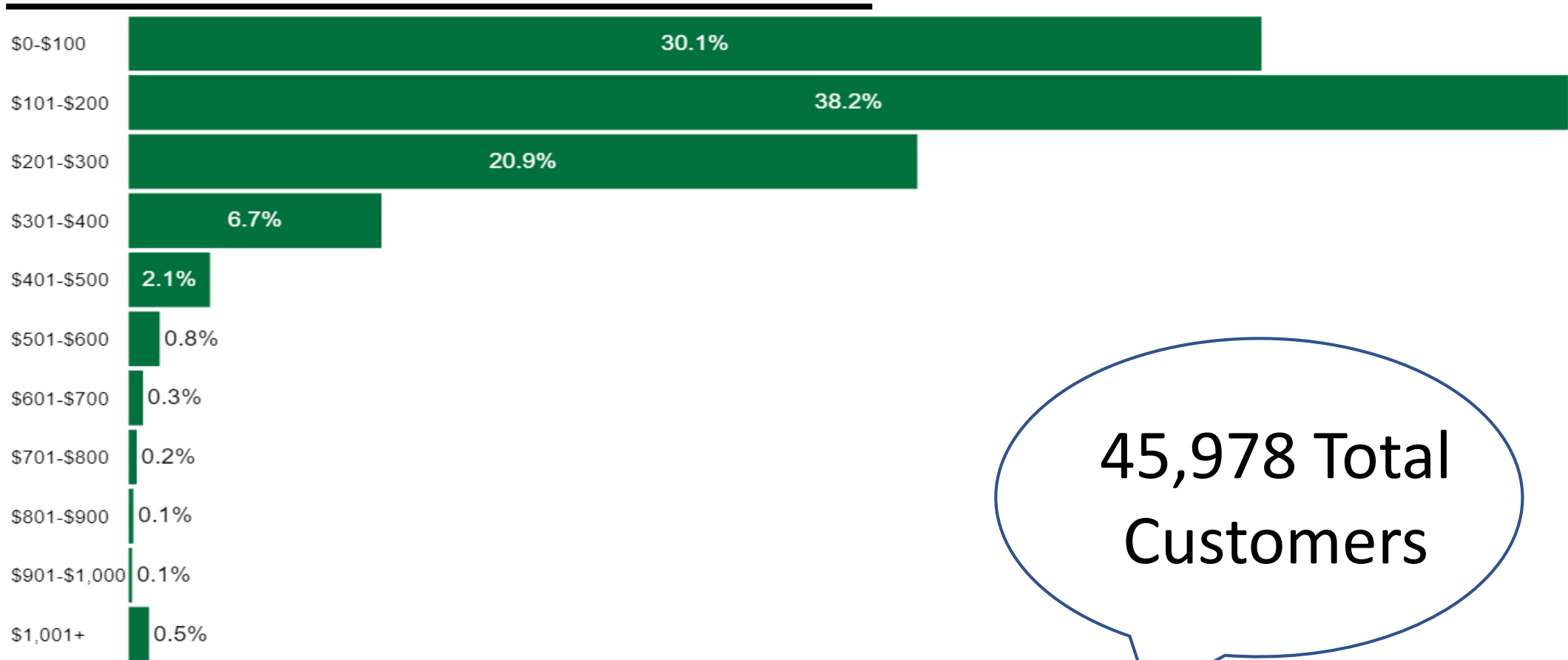
LAST 7 YEARS RANK AS TOP 7 HOTTEST



January 2021

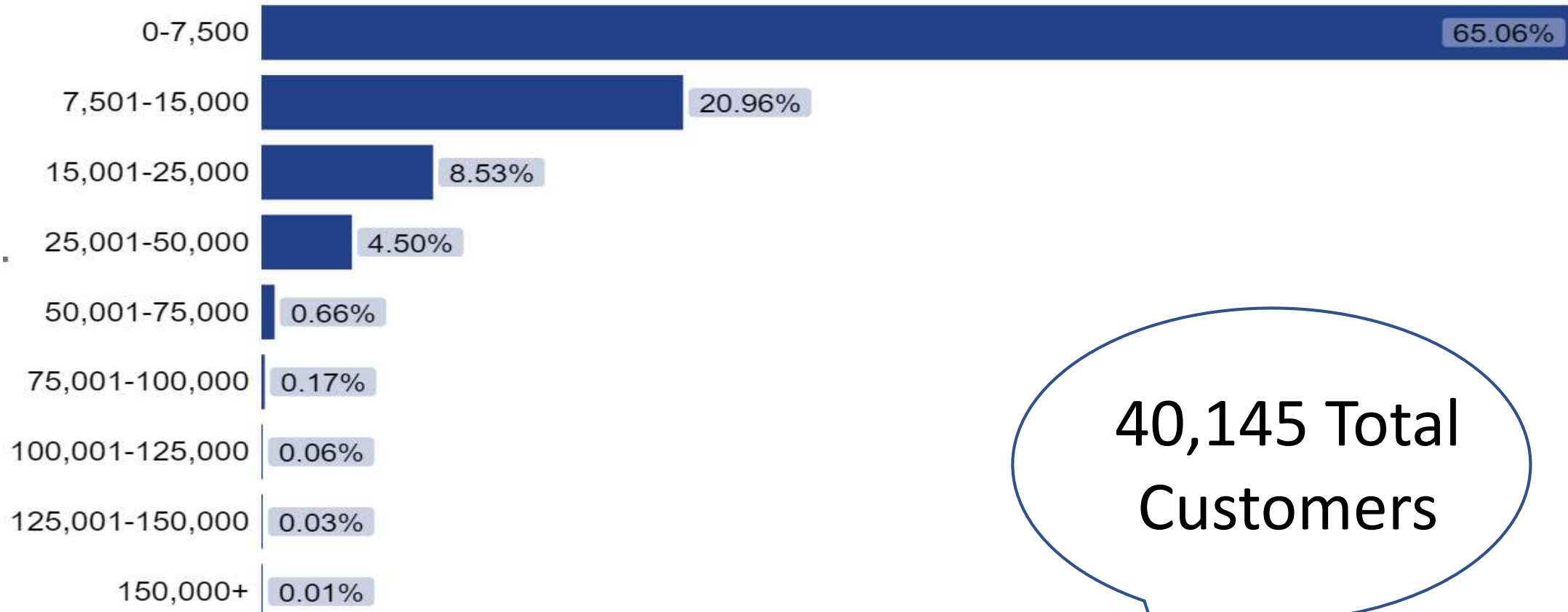
The seven hottest years on record include 2016, 2020, 2019, 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2014, ranked by their departure from the 20th century average temperature. Courtesy of NOAA NCEI, Barbara Ambrose.

% of Customers by Total Bill Amount: Summer 2020



45,978 Total
Customers

% of Customers by Water Use Summer 2020

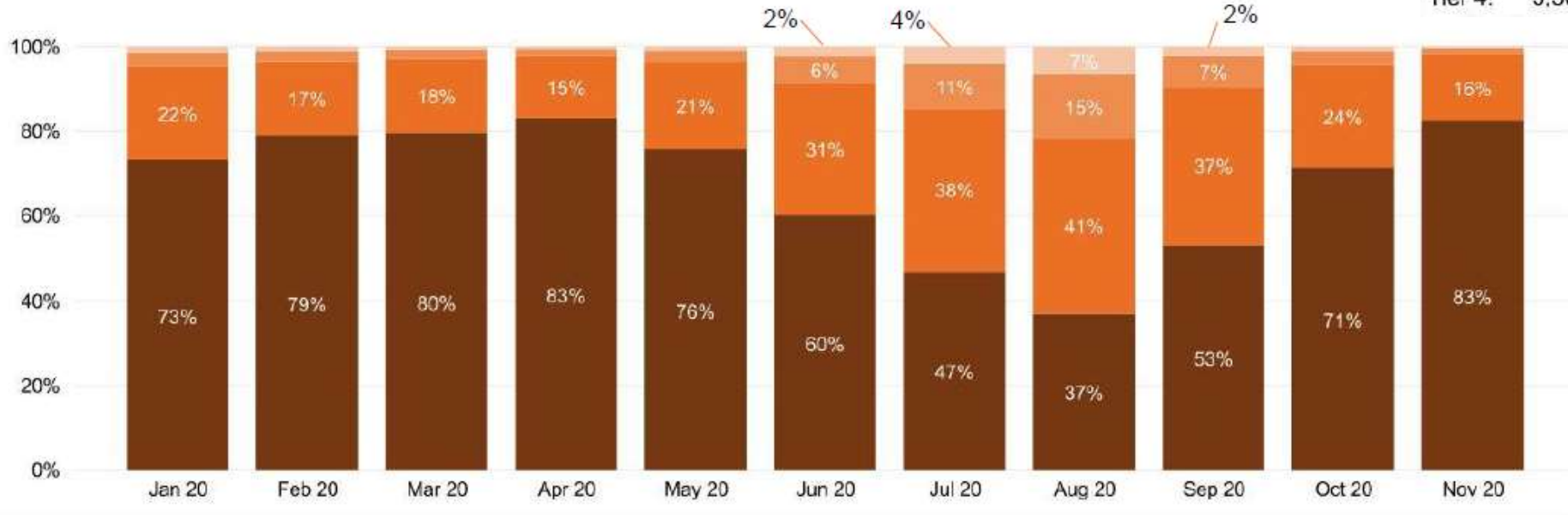


40,145 Total
Customers

Electric

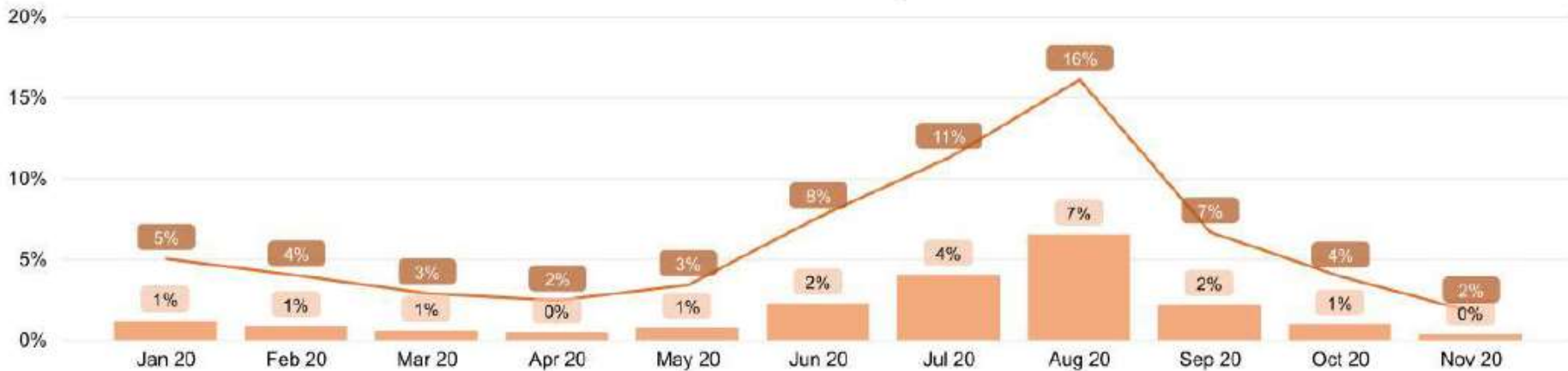
Electric
 Tier 1: 0-1,400 kWh
 Tier 2: 1,401-2,500 kWh
 Tier 3: 2,501-3,500 kWh
 Tier 4: 3,501+ kWh

% of Accounts by Tier



● % Accounts — % Usage

Tier 4+
 % of Accounts
 vs
 % of Usage



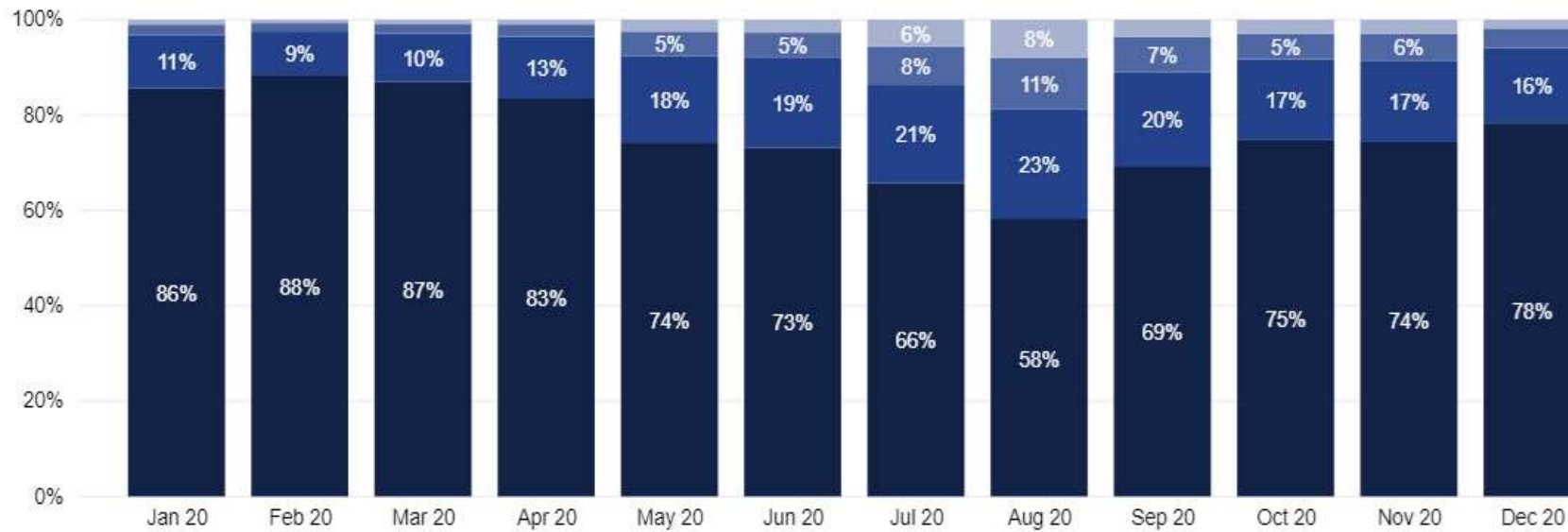
Average % of Accounts by Usage Tier and % of Usage

Note

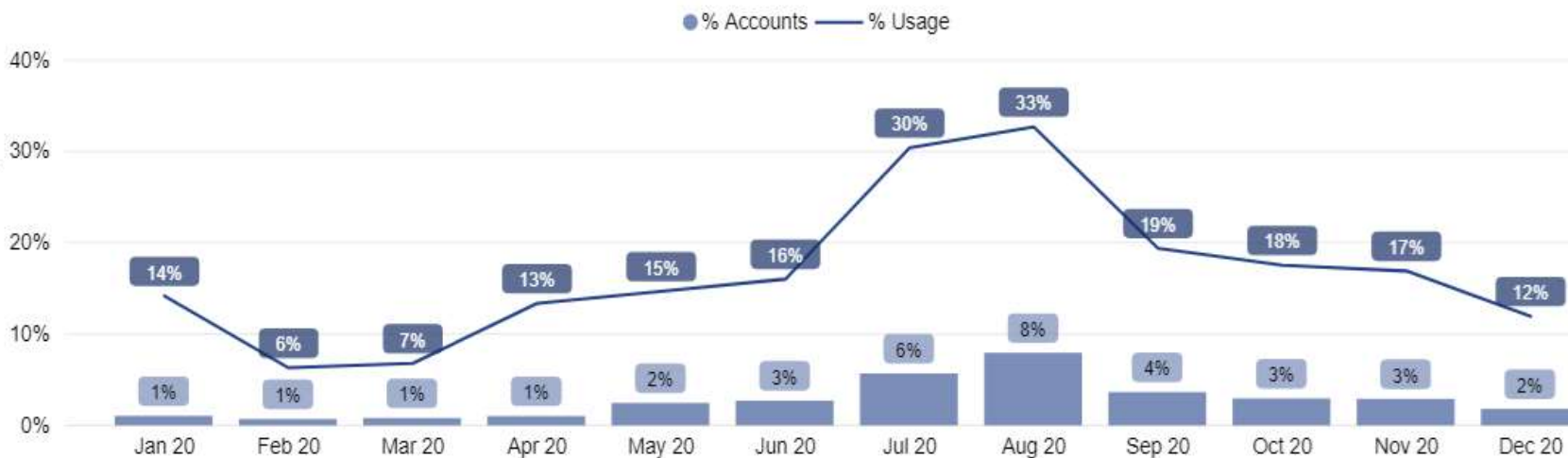
As temperatures reach yearly highs (July/August) the percentage of customers in Tier 4 (>25,000 Gal) also reach yearly highs.

During peak demand months, a small percentage of accounts are responsible for a large percentage of usage. In August, 8% of accounts used 34% of all residential water used.

% of Accounts by Tier



Tier 4+
% of Accounts
VS
% of Usage



Guiding Principles

- Create easy to use tools for customers
- Avoid utility speak where possible
- Simplify
- Be helpful
- Focused primary on water rate education and conservation


Tools Created

- Customer how to videos
 - Accessing Online Account Tools
 - Usage Notifications
 - Setting Irrigation Timers
 - Using NBU Bill analyzer
- Revamped all NBU Rebates
 - Updated Rebate Values
 - Create new rebate for Comal Master Gardener Landscape Guide

Online Bill Calculator

RESIDENTIAL RATE CALCULATOR


Season: Peak
Water, Wastewater & Electric



Electricity

Monthly Power Usage


Average use 1,200 kWh



Wastewater

Wastewater Usage

Wastewater rates are calculated using a customer's three lowest months of water usage in rolling 12-month period. The average for NBU customers is 4,600 gallons.




Water - Home Use

Residential Water Meter Size

RESIDENTIAL RATE CALCULATOR

Season: Peak
Water, Wastewater & Electric

	Electricity
	Power Supply
	Purchased Power 1,200 kWh _____ \$66.24
	Power Cost Recovery Adjustment _____ \$9.60
	Delivery
	Delivered Power 1,200 kWh _____ \$15.48
	Electric Availability _____ \$14.77
	Taxes
	Taxes are listed on your bill _____
	Total Electricity Charges _____ \$106.09

Simplified Rate Views

Forecasted Customer Water Cost Ranges 2020-2023 Based on Usage

		Usage	2020 Min-Max	2021 Min-Max	2022 Min-Max	2023 Min-Max
Essential Use	TIER 1	0 - 7,500	\$0 - \$27	\$0 - \$26	\$0 - \$28	\$0 - \$31
Moderate Use	TIER 2	7,501 - 15,000	\$27 - \$61	\$26 - \$67	\$28 - \$83	\$31 - \$91
High Use	TIER 3	15,001 - 25,000	\$61 - \$128	\$67 - \$146	\$83 - \$182	\$91 - \$199
Very High Use	TIER 4	25,001 - 50,000	\$128 - \$375	\$146 - \$427	\$182 - \$520	\$199 - \$566
		50,000 - 75,000	\$375 - \$621	\$427 - \$709	\$520 - \$858	\$566 - \$933
		75,001 - 100,000	\$621 - \$868	\$709 - \$990	\$858 - \$1,196	\$993 - \$1,300

Other Tools Created Cont.

- Customer Call Routing Guides
 - Process flows
 - Documentation for addressing customer calls and concerns
- Processes for addressing customer concerns through social media
- Increased Electric, Water and Irrigation Assessment availability hours
 - Now includes some nights and weekends

Proactive Customer Outreach

- Created personalized informational letter to educate customers on rate increase impacts to their bill.
- Letter to be sent to all water customers (pending update)

Table A: Forecasted Customer Water Cost Ranges 2020-2023 Based Off Usage

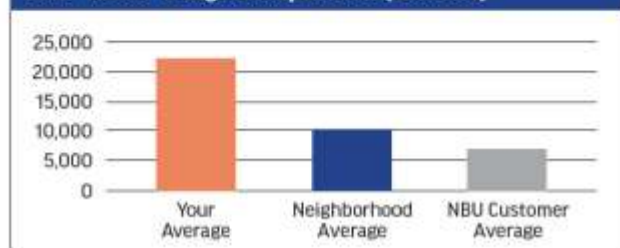
Name		Usage (Gallons)	2020 Min-Max	2021 Min-Max	2022 Min-Max	2023 Min-Max
Essential Use	TIER 1	0 - 7,500	\$0 - \$27	\$0 - \$26	\$0 - \$28	\$0 - \$31
Moderate Use	TIER 2	7,501 - 15,000	\$27 - \$61	\$26 - \$67	\$28 - \$83	\$31 - \$91
High Use	TIER 3	15,001 - 25,000	\$61 - \$128	\$67 - \$146	\$83 - \$182	\$91 - \$199
Extreme Use	TIER 4	25,001 - 50,000	\$128 - \$375	\$146 - \$427	\$182 - \$520	\$199 - \$566
		50,000 - 75,000	\$375 - \$621	\$427 - \$709	\$520 - \$858	\$566 - \$933
		75,001 - 100,000	\$621 - \$868	\$709 - \$990	\$858 - \$1,196	\$933 - \$1,300

Table B outlines how New Braunfels Utilities' (NBU) customers used water during the on-peak (June through September) months of 2020. This data details how 5.45 percent of NBU customers use more than 25,000 gallons of water on a monthly interval, which is classified as extreme use. An average NBU residential customer's monthly water use is 6,000 gallons.

Table B: NBU Residential Customers by Water Usage Level

Water Usage Tiers (Gallons)			# of Customers	% NBU Customers
Essential Use	TIER 1	0 - 7,500	27,038	65.01%
Moderate Use	TIER 2	7,501 - 15,000	8,732	20.99%
High Use	TIER 3	15,001 - 25,000	3,556	8.55%
		25,001 - 50,000	1,880	4.52%
Extreme Use	TIER 4	50,001 - 100,000	346	0.83%
		100,001 and greater	40	0.10%

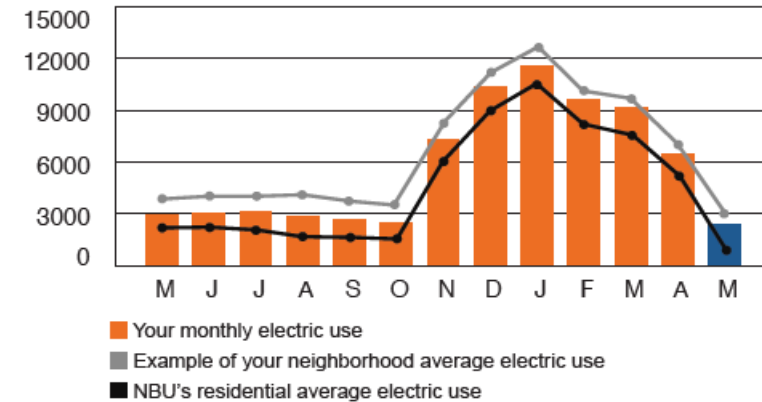
Your Water Usage Comparison (Gallons)



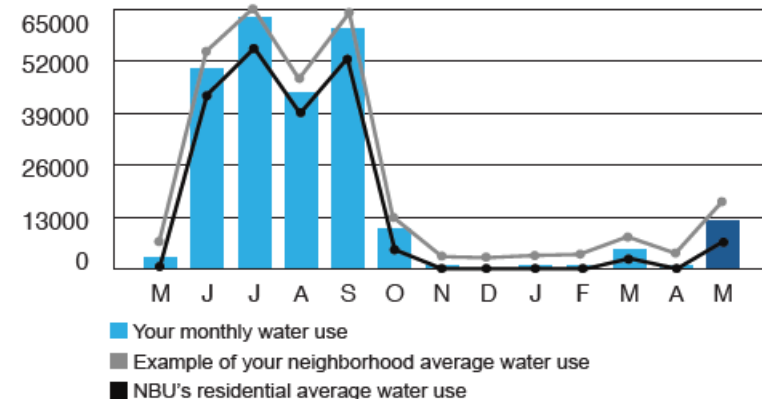
Updated Residential Customer Bills

- To include neighborhood and NBU usage averages
- Forecasted to be completed July 2021

Monthly Electric Usage in kWh



Monthly Water Usage in Gallons



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Customers can help offset rate increases by adjusting utility use and practicing conservation techniques. New Braunfels Utilities offers comprehensive tools, tips, and assets to help customers understand and manage utility expenses.



BILL MANAGEMENT TOOLS

RESOURCES	SUMMARY
After-Hours One-On-One Consultations	After-hours consultations on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Automated Threshold Alerts	Instruction on how to set automated threshold notifications if you are approaching a preset water or electric volume during the month.
Bill Assistance Program	Customers experiencing financial hardship, or wanting to help customers in our community can donate to the NBU Utility Bill Payment Assistance program.
Bill Calculator	The Residential Utility Bill Calculator can help you estimate monthly residential electric, water, and wastewater usage costs.
Budget Billing	Avoid big changes in your utility bill - especially during peak months when air conditioning, heating, and using the sprinkler system can increase bills.
Conservation Tips	To keep your utility bill as low as possible, take advantage of tips and information and help save water, energy, and money.
Conservation Videos	For conservation tips that can help you manage utility costs, view the NBU video library.
Consumption Usage Reports	Request a consumption usage report that shows how your usage compares to your neighborhood and community averages.
DIY Videos	Take the guesswork out of programming your irrigation meters and timers and learn how to set up your online account and manage usage alerts with helpful do-it-yourself videos.
Home Assessments	FREE water, energy, and irrigation assessments are a great way to identify waste and solutions that can help reduce utility expenses.
Leak Detection Checklist	Annual household leaks waste more than 10 trillion gallons of water per year nationwide. New Braunfels Utilities offers helpful advice to ensure your pipes are sealed and do not contribute to this waste.
Rebates	Get more for less with energy and water rebates. For more information, call the NBU Customer Solutions Department at 830.608.8925 or visit nbutexas.com/rebates .
Track and View Interval Usage	Interval usage data availability is determined by meter type.
Understanding Your Bill	New Braunfels Utilities wants to help break down the details of your bill for easy processing. Easily find the important information - the amount due, due date, usage totals, and further understand your consumption data.
Virtual Assessments	FREE Virtual Performance Assessments are conducted on-line or by phone without NBU staff visiting your home.

To access New Braunfels Utilities Bill Management tools, visit nbutexas.com/water-rate-explanation.