



# The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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### Did you know...

- There were **32** new single family home permits drawn in the City of Redding in April, bringing the total number of single family permits through April 2015 to **75**. That is 31 more than for the same period last year (**a 70% increase**), and 46 more than for the same period in 2013.
- The unemployment rate in Shasta County for April, 2015 was **7.7%**, down from 8.4% in March. The current labor force in Shasta County totals 74,000 down from a peak of 83,100 in April of 2009. But during April of 2009, the unemployment rate was 13.9%, even with about 10,000 more people working than today. This would indicate that not only jobs, but working people continue to leave Shasta County.

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## Shasta VOICES Celebrates 8 Years

For the past eight years, Shasta VOICES, a private non-profit organization with over 1,070 supporters, has been successful in our mission to have an impact on decisions being made locally that affect our economic opportunity in the Shasta County area. We don't even have room any more to show you everything, but here are the highlights demonstrating how well our organization works:

TASK	RESULT
Defeating Fix 5/SCRIP Traffic Impact Fees (Supported other sources of funding; <i>continue</i> to support and obtain other sources of funding)	<b>\$25 million</b> (so far) coming from State and Federal government instead of local fees—first 6 miles <b>completed</b> in 2012 <b>with local contractors and suppliers</b> .
Defeating Joint Shasta County/City of Redding Facilities Impact Fees	Saved <b>\$4,681</b> per single family dwelling—up to <b>\$93,620</b> for a commercial dwelling.
Supporting/assisting in obtaining Federal Stimulus Funds in lieu of local fees for local projects	Saved <b>\$25 million</b> of local \$\$ (and hundreds of local jobs created), with more expected.
Succeeded in obtaining suspension of annual inflationary increases in City of Redding impact fees from 2009 levels through June, 2013	Saved <b>\$2,500+</b> per single family dwelling, and up to <b>\$51,440</b> for commercial office or retail building and/or remodel.
Generating Commercial Construction Incentive Program	Closes financing gap, reduces interest costs, allows businesses to open and create new jobs.
Supporting <b>5% Local Preference</b> Policy in the City of Redding	Better opportunity for local businesses.
Radical 10 in '10 participation	Brought forward a series of job creating ideas that are works in progress now.
Suggested/supported/succeeded in obtaining a development impact <b>fee waiver program</b> in the City of Redding from October 2011 through June 2013.	Eliminates <b>\$12,518 in fees</b> per single family dwelling/duplex/triplex/4-plex. Reduces price of newly built homes to compete with existing home market, while creating local jobs on many levels.
Published " <b>Privatization of Public Services, Salary and Benefits Survey.</b> " Held " <b>Public Pension Reform</b> " Forum.	Posted on our website to provide education, information, and transparency on subject matter of public interest and concern.
Assists new and expanding local businesses in <b>reducing/eliminating excessive impact fees</b> to bring their projects forward and create jobs.	Creation of <b>new jobs</b> and filling up some vacant commercial spaces throughout the region.
Participated in creation of new Development Impact Fee Program in Redding, implemented in <b>August, 2013</b> ; influenced changes to reduce fees and simplify how they are applied to both residential	Reduced overall impact fees by <b>\$3,282</b> per single family dwelling. <b>Eliminated</b> fees for most commercial remodels. <b>Reduced</b> overall fees for new commercial structures (varies by building).

Executive Director of Shasta VOICES, Mary Machado, was honored as "**Communicator of the Year**" in 2014, by the City Clerk of the City of Redding.

Thank you to all of those who have been supportive for the past eight years. We are looking forward to continuing our pattern of success throughout 2015 and beyond.

## *REU's Proposed Electric Rate Structure*

Redding Electric Utility (REU) is proposing its first rate structure changes since 1945 to “continue to create safe, cost-competitive, and reliable electric to its customers while providing exceptional services and programs.” A citizens advisory group formed to participate in the rate structure study saw the final outcome of their discussions with REU staff in early May. If the proposed new rate structure is eventually approved by Council, it could go into effect as soon as October 1, 2015. The proposed changes affect both residential and commercial customers.

The proposed new ***residential rate structure (rate class E1)*** looks like this:

Rate Class	Bill Component	Existing Rate	Proposed Rate
E1	Network Access Charge/Fixed Charge	\$13.00 per month	\$42.00 per month
E1	Energy Charge	\$0.1528	\$0.1231

The proposed new rate structure may or may not increase the total amount of a customer's monthly bill in the future. The usage rate will go down, and in those months where it is very hot, such as July (illustrated below) and the air conditioner is used often, the monthly bill actually is reduced. But in the cooler months such as January (illustrated below), the monthly bill can go up. Here is an example of an average existing residential monthly bill to illustrate how this may affect an average residential electric customer:

	Current Bill (July)	Proposed Bill (July)	Difference	Current Bill (January)	Proposed Bill (January)	Difference
Rate Class	E1	E1		E1	E1	
Fixed Charge	13.00	42.00	+29.00	13.00	42.00	+29.00
Energy Charge	307.43 2,012 kWh	247.68 2,012 kWh	-59.75	90.00 589 kWh	72.51 589 kWh	-17.49
Taxes	12.55	12.55		3.68	3.68	
TOTAL	332.99	302.23	<b>(30.76)</b>	106.68	118.19	+11.51

### **Transitional Program:**

There will be a transitional program available upon implementation of the new rate structure for customers who are low energy users, with usage up to 600 kWh per month. The revenues to support this program will come from a requirement of AB32 (the state's greenhouse gas reduction bill), called climate credit assistance. During **year one**, any residential or commercial low energy user below 600 kWh will receive a credit of **\$20** each month where usage is below 600 kWh. During **year two**, that credit reduces to **\$10** per month, and in year 3, the credit goes away entirely.

Additionally, the current Lifeline and Lifeline Plus programs will be expanded to include those up to 50% of the median income, or about \$30,000 annually for a family (household) of 4.

### **Proposed Commercial Customer Distribution Changes:**

There are currently three classes of commercial customers: E2 (small users), E7 and E8 (larger users). The proposed **new commercial classes**, listed with examples of such customers, are:

New Rate Class	Sprinkler Timer	Doctor's Office	Restaurants	Manufacturer
Energy Usage	Ultra Low	Small	Medium	Large

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## ***REU's Proposed Electric Rate Structure*** (continued from page 2)

The proposed commercial rates for the ***ultra-low rate class E4*** as illustrated below, will not change:

Bill Component	Existing Rate	Proposed Rate
Network Access Charge/Fixed Charge	\$20/mo	\$20/mo
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$0.1679/kWh	\$0.1679/kWh

The proposed commercial rates for the ***small rate class E2***, as illustrated below, result in a higher fixed charge and lower energy charge:

Bill Component	Existing Rate	Proposed Rate
Network Access	\$20/mo	\$74/mo
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$0.1679/kWh	\$0.1354/kWh

The proposed commercial rates for the ***medium rate class E3***, as illustrated below, result in a higher fixed charge, a new demand charge (incentivize efficiency), and a lower energy charge:

Bill Component	Existing Rate	Proposed Rate
Network Access	\$20/mo	\$220/mo
Demand Charge	N/A	\$20/kW-mo
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$0.1679/kWh	\$0.099/kWh

The proposed commercial rates for the ***large rate class E7***, as illustrated below, result in a higher fixed charge, a simplified demand charge (incentivize efficiency), and non-tiered energy:

Bill Component	Existing Rate	Proposed Rate
Network Access	\$33/mo	\$675/mo
Demand Charge (\$/kW)	Lesser of \$29.65/kWh-	\$20/kW-mo
Energy Charge (kWh)	First 15,000 kWh: \$0.1679/kWh Additional kWh:	\$0.0920/kWh

Each customer in the commercial classes can be affected differently (increased or decreased rates) depending on how efficiently they use energy in the future under these classes.

City Council is scheduled to hear the results and recommendations of this project at the June 16th, 2015 Council meeting, where they will be asked to set a public hearing for the August 18, 2015 Council meeting. The Council can also consider keeping the current rate structure.

If the new rate structure is eventually approved by Council, it would be effective October 1, 2015. REU will also be asking Council to approve a 1.5% inflationary increase for all rates on March 1, 2016. This is a departure from REU's past history of asking for large percentage increases each year (i.e. 7.84% over the past 5 years).

## *Updated News and Notes*

Shasta VOICES is continuing to monitor and follow many issues of interest to our supporters and the community. As part of our efforts to keep you updated and informed, here is a brief update of some of these issues.

***Shasta County Receives Grant for Public Safety/Crime Reduction***—Shasta County Superior Court received a two-year **\$600,000** state grant for crime reduction efforts, specifically intended to reduce recidivism, ease jail overcrowding and reduce the number of those who fail to show up to court for their criminal cases. The state budget for 2014-2015 included \$91million in an anti-recidivism fund, with all 58 counties eligible for awards. Shasta County was one of only 4 counties awarded the full amount of available funding for a two-year program. The grant will allow probation officials to monitor individuals who would otherwise be released from jail with no supervision. Under the **“Community Crime Reduction Program,”** probation staff will be hired to assess those brought to the jail on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, when jail capacity and inmate releases are at their peak. The staff will perform risk assessments, communicate their recommendations to an on-call judge, and the judge will decide whether or not the inmates should be released. Those released may be required to wear GPS ankle monitors. Veterans and those showing signs of mental illness will be referred to specific programs aimed at helping those groups.

***Shasta Venture HUB***—The Shasta County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and 10 local investors are spending about \$130,000 on a new start-up business incubator called Shasta Venture HUB, which is 14,000 square feet of space located in the Mountain Lakes Center on Caterpillar Road in Redding (in the Southern Aluminum Finishing building). They believe this will spur growth and create more jobs in the community. Start up companies will be able to apply for space in the HUB. The concept is that these start-ups will spend 12 to 18 months in the facility, work with mentors and experts in their specific industry, and eventually make enough progress to move forward on their own. The HUB includes 13 office spaces where potential companies will set up their business and grow. These firms are expected to have less than 10 employees. The goal is to have the HUB facility ready by late summer. The EDC will also relocate to this building from its current location on Hemsted Drive.

***Costco at Oasis Road***—Costco is continuing to make progress towards the construction of their planned new facility at the northeast corner of Oasis Road and I-5. According to Redding staffers, they have always wanted all things ready to go with cost certainty before they “pull the trigger” on construction, and they are continuing their efforts towards getting closer to that goal.

Recently, environmental permits have been obtained with the condition of putting conservation areas into individual parcels, which is still in the process of being completed. Roadway right-of-way appraisals on third-party right-of-way have been completed and agreements on cost with property owners on this and other property acquisition issues are still pending.

These are not new issues and it appears Costco remains committed to their project.

***Join Shasta VOICES today.***

**We depend on membership and other contributions.**

If you are viewing this issue of **“THE VOICE”** on our website, click on the **membership tab** for information and to download a membership application or contributor form. Or, you can obtain more information by going to our website, **www.shastavoices.com**, or calling **(530) 222-5251**.

Mary B. Machado, Executive Director