



Technical Customer Advisory Committee

AGENDA

Members

Deborah Dixon
Robert Fowlie
Tess Houle
Erwin Melis

Amy Miller
Ron Schwarzwald
Paul van Gulick
Jingjing Wang

Members of the public have the ability to view the meeting by joining the video conference. To request login information for this meeting, contact Luz Carreon at lcarreon@abcwua.org or 505-289-3100. Requests for login must be received before 2pm on Thursday, October 7, 2021. Public Comment must be submitted via email to Luz Carreon at lcarreon@abcwua.org before 2pm on Thursday, October 7, 2021.

Thursday, October 7, 2021	4:00 PM	via video conference
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1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of September 2, 2021 Action Summary
4. Public Comment
5. Drought Update
6. Customer Conversation
7. Other Business
8. Adjournment

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have a disability and require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Water Utility Authority Office, Suite 5012, Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Government Center, phone 289-3100, as soon as possible prior to the meeting date.



**Technical
Customer Advisory Committee**

ACTION SUMMARY

September 2, 2021

Members Present:

Deborah Dixon
Robert Fowlie
Tess Houle
Amy Miller
Ron Schwarzwald
Paul van Gulick
Jingjing Wang

Members Excused:

Erwin Melis

Water Authority Staff Present:

Elizabeth Anderson, Chief Planning Officer
Luzdelcarmen Carreon, Executive Service Coordinator
Mark Kelly, Water Resource Manager
Carlos Bustos, Water Conservation Program Manager
Richard Shean, Irrigation Efficiency Specialist

Members of the public have the ability to view the meeting by joining the video conference. To request login information for this meeting, contact Luz del Carmen Carreon at or 505-289-3100. Requests for login must be received before 2pm on Thursday, August 5, 2021. Public Comment must be submitted via email to Luz del Carmen Carreon at lcarreon@abcwua.org before 2pm on Thursday, August 5, 2021.

Item 1 – Call to Order - Note presence of quorum

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm by Vice Chair Deborah Dixon.

Item 2 – Approval of Agenda

Paul van Gulick made a motion to approve the agenda. Erwin Melis seconded the motion. The motion passed on an 6-0 vote.

For: 6 Fowlie, Houle, Wang, Van Gulick, Melis & Miller
Against: 0

Excused: 1 Schwarzwaldner

Item 3 – Approval of August 5, 2021 Action Summary

Paul van Gulick made a motion to approve the action summary. Robert Fowlie seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

For: 5 Fowlie, Houle, Wang, Van Gulick, & Miller
Against: 0
Excused: 2 Schwarzwaldner & Melis

Item 4 – Public Comment

Public Comment was accepted prior to the meeting by email and distributed to members.

Item 5 - Drought Update

Carlos Bustos, Water Conservation Program Manager, stated we continue to be in Drought Stage 1 which means we continue with added public messaging, offer drought smart classes with a \$20 rebate and water waste fees are double. All these measures are intended to curve demand during summer season when outdoor consumptive use is at its max.

Item 6 – Groundwater Management Plan

Geoffrey Rawling, New Mexico Bureau of Geology & Mineral Resources, spoke on how the water levels have risen and fallen across study area since predevelopment and the current understanding of the Albuquerque Aquifer. Fault structures created sub-basin features that control the subsurface flow of water in the Albuquerque Water, and created an egg-carton shaped aquifer, versus a large bathtub of alluvial sediments.

Item 7 – Irrigation Guide Comments and Questions

Carlos Bustos, Water Conservation Program Manager, once again reminded the committee to turn in the survey and any comments they have on the Irrigation Guide.

Item 8 – Other Business

Vice Chair Deborah Dixon announced two vacant positions, which will be advertised at the next Water Authority Board meeting and on the website.

Item 9 – Adjournment

Vice Chair Deborah Dixon adjourned the meeting at 5:29 PM.

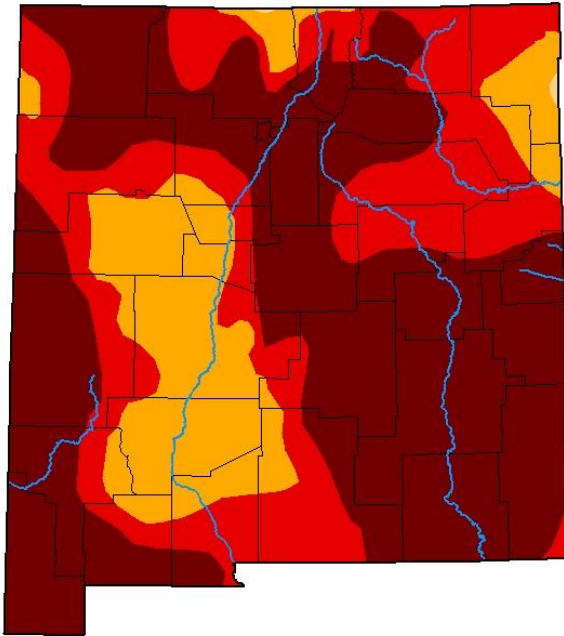
Drought Update

Carlos Bustos
Conservation Program Manager
October 7, 2021

Drought Update

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico

March 2, 2021
(Released Thursday, Mar. 4, 2021)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

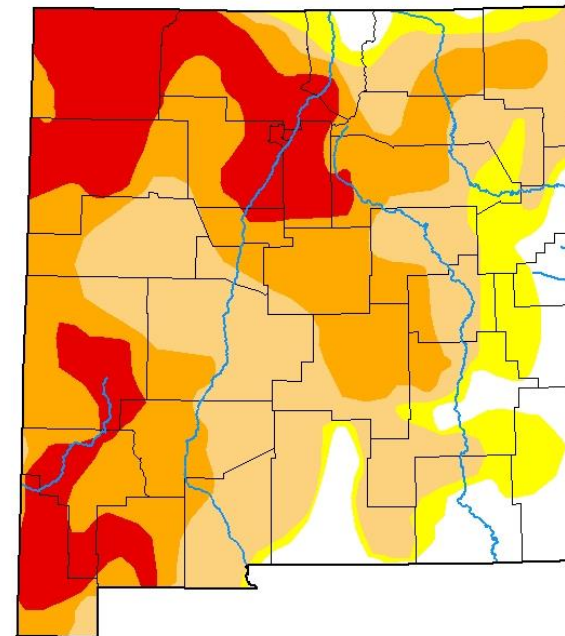
Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico

September 21, 2021
(Released Thursday, Sep. 23, 2021)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

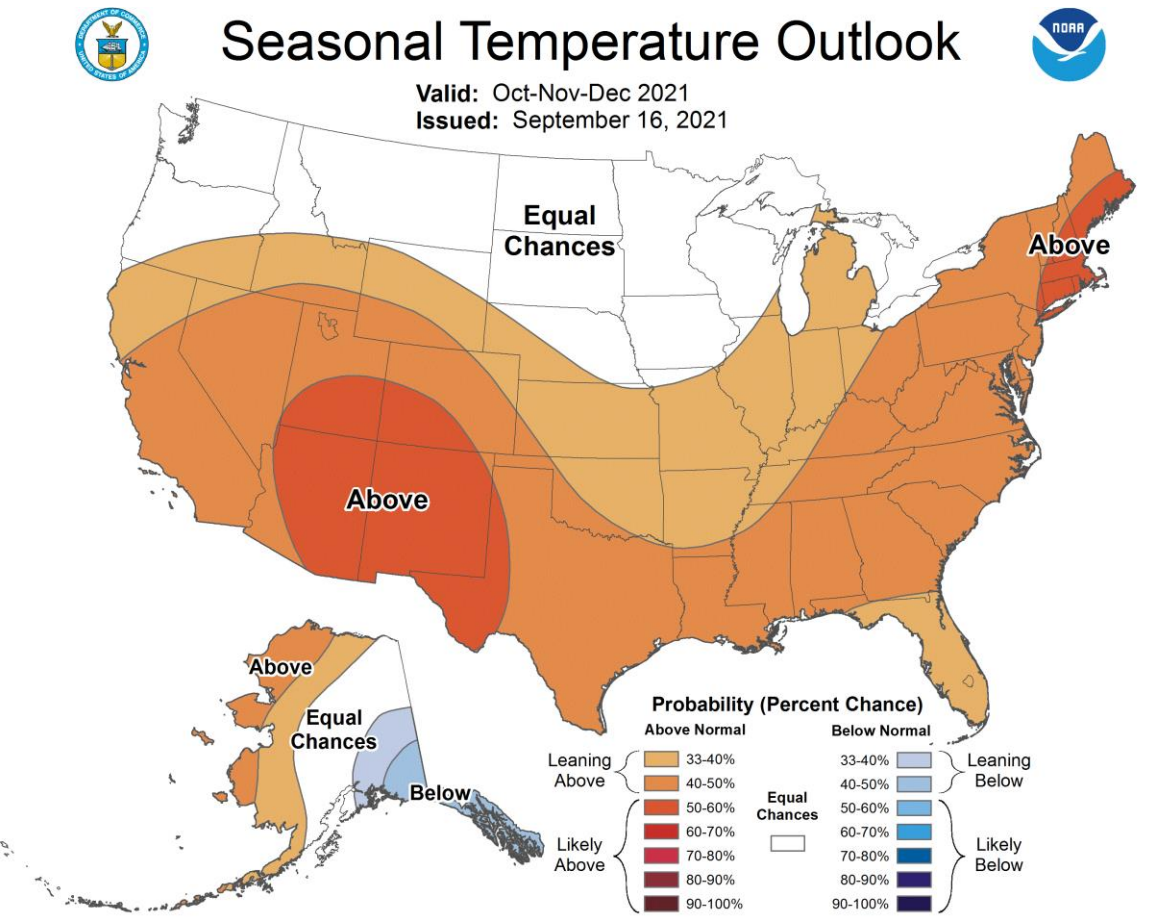
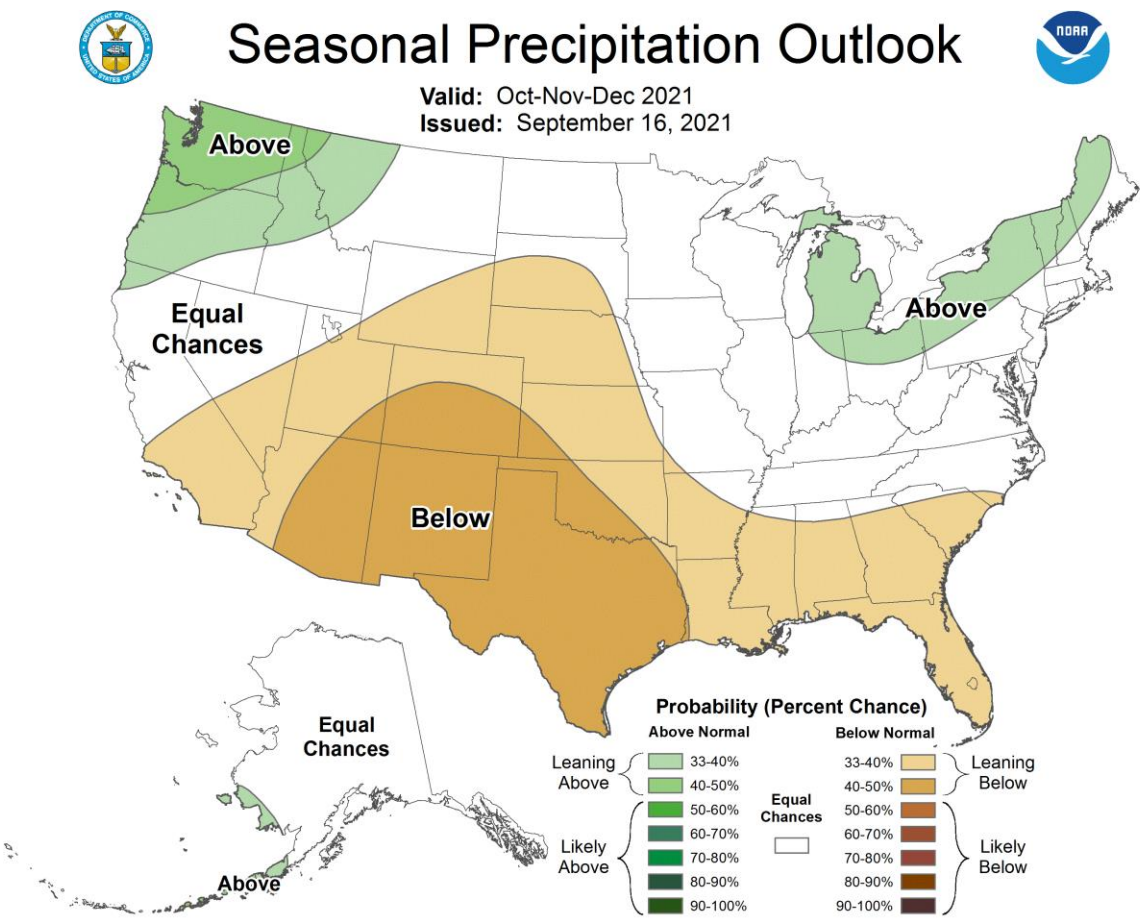
Author:

Brad Rippey
U.S. Department of Agriculture



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

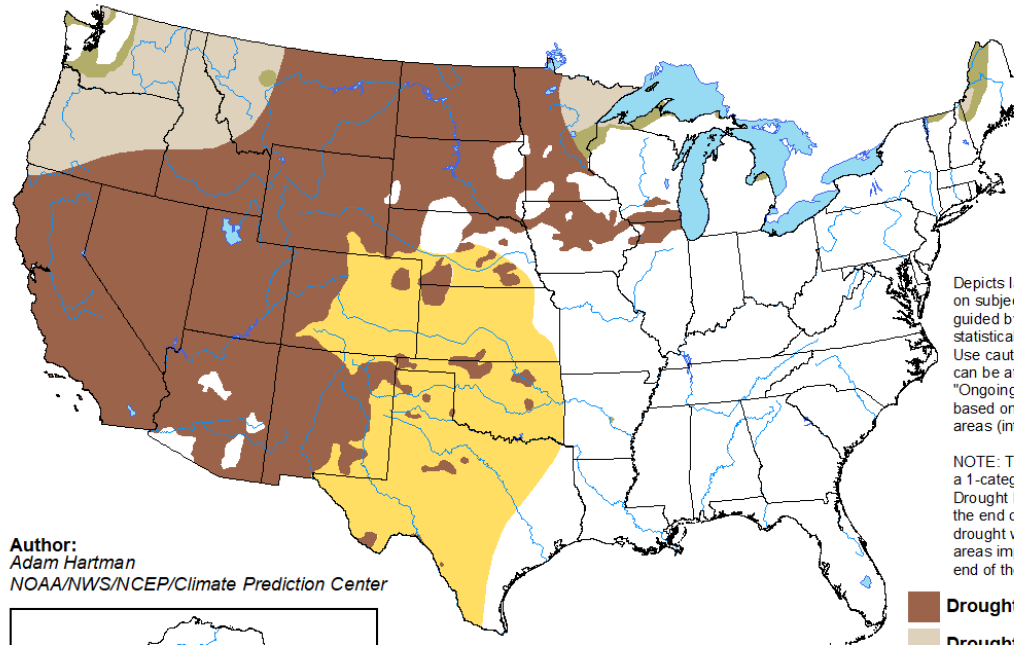
Drought Update



Drought Update

U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period





Valid for September 16 - December 31, 2021
Released September 16



Author:
Adam Hartman
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Climate Prediction Center

Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

-  Drought persists
-  Drought remains but improves
-  Drought removal likely
-  Drought development likely



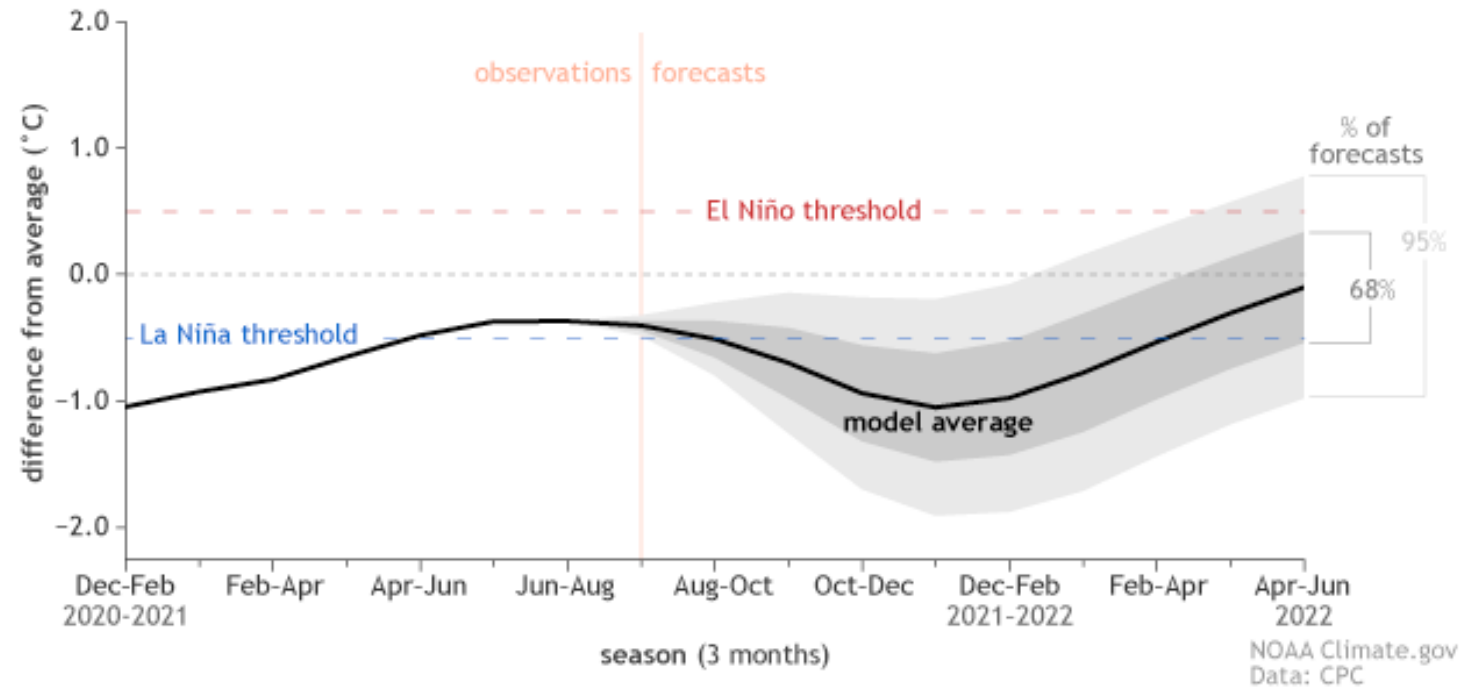
<http://go.usa.gov/3eZ73>



Albuquerque Bernalillo County
Water Utility Authority

La Niña Winter Prediction

Seasonal forecasts for Niño 3.4-region sea surface temperatures as of September 2021



Albuquerque Bernalillo County
Water Utility Authority


Winterization

SERVICE
YOUR IRRIGATION
SYSTEM
Freeze Warning

Discontinue automatic watering when daytime temperatures are below 40 degrees, and guard your irrigation system against freezing by draining pipes and tubing. Continue to water your trees as needed; seasonal watering recommendations can be found on 505Outside.com

It's a DROUGHT!
Avoid wasteful leaks —
make sure your irrigation system is properly winterized!

Schedule a FREE irrigation consultation!
Email AskAnExpert@abcwua.org


WINTER! 


Cold Weather is Here!
Shut Down Sprinklers, Prepare Pipes

Avoid trouble—take precautions NOW!

- **Find the master shutoff valve—** It turns off the water to the entire house. Learn its location—this could be critical if a pipe should burst.
- **Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses.** This allows water to drain from the pipe so an overnight freeze doesn't burst the faucet or the pipe it's connected to.
- **Shut down your sprinkler system.** Remember, you can be fined if your sprinkler system creates an ice hazard on streets or sidewalks. Plants can't use water when it's freezing out and lawns should be allowed to go dormant for the winter, so there's no reason to run sprinkler systems during cold weather. Turn off the automatic timer and bleed the system of water to avoid frozen pipes.
- **Insulate pipes and faucets in unheated areas.** Also, consider installing "heat tape" or "heat cable" on exposed water pipe.
- **Seal off access doors, air vents, and cracks.** Winter winds whistling through overlooked openings can quickly freeze exposed water pipes. DO NOT plug air vents used by your furnace or water heater.

If a pipe on your property bursts and you need an emergency water shut-off, please call 842-WATR (9287).


Faucet Cover


Water Utility Authority

Time of day watering restrictions end October 31st.

Questions?



Albuquerque Bernalillo County
Water Utility Authority



Albuquerque Bernalillo County
Water Utility Authority

CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS 2021

**POST-COVID
PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PLANS**



Your Hosts



**Elizabeth Lynch
Phillips**
Moderator

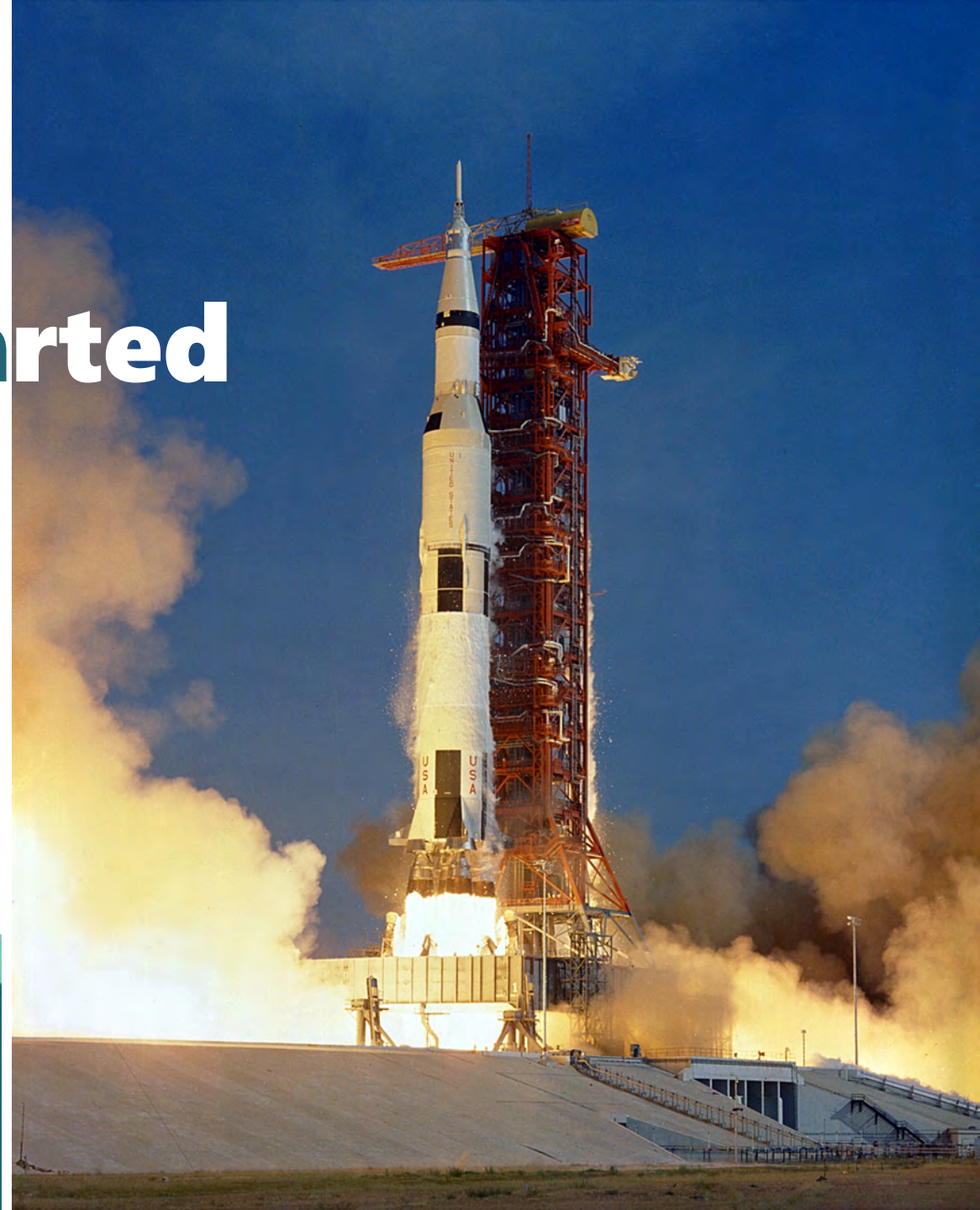
Adrienne Candelaria
Customer Service
Division Manager

Duane Hamar
Customer Service
Administrator



**Laura Kesselman
Monica Aspacher**
Zoom Sherpas

Before We Get Started



RAFFLE PRIZES

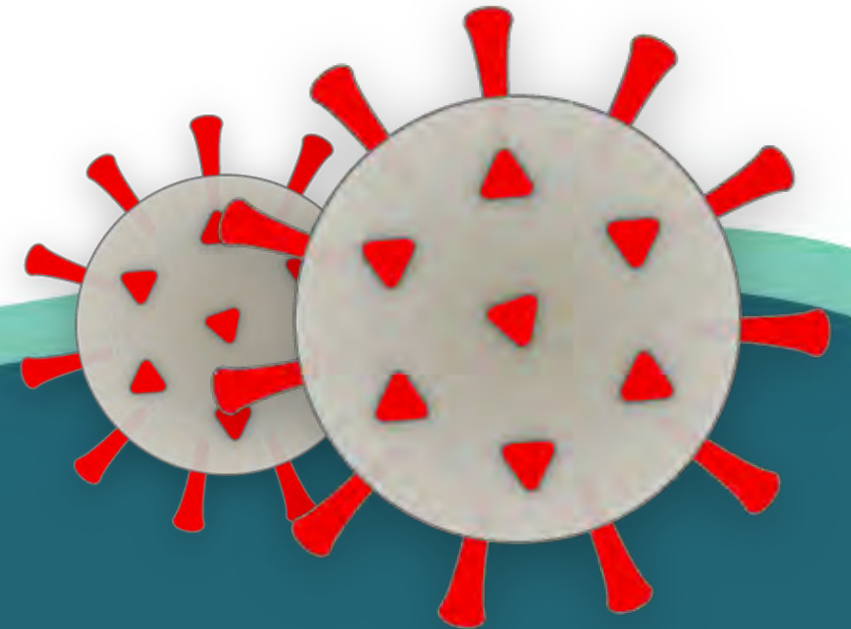


Why We're Here

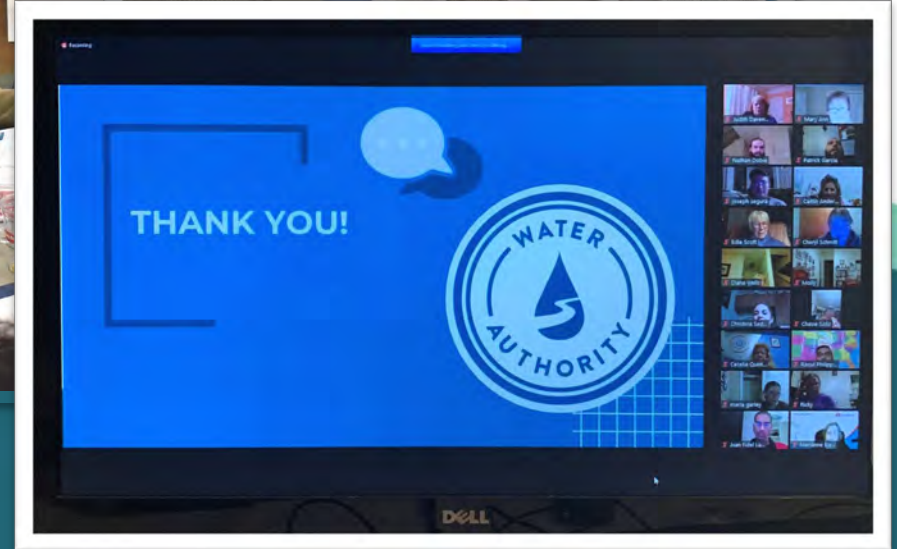
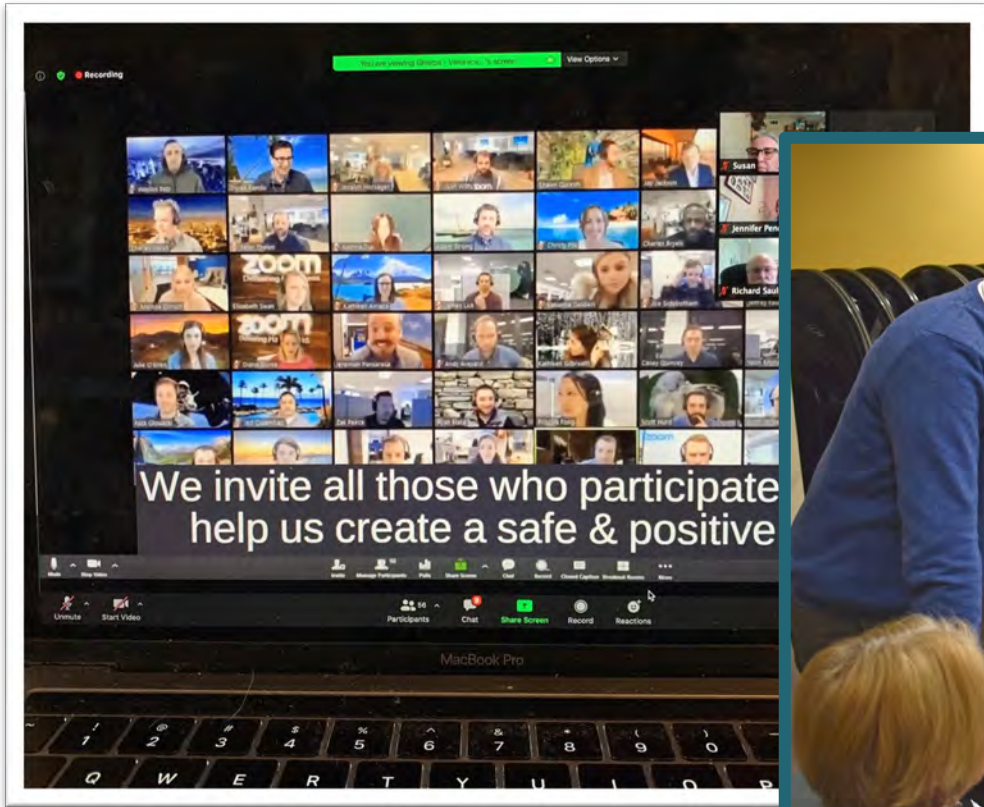
COVID-19

**Addressing delinquent accounts as we
emerge from the pandemic**

**Balancing fairness, efficiency and compassion in the return to
normal operations**



We Value Your Input!



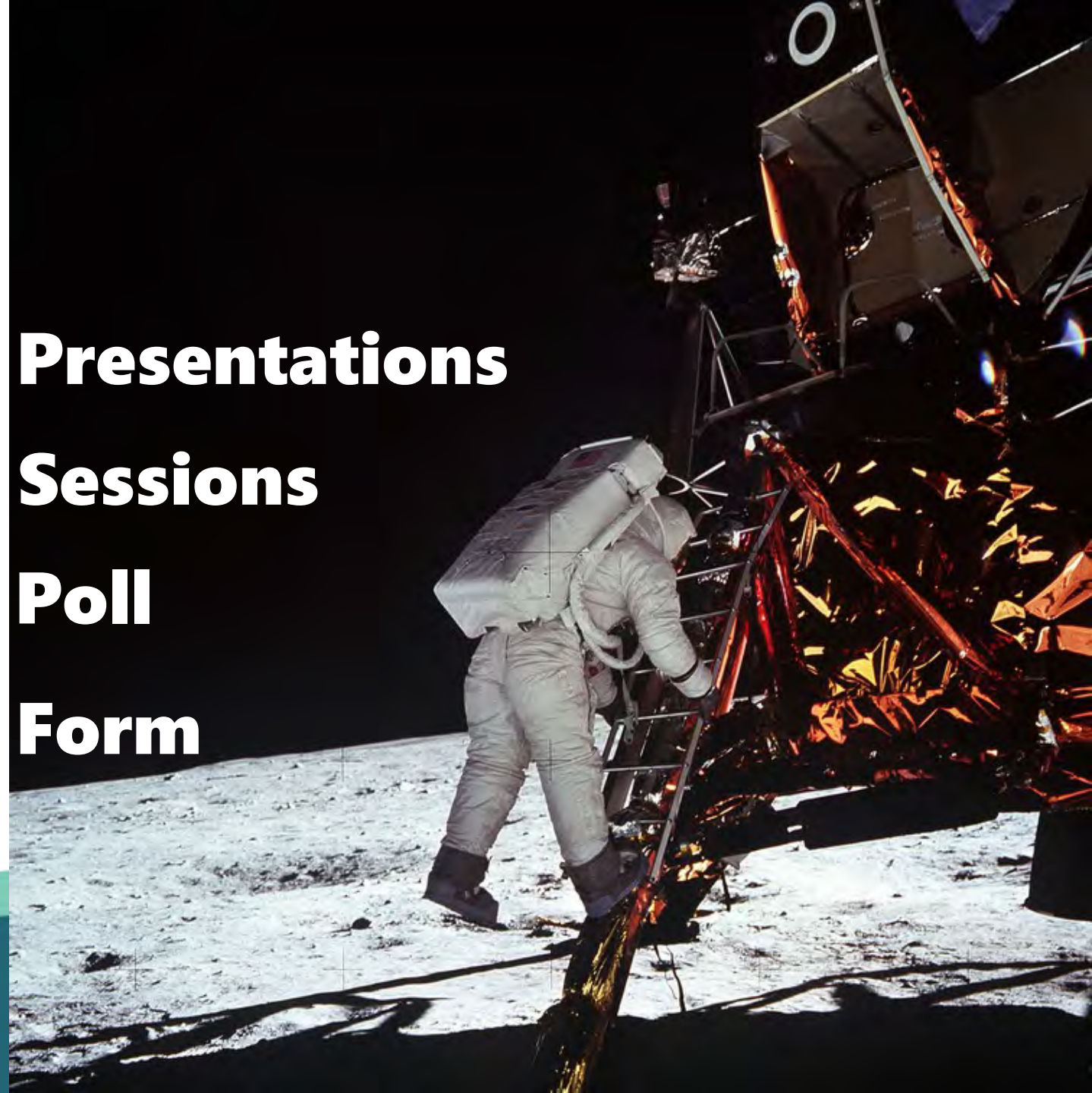
What We'll Do

2 Background Presentations

2 Breakout Sessions


1 Interactive Poll

1 Evaluation Form



Practice Poll!

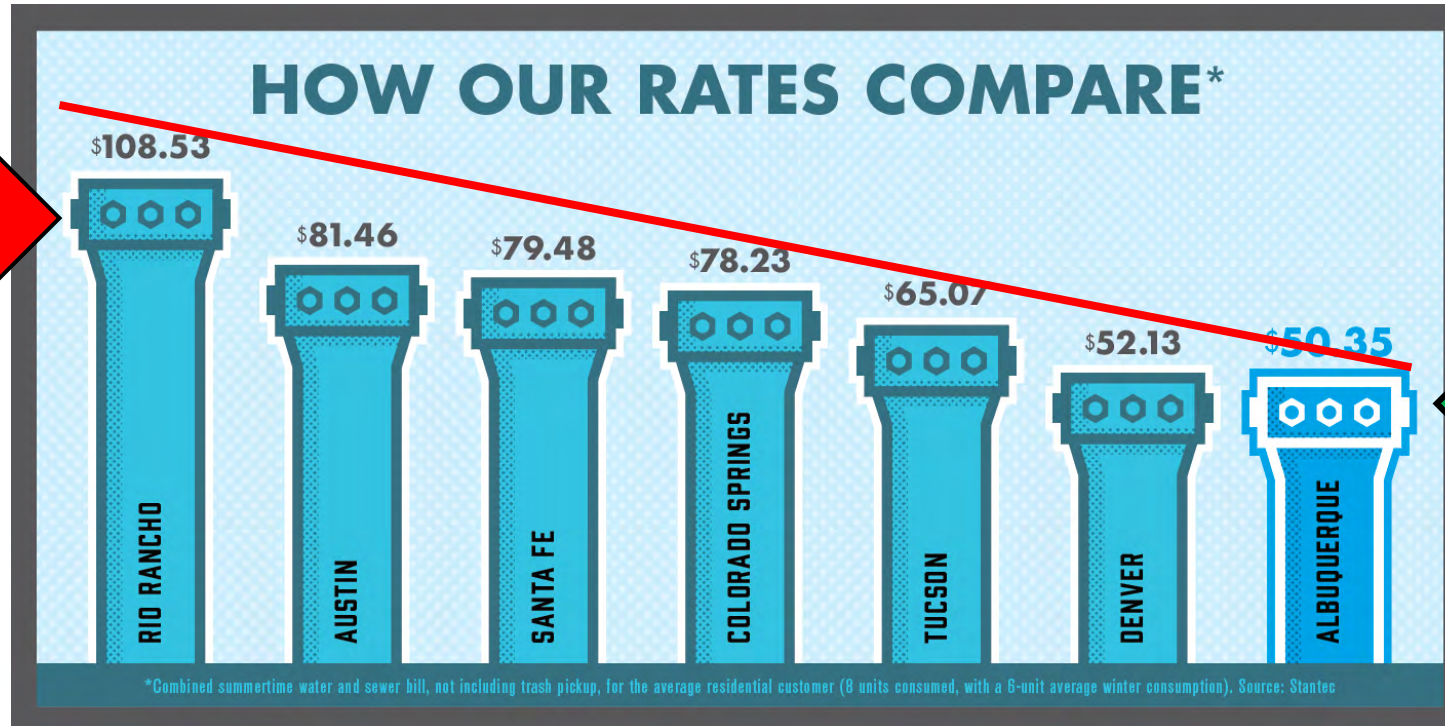
Compared with Tucson, Denver, Austin, Santa Fe and Rio Rancho, Albuquerque's water rates are

- 1) The highest among all these cities**
 - 2) Lower than Santa Fe but higher than everywhere else**
 - 3) The lowest among all these cities**
- 

CORRECT ANSWER

3) The lowest among all these cities

HIGH: Rio Rancho
\$108.53/Mo.



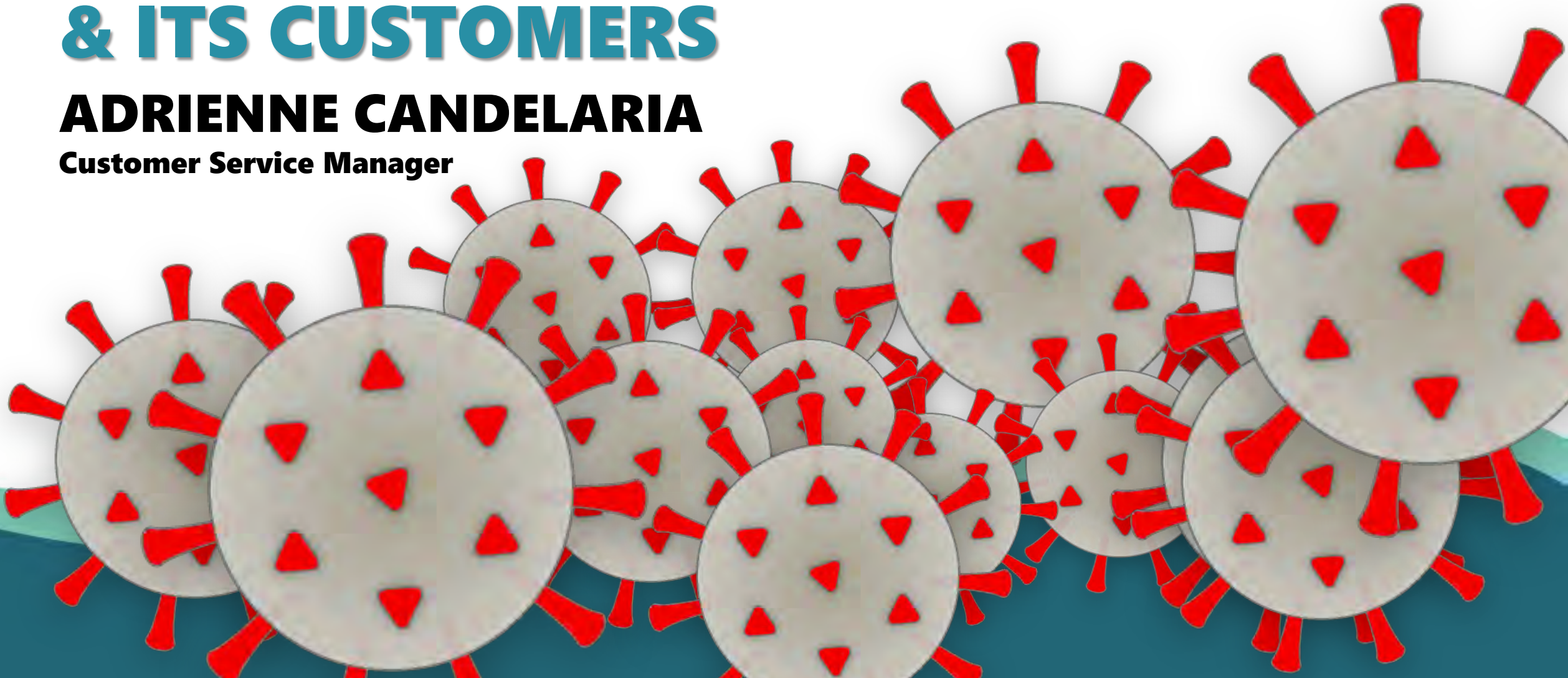
LOW: Albuquerque
\$50.35/Mo.

Presentation No. 1:

COVID'S IMPACT ON THE UTILITY & ITS CUSTOMERS

ADRIENNE CANDELARIA

Customer Service Manager



Background: The Water Authority



- 1) Largest water and wastewater utility in New Mexico**
- 2) 635 employees; 5,000+ miles of pipeline; 90 mgd drinking water treatment plant; 76 mgd wastewater treatment plant**
- 3) Capital budget of \$68 million for infrastructure replacement and renewal; \$231 million for operations**
- 4) 210,000 customer accounts—90% residential)**
- 5) Ceased late fees and turn-offs for delinquent accounts March 2020; restored service for those who'd been turned off**

COVID'S IMPACT: Eligibility of Delinquent Accounts for Turn-Off* Due to Non-Payment

*Turn-offs have been curtailed during pandemic; pre-COVID, accounts owing \$275 or more could be turned after being 45 days late



**Number of delinquent residential accounts meeting criteria
for turn-off due to non-payment:**

PRE-COVID (monthly average, 2019):

576

During COVID (e.g., Aug. 2021)

5,000

The bottom of the slide features decorative wavy lines in shades of teal and dark blue, creating a stylized background element.

IMPACT TO BOTTOM LINE:

\$6 Million

in water and sewer payments owed by delinquent customers,
including late fees assessed up to March 2020

PERSPECTIVE:

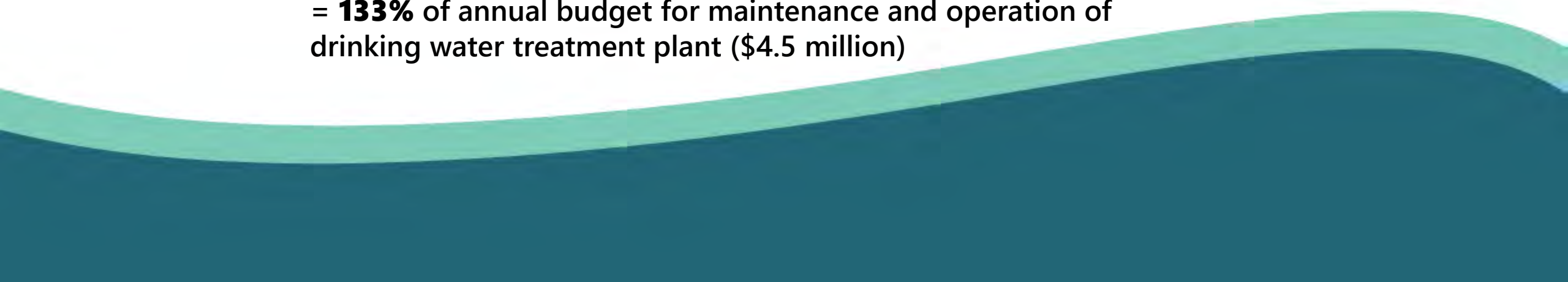
\$6 Million

= **28%** of annual budget for power and chemicals (\$21.5 million)

= **51%** of annual budget for maintenance and operation of wastewater treatment plant (\$11.7 million)

= **88%** of annual budget for maintenance and operation of groundwater system (e.g., wells – \$6.8 million)

= **133%** of annual budget for maintenance and operation of drinking water treatment plant (\$4.5 million)



MOVING FORWARD

**Help is on the way for certain customers in economic distress via
Emergency Rental Assistance Program**

\$170 million in federal aid to NM

Utilities can facilitate application

12 mos. past due + 3 mos. future bills (utilities)

Program in place....Just need to apply

Income-based; have to be a renter



MOVING FORWARD

Return to Normal Operations

Collect delinquent accounts

**Transition to resumption of
turn-offs and late fees (liens still being filed)**



MOVING FORWARD

TURN-OFFS

Need to give customers time/opportunity to pay balances

Need to give assistance programs time to work

Can't flip a switch and turn off 5,000 accounts simultaneously



THE SOLUTION

PAYMENT PLANS

Pay-offs over time for delinquent accounts

**ALL delinquent accounts
must have one to avoid turn-off**



NOT SO FAST!

How will these plans work?

How do we notify* customers

A) That help is available

B) That they must contact us to get on a plan?

*Premise-based billing means the person paying the water bill may not be the person receiving it in the mail



Payment Plan Options

Different time limits based on amount owed?

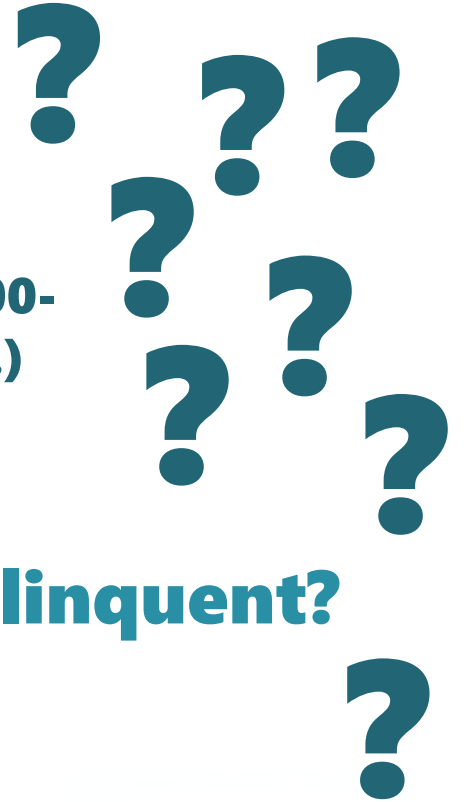
Threshold amounts for each time limit? (E.g., 3 months to pay \$100-\$300; 10 months to pay \$300-\$600; 20 months to pay \$600+?, etc.)

Down payments required? How much? How many chances do you get before we turn you off after you default on your plan? Don't charge late fees if they get on a payment plan?

Different terms based on number of months delinquent?

Who do we turn off first?

What turnoff criteria rules do we change?



BREAKOUT NO. 1

Payment Plan Rules



WELCOME BACK



INTERACTIVE POLL: Informing Customers

Message: What do we emphasize?

Paying what you owe is the right thing to do?

The threat of looming turn-offs?

Help is available—take full advantage?

The bottom of the slide features decorative wavy lines in two shades of teal and green, creating a modern, abstract background element.

BREAKOUT NO. 2

Prioritizing Turn-Offs



WELCOME BACK





Albuquerque Bernalillo County
Water Utility Authority

THANK YOU!

**You MUST Fill Out the Online
Evaluation Form to Receive Your
Gift Card and Be Entered in the
Prize Drawing!**

