

Utility Billing



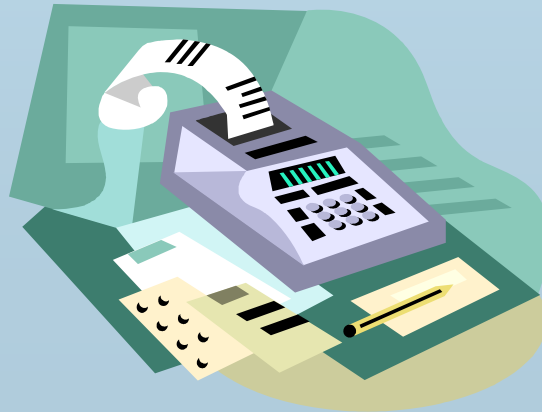
Service Level Report FY08 with
historical data

Mission – Utility Billing

To provide billing and collection services for the Water Department, Water Pollution Control Department, and Sanitation Department

To perform the accurate reading of all water meters

To ensure the Customer service needs of the City Utility customers are met



People

Measures of Inputs

Utility Billing	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09
Full Time	9	9	9	9	10	10

Money

	FY 2004 ACTUAL	FY 2005 ACTUAL	FY 2006 ACTUAL	FY 2007 ACTUAL	FY 2008 ACTUAL	FY 2009 BUDGET
UTILITY BILLING						
Labor	496,953	494,025	509,564	520,391	583,224	624,934
Operating	374,723	372,746	401,089	406,779	443,862	474,242
Capital	30,539	20,374	18,859	16,450	19,150	4,000
Total	902,215	887,145	929,512	943,620	1,046,236	1,103,176
CPI	190.9	199.2	201.8	208.9	216.6	
Real FY04 \$	902,215	850,181	879,305	862,164	922,213	
% Change in Real FY04 \$, FY04-FY08					2.22%	

FY08 Program Revenue: \$198,645
(service fees)

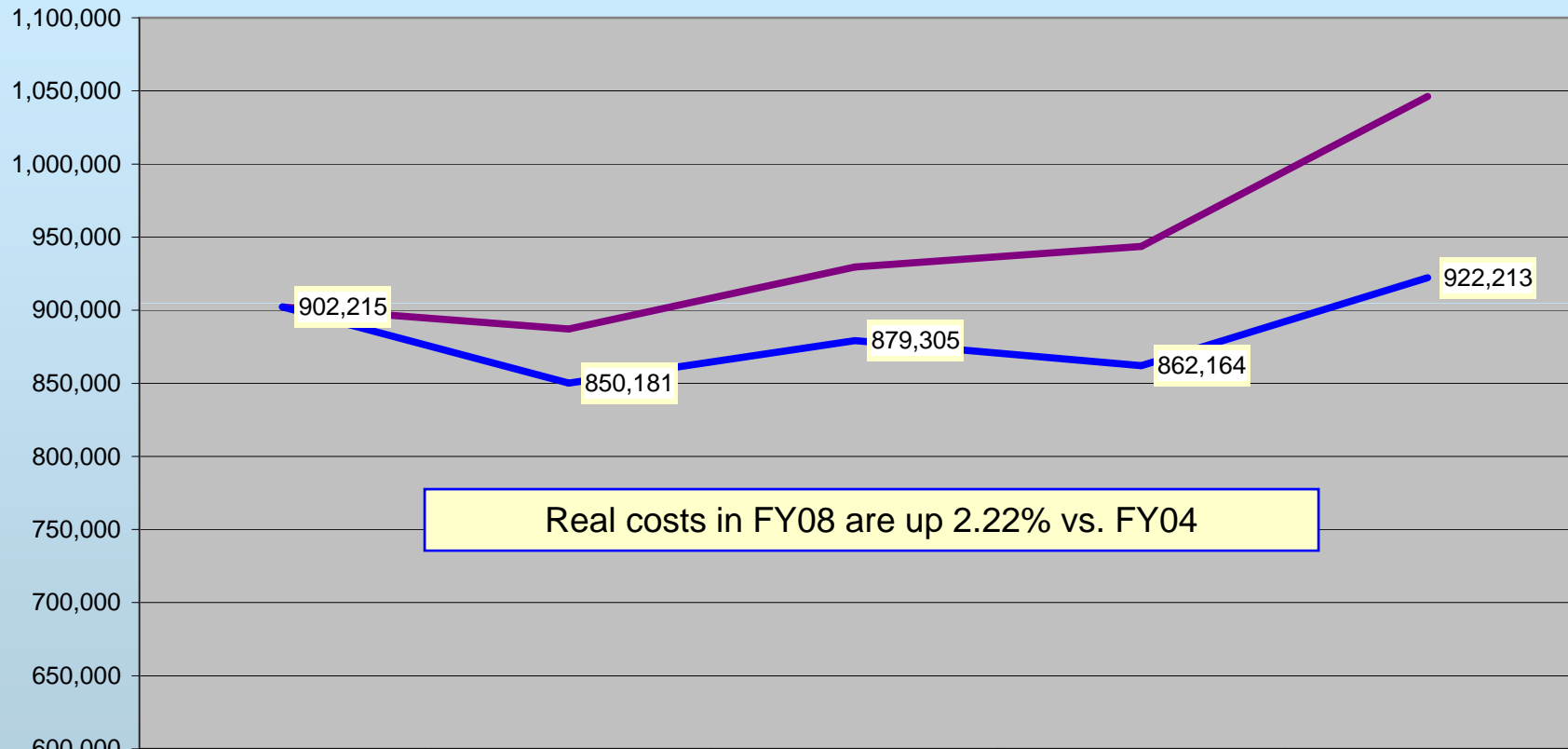
FY08 Net Cost to utilities: \$850,600

Inherited Capital

Office space, 6 gas vehicles and one electric vehicle, meter reading equipment

Analysis of Inputs

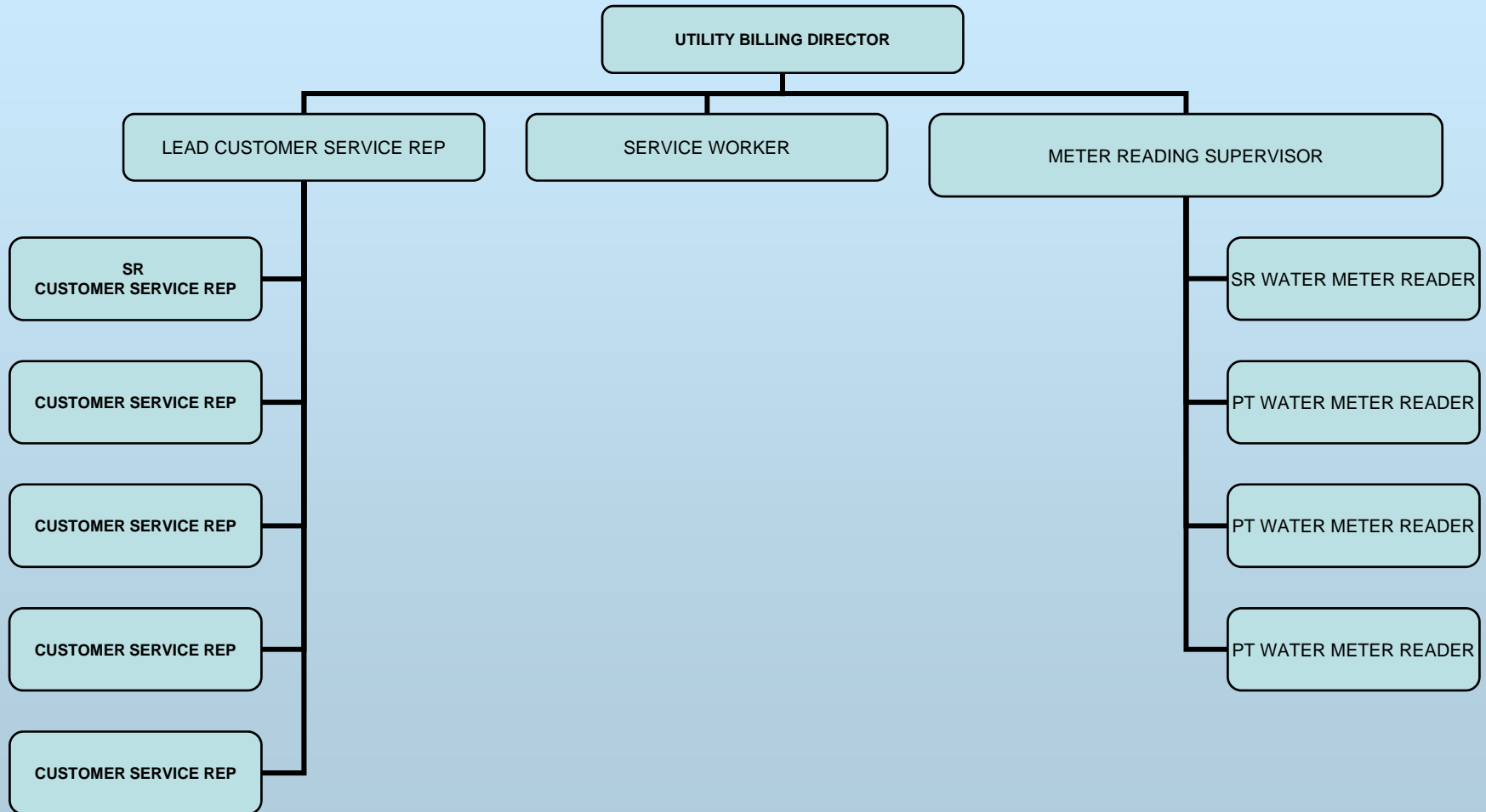
Utility Billing Nominal & Real FY04-FY08



Real costs in FY08 are up 2.22% vs. FY04

	ACTUAL FY 2004	ACTUAL FY 2005	ACTUAL FY 2006	ACTUAL FY 2007	ACTUAL FY 2008
— Total	902,215	887,145	929,512	943,620	1,046,236
— CPI	190.9	199.2	201.8	208.9	216.6
— Real FY04 \$	902,215	850,181	879,305	862,164	922,213

UTILITY BILLING DEPARTMENT



More on Inputs – Utility Billing

- Office space at City Hall (Includes 2-station payment window)
- Five (5) off-site payment drop boxes
- Two (2) on-site payment drop boxes & a box inside City Hall
- A PC-based water meter reading system including four (4) hand-held data collectors and miscellaneous multi-vendor meter reading wands
- Billing software and related hardware which interfaces with the City's Financial system software
- Six incoming customer service phone lines

Department Vehicles: The Utility Billing Department runs a fleet of seven (7) pickup trucks (6 gas and one electric) as needed by a Meter Reading Supervisor, a Utility Billing Service Worker, one full time Meter Reader, and three (3) part-time meter readers who read meters 8 hours a day for 9 months¹² of the year (March through November).

Measures of Outputs – Utility Billing

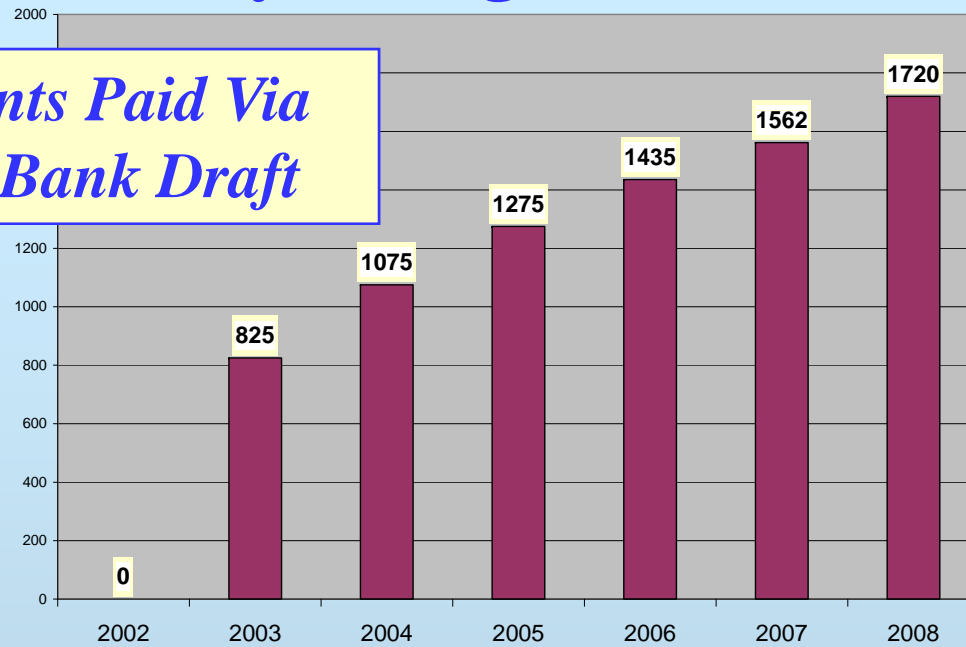
- 48 regular billing statements generated annually (4 billing cycles per month)
- 1200 Late Notice Reminders processed and mailed monthly (14,400/year)
- Over 17,000 water meters are read monthly
- \$20 Million in utility receivables are billed annually
- Approximately 286 summer lines (irrigation lines) turned on each spring, and off again each fall
- Average 115 phone calls per day; 27,600/yr., or 1 every 4.7 minutes
- Average 13 voice messages received and addressed per day
- Approximately 3700 drop box payments collected and processed monthly
- 150 water services turned off monthly for non-payment
- 165 payment arrangements made to accommodate special needs of our customers monthly
- 122 new customers created in 2008

Measures of Efficiency – Utility Billing

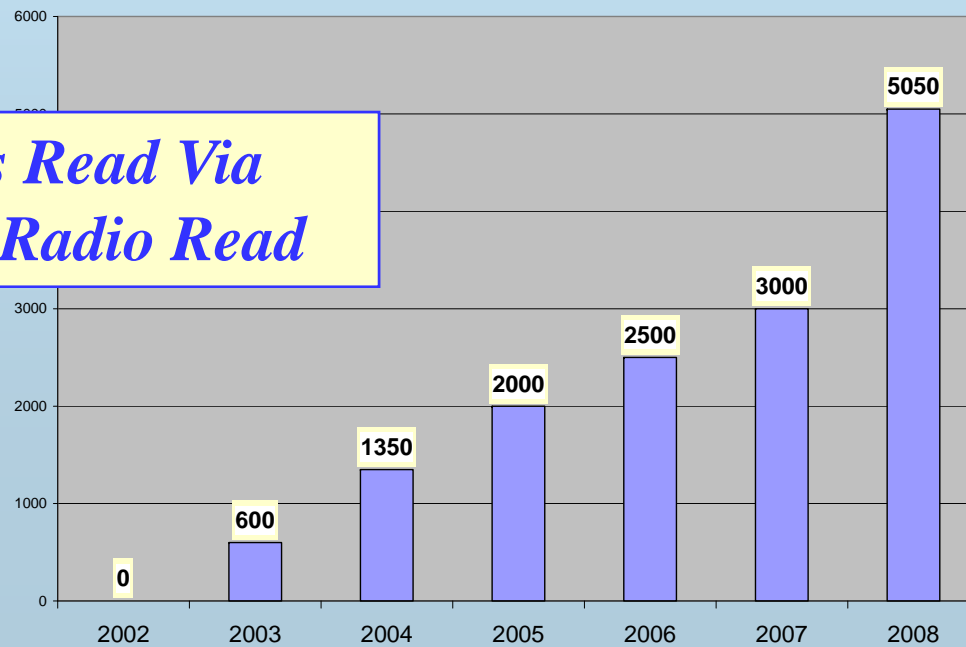
- Our 3 Water Meter Readers each read an average of 5700 meters per month.
- Our 4 cycle billing representatives each review approximately 4250 accounts for billing accuracy each month, which includes a review of all meter readings
- We read approximately 9000 more water meters now than 15 years ago with no additional employees
- Our billing software is CASS Certified (USPS) to enable our monthly billings to mail at the most reduced postage rate

Utility Billing Automation

of Accounts Paid Via Automatic Bank Draft



of Meters Read Via Automatic Radio Read



Measures of Efficiency – Utility Billing

Water Fixed Line Charge

(including meter replacement and billing costs)

Pocatello

\$7.55

United Water (Boise)

\$16.21

Ogden, UT

\$9.84

(\$3 to pay with credit card
or electronic check)

Customer Billing Charge

Pocatello

\$1.33

(per garbage acct)

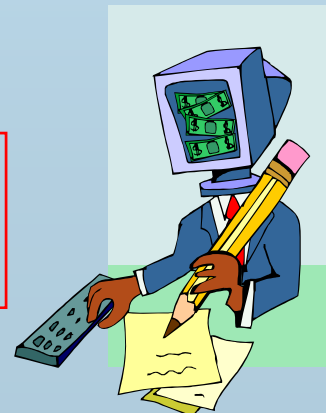
Intermountain Gas

\$6.50

Idaho Power

\$4.00

*Billing and meter overhead about 1/2
as much as others*



Points of Interest – Utility Billing

- The City provides a 30% reduction in utility costs for customers who qualify for the Circuit Breaker exemption (approximately 722 accounts)
- Over 10% of accounts now paid through Bank Drafting
- Approximately 1% of customers have exercised the credit card or “on-line” payment option, getting about 15 PIN requests per week
- Pocatello’s Water Meter Readers start at \$11.41/hour compare to:
 - Twin Falls = \$9.89/hour
 - Idaho Falls = \$13.52/hour
 - Nampa = \$11.97/hour

Outcomes: Effectiveness & Results



- Same day service for turn-on / turn-off
- Low percentage of billing turned over for collection
- Modern payment options (bank draft, credit cards)
- The City now offers e-notifications and e-billing (paperless)
- Strive for 30 day meter read cycles (avoids high/low billing variance)
- Special services include
 - Temporary vacancies
 - Turn-on/turn-off for snowbirds and summer lines
 - Budget billing
 - Leak detection and adjustment
 - 30% circuit breaker reduction (722 customers)

Explanatory Factors

Utility Billing

- Winter weather prevents most manual residential water meter reading Dec-Mar (we are reading more by radio each year, however)
- Radio-read meters are read year-round
- Other factors are about average

Issues & Concerns

Utility Billing

- **Staff Retention**

- PT meter reader converted to FT in 2007 for service work, meter maintenance and year-round reading coverage. Utility Billing continues to have difficulty in retaining part-time meter readers.
- Utility Billing also continues to realize higher than average customer service staff turn over.

- **Accuracy of meters and meter readings**

- progress achieved in the continued transition to radio reading has noticeably helped deal with unpredictable staffing and has increased the accuracy of readings and billings