



**BROWNSVILLE**  
PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

# Local people means long-term commitment

**FY2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT**



## Overview



Electric Peak Demand

**332**

megawatts on

MAY  
9th



Water Peak Demand

**27**

million gallons on

MAY  
27th



Total Combined  
Budget

**\$259.51**  
million

Customer Contracts  
(year end)

**165K**

Electric, Water &  
Wastewater  
(combined)



Employees (year end)

**632**

Bond Rating **A2** Moody's



**A-** Standard & Poor's

**A-** Fitch

## A Legacy of Community Commitment

As early as 1900 the citizens of Brownsville undertook the responsibility to secure the funding to build the infrastructure necessary to provide reliable public utility services. In 1960 the Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB) was created through the City Charter as a separate entity to carry on with the responsibility of providing reliable water, wastewater and electric services while remaining a municipally owned utility. This unique status empowers us to prioritize the needs of Brownsville's residents, reinvesting revenues directly into improving infrastructure, enhancing services, and supporting local initiatives.



BPUB's legacy is built on a foundation of community-focused values. As a public utility, we have the privilege of aligning our goals with the priorities of our customers – our neighbors. This includes keeping rates competitive, maintaining dependable service, and spearheading innovative programs like renewable energy integration and sustainable water management.

Our commitment to transparency and accountability ensures that every decision we make reflects the best interests of Brownsville. From upgrading critical infrastructure to supporting economic development, BPUB continues to honor its mission of improving the quality of life in our community while planning for the challenges of tomorrow.

As we look to the future, our role as a municipally owned utility remains central to our vision: powering growth, ensuring sustainability, and delivering value to every resident we serve.

### Board of Directors

**Arthur "Art" Rendon**  
Chair

**Joseph L. Hollmann, Ph.D.**  
Vice-chair

**Daisy Zamora, Ph.D.**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Alejandro Najera**  
Member

**Gerardo Martinez**  
Member

**Alonzo "Al" Villarreal**  
Member

**John F. Cowen, Jr.**  
Ex-Officio Member, Elected

### Executive Management

**Marilyn D. Gilbert**  
General Manager & CEO

**Mark Dombroski**  
Asst. General Manager & COO

**Mike Perez**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Constanza Miner**  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Paul Gonzalez**  
General Counsel & Chief Legal Officer



## CEO Letter

*Marilyn D. Gilbert*

It is with great pride that I present to you the Brownsville Public Utilities Board's Annual Report for the fiscal year 2023-2024. This past year has been one of continued growth, strategic change, and significant accomplishments, all aimed at strengthening our commitment to serving the Brownsville community and surrounding areas with reliable, affordable, and sustainable utility services.

Over the course of the year, we made remarkable progress on several key initiatives. Among our successes was the start of a major water/wastewater improvement project in downtown Brownsville, which will significantly benefit customers in that area. The ongoing drought underscored the need to proactively seek alternative water sources beyond the Rio Grande and enhance our water storage capabilities. Our continued commitment to increasing water storage through the Resaca Restoration Program reflects our dedication to resiliency, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

The continued evolution of our services is driven by a focus on adapting to the electrical and water needs of our growing community. By investing in smart technology, modernizing aging infrastructure, and maintaining financial discipline, we are building a future-ready utility system that prioritizes reliability and customer satisfaction.

None of this progress would have been possible without the support and collaboration of our employees, stakeholders, and community partners. Together, we have embraced change and pursued growth with determination, ensuring that Brownsville continues to thrive.

As we look to the future, we remain steadfast in our mission to provide exceptional service and to be a catalyst for sustainable development in our region. Thank you for your trust and partnership as we build on our accomplishments to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Marilyn D. Gilbert,  
General Manager & CEO  
Brownsville Public Utilities Board

# Strong Financial Outlook

*Excellence in Financial Reporting*

The 2024 fiscal year has been marked a continued success as BPUB received three distinctions and was awarded four grants.

BPUB received the Certificate of Distinction Award from the Government Treasurer's Organization of Texas (GTOT) for our Investment Policy, which was reviewed and deemed comprehensive. The certification demonstrates that BPUB's policy meets the Public Funds Investment Act requirements and the standards for prudent investing established by the GTOT.

BPUB received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the second consecutive year.

The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.

BPUB's budget document was also awarded "special recognition" for the Capital program. Special recognition is granted when reviewers give the document the highest achievable score in particular categories.

BPUB's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award from GFOA, which acknowledges BPUB's commitment to go beyond the minimum requirements for financial reports in the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.

This certificate is the highest recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. As part of the award, team members who compiled the ACFR were invited to join the Special Review Committee. This committee's peer reviewers achieve professional recognition, gain exposure to reports from around the country and help other local governments improve their reports.

Jorge Santillan, Finance Manager, Mirian Camacho, Treasury & Accounting Manager.



# \$15.9M

total funding through four grants:

## \$5M

### Advanced Metering Infrastructure Project

*United States Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Grants*

Approximately

# 57K

water meters to be replaced or retrofitted to smart meters.

The goals of the AMI project are to improve resource management, enhance service efficiency and improve customer experience.

## \$8.7M

### Texas Solar for All

*United States Environmental Protection Agency*



BPUB will create a community solar storage system to provide bill credits for low-income residents. BPUB will also work with the Brownsville Housing Authority to identify opportunities to construct a resilience hub to reduce the cost of utilities.

## \$187,148

### Rapid Adoption and Deployment of ICS Cybersecurity Technologies

*Department of Energy/American Public Power Association*



Through a Department of Energy and American Public Power Association cooperative agreement, BPUB will deploy various measures and technologies to enhance critical infrastructure IT networks, increase visibility of threats to ICS and OT systems, and enable near real time situational awareness in critical networks.

## \$2M

### Resacas in the Vicinity of Brownsville

*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*



Brownsville resacas have silted and lost some of their natural function; through funds provided by the US Army Corps of Engineers, BPUB will restore the structure and function of riparian and aquatic vegetative communities. BPUB will dredge material, supplement soil, modify water control structures, plant native vegetation and create habitat structures to attract unique biota to these resacas.

## General Financial Summary

### Fiscal Year 2024 Highlights

**\$499.7M**

Ending net position

**\$17.48M**

Transfer to the City of Brownsville

**\$11.39M**

Net Cash Transfer to COB after usage

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### BPUB Financial Highlights for the Quarter ended September 30, 2024

**\$590.31M**

Capital Assets, net of accumulated depreciation

## General Financial Summary

3. Customer Unit Sales / Operating Revenues			
Sales	Audited FY 2022	Audited FY 2023	Audited Actuals as of Sept. 30, 2024
Electric Service - kWh	1,389,613,240	1,385,200,396	1,404,578,210
Water Service - 1,000 gallons	6,749,817	6,790,305	6,700,456
Wastewater Service - 1,000 gallons	4,783,595	4,791,090	4,741,990
Operating Revenues	Audited FY 2022	Audited FY 2023	Audited Actuals as of Sept. 30, 2024
Electric Service	\$ 192,251,411	\$ 175,724,580	\$ 147,097,895
Water Service	29,042,631	35,519,129	38,085,197
Wastewater Service	25,007,715	28,544,521	30,736,085
Total Utility	\$ 246,301,757	\$ 239,788,231	\$ 215,919,179
4. Summary of BPUB Transfers to the City			
	Cash Transfers to the City	City of Brownsville Usage	Total Transfers
YTD Actuals as of: Audited September 30, 2023	12,055,925	6,053,425	18,109,350
Audited September 30, 2024	11,393,548	6,089,411	17,482,959
5. Debt Service Coverage by Quarter			
	Audited FY 2023	Audited Month Ended September 2024	
Electric	3.14	2.70	
Water	3.25	2.99	
Wastewater	2.50	2.47	
Combined Utility	3.05	2.70	

# Environmental Stewardship

## Environmental inspections

Throughout the year, BPUB undergoes a variety of inspections, both environmental and procedural, from federal and state agencies. This year, BPUB participated in the 2024 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)/ The NELAC Institute (TNI) audit, 2024 TCEQ Lead and Copper water sample collections and a state audit for our Industrial Permitting Program. The TCEQ focuses on protecting the quality of surface water and groundwater in Texas and ensures safe drinking water for its residents.

The 2024 TCEQ/TNI audit included a six-month correspondence period and a corrective action departmental training. Failure to pass this audit would have resulted in the termination of the TNI Laboratory Accreditation. This accreditation allows the BPUB laboratory to provide the TCEQ with analytical data, gathered in-house and demonstrates BPUB's commitment to providing quality, accurate reports.

As part of the 2024 TCEQ Lead and Copper water sample collection, BPUB collected water samples from state-approved residential and school locations.

The final results for both lead and copper were below the TCEQ action levels and, notably, lead was not detected at any of the sampling points.

TCEQ's audit of our Industrial Permitting Program reported no violations or findings. Currently, the program is conducting a one-on-one training approach with our industrial customers, including our key accounts customers. This allows our customers to feel comfortable asking industrial-specific questions and ensures we comply with state environmental requirements.

These audits demonstrate BPUB's commitment to upholding and abiding by necessary regulations, but, with inspections from federal and state agencies yielding no fines or findings, show that BPUB is committed to protecting our community and training our customers to protect the resources we have available.



BPUB has completed the first and second quarterly Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)/Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5 (UCMR-5) sampling events for 2024. January 2025 was the mid-point to obtain the average results for the PFAS parameters that will be added to the 2027 Consumer Confidence Report. Testing for these widely used, long-lasting chemicals is important to better understand the specific contents of our drinking water sources.

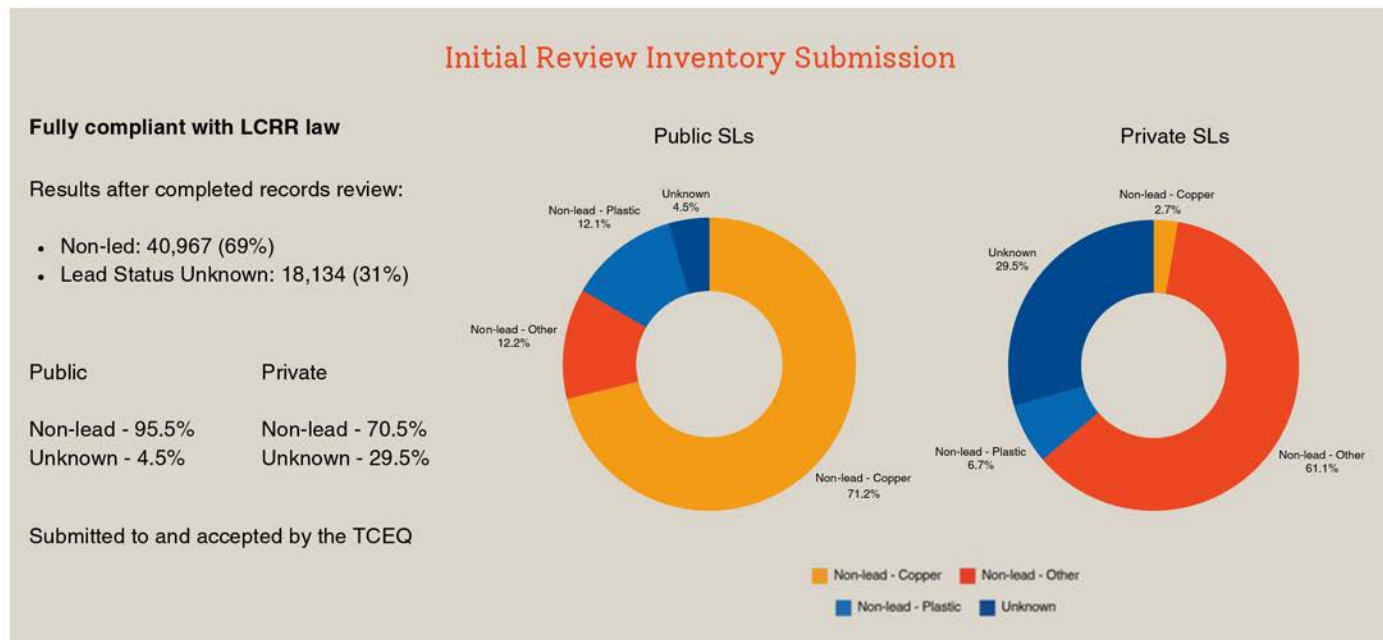


## Phase 1 of New Lead and Copper Rule

The Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) was published in 1991 and its purpose is to protect the public's health by minimizing lead and copper levels in our drinking water. On Dec. 16, 2021, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced next steps to strengthen the regulatory framework on lead under the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR). The overarching goal is to proactively remove and replace all lead service lines.

BPUB completed Phase 1 of the LCRR, by developing an inventory of all water service lines in its distribution system. After identifying the service line material on system-owned and customer-owned portions of each line, service lines were categorized as non-lead, lead, galvanized requiring replacement (GRR) or lead status unknown. However, no lead or GRR service lines were found during the inventory process. This was accomplished through a review of historical records, including: 12,969 customer service inspections, waterline replacement records, standard service line details (1973, 1982 and 1986), Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, parcel data, online build year resources and historical aerial images.

The Initial Inventory Submission classified 31% of all service lines as lead status unknown, with the majority being private service lines. BPUB submitted its findings to, and were accepted by, the TCEQ. With the initial phase complete, BPUB is now working with the community to identify and reclassify service lines listed as unknown. To accomplish this, BPUB created the BPUB LCR website which informs the public on service lines, lead, reporting service line materials and hosts an interactive map for unknown service lines. In compliance with the LCRR, BPUB sent initial notices to customers with unknown service lines and will continue to do so yearly, until 2027 or the service line is identified as non-lead. BPUB will replace all lead or GRR service lines within the next 10 years, with customers incurring the cost for private line replacements.



# Environmental Stewardship

## Resaca Restoration Update

Brownsville's resacas are more than just scenic waterways; they provide ecological, recreational, and cultural value along with providing additional storage for drinking water. Recognizing their importance, BPUB has continued its commitment to preserving and revitalizing these iconic features through the Resaca Restoration Program.

This year, the program achieved significant milestones – completing the dredging in one project, finding financial funding for ongoing work, and making plans for the future. These efforts not only strengthen the ecological health of our region but also create inviting green spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy.

The restoration work is part of a larger vision to balance sustainability with growth. By integrating advanced engineering techniques and community collaboration, the program highlights BPUB's dedication to protecting Brownsville's natural resources while ensuring long-term environmental resilience.

As we continue to restore and maintain our resacas, we reaffirm our role as stewards of Brownsville's unique landscape, working to create a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

RESTORE Act dredging completed

**57,136**

cubic yards of dredged material was removed from project resacas.

RESTORE Act contract amendment

**\$1.9M**

Inflation in both materials and labor costs led to an amendment to continue the project, which the U.S. Treasury approved in April 2024.

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The USACE portion of the project received a boost in funding, receiving

**\$2M**

in Community Project Funding for Contract 1. This was accomplished through close working relationship with federal elected officials.



View of a portion of Resaca de la Guerra along side Old Alice Rd.

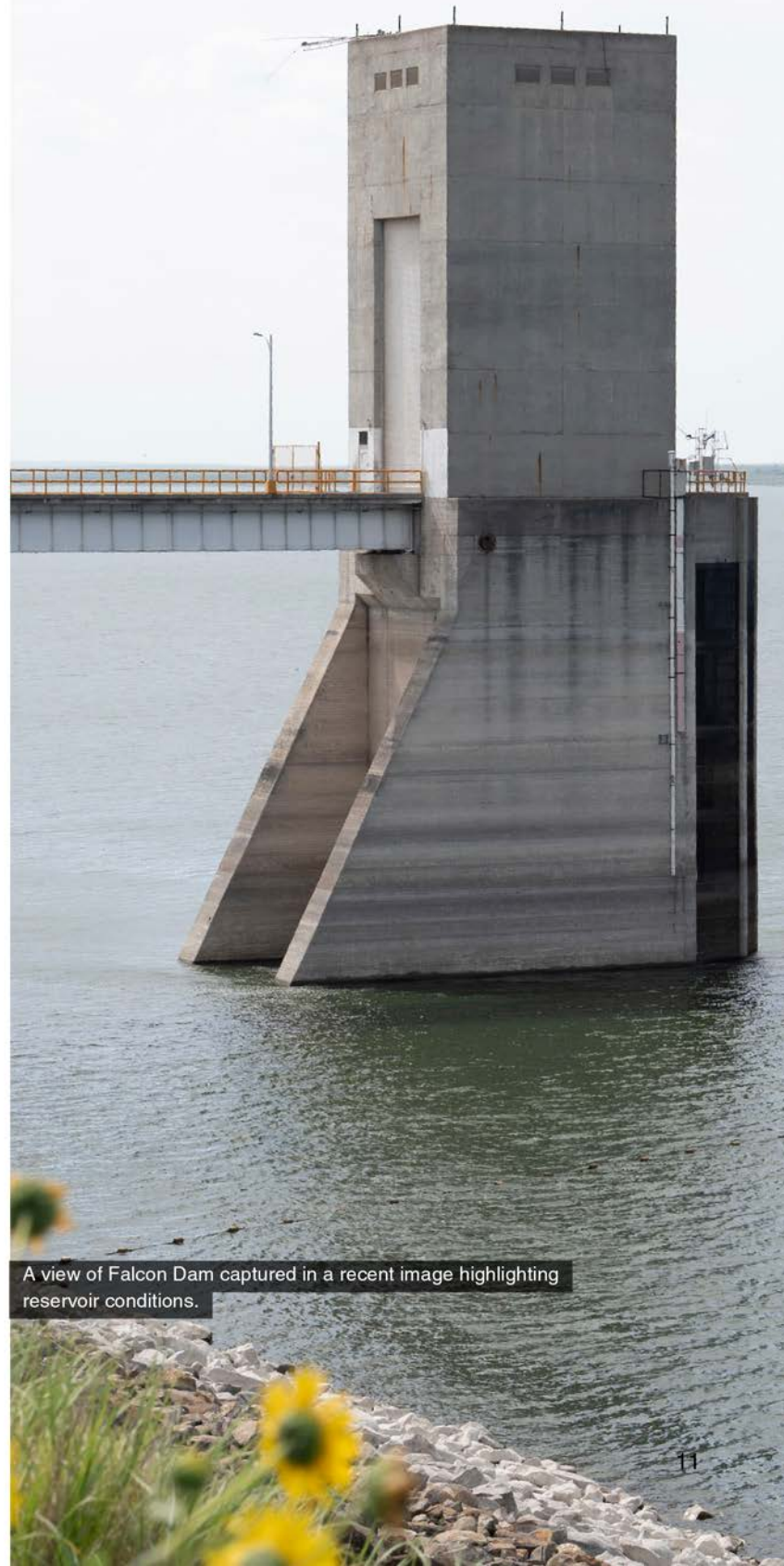
## Managing Drought

BPUB and the city of Brownsville initiated water restrictions under Stage 2 of the Drought Contingency Plan Sept. 18, 2023, when water levels at the Amistad and Falcon International reservoirs fell below 25%. The water reservoirs dropped to a combined level of 18.14% in June 2024 and stood at 20.65% as of Dec. 28, 2024.

BPUB's goal has been to conserve the water supply by reducing the average daily water demand by 5 percent and the maximum daily water demand by 10 percent. The water restrictions under Stage 2 include the following:

- Vehicle washing is allowed two days a week from midnight to 10 a.m. and from 7 p.m. to midnight, based on the last digit of the service address.
- Non-essential watering, such as washing buildings, using water for dust control, or allowing water to runoff into streets, is prohibited.
- Lawn watering by a sprinkler system is restricted to two days a week from midnight to 7 a.m. and from 7 p.m. to midnight, based on the last digit of the service address.
- Variances must be acquired from BPUB to water new landscapes outside the landscape irrigation schedule for four weeks since the date of planting.

As drought continues, BPUB has worked to increase raw water sources and inform customers on effective ways to conserve water. To address drought, BPUB has sought to invest in infrastructure and technology to efficiently treat and distribute high quality water.



A view of Falcon Dam captured in a recent image highlighting reservoir conditions.

# Environmental Stewardship

## BPUB's Efforts to Combat Drought and Enhance Water Resources



### Southmost Regional Water Authority (SRWA) desalination plant optimization and expansion planning efforts

The projected cost for the SRWA plant optimization and expansion is estimated to be \$253 million. With a portion of the funds dedicated to replacing and upgrading existing infrastructure, the larger goal is to double the plant's production capacity from 10 million gallons per day (MGD) to 20 MGD, and provide an alternate water supply to lower our dependence on surface water and tributaries from Mexico.

**\$253M**

estimated projected cost

**20 MGD**

increase capacity from current 10 million gallons daily

BPUB has also worked on resaca dredging and restoration, and invested \$16.8 million for Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), which supports leak detection and isolation.

Apart from infrastructure and internal programs, BPUB has dedicated time to inform and motivate customers to conserve water. These efforts include targeted outreach campaigns, use of traditional media, social media outreach and promotional rebates.



### Indirect Potable Re-use (IPR) Pilot Project

The IPR Pilot Project aims to analyze the possibility of diverting 8 MGD of unused effluent from the Robindale Wastewater Treatment Plant, currently lost to the Gulf via San Martin Lake, to Resaca De La Guerra to enhance the raw water supply. Water Treatment Plant No. 2 will then treat it to potable standards. An engineering firm is assisting with planning, permitting, and grant applications for the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) Drought Response Program.

**8 MGD**

could be reintroduced into our water system

BPUB's community outreach, internal programs and infrastructure improvements are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to BPUB's efforts to address the drought and provide water to customers.

BPUB has taken significant steps to engage with local and federal agencies, while also involving local politicians in search of solutions for the people of Brownsville. These efforts include coordinated discussions with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), and the

## Environmental Stewardship

U.S. Department of State to discuss the 1944 Water Treaty and Mexico's obligation to deliver water. In July, BPUB hosted an informational session on drought, which brought state Reps. Janie Lopez, D-Texas, and Erin Gámez, R-Texas, Brownsville Mayor John Cowen Jr., Port of Brownsville Chair Esteban Guerra, BPUB General Manager and CEO Marilyn D. Gilbert, community stakeholders and business leaders together to discuss Brownsville's water resources, current drought conditions, and future strategies to create a more sustainable water supply.

"At the heart of BPUB's drought management is a willingness to provide for the community during difficult times and work towards limiting the impact of future natural effects," BPUB General Manager & CEO Marilyn D. Gilbert said.

Marilyn D. Gilbert, General Manager & CEO speaks during an interview during BPUB's drought round table in July.



*At the heart of BPUB's drought management is a willingness to provide for the community during difficult times and work towards limiting the impact of future natural effects.*

*Marilyn D. Gilbert*



## Public Power



### Enhanced Reliability and Community Focus

From its inception, BPUB has served Brownsville as a municipally owned utility company focused on community interests rather than profit. Working under the public power model, BPUB has responded to service interruptions quickly and efficiently, improved the community's access to power, and collaborated with all levels of government to ensure customers' safety.

For BPUB customers who experienced service interruptions in 2024, power was restored within an average of one hour.

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#### Completed reliability-focused projects:

##### Stagecoach Trail

**13**

wooden pole  
installations

**1,170 ft**

of three-phase primary  
cable installed

Create an extension from Stagecoach Trail and Dennet Road to The Woods Subdivision. This project increases the reliability of existing customers in the area. It provides service to an upcoming subdivision, which will later serve to increase extensions and service the area via multiple avenues.

##### Owens Road

**12**

pole installations

**1,600 ft**

of three-phase  
distribution line installed

Provide an alternate route for power, reduce downtime, service homes and commercial lots lines along Owens Road up to East 30th Street.



## Collaborations for Community Safety and Infrastructure Improvements

BPUB has also worked with agencies at all levels of government to ensure the community's safety. These projects include:

BPUB extended **4,000 feet** of conductor to serve the Brownsville Police Department's Joint Tactical Training Facility. This state-of-the-art, state-funded facility will be used by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to train for live threat emergencies, building searches, and other critical simulations.

In partnership with the state of Texas, BPUB rerouted overhead electric lines that interfered with the proposed route for the southern border wall. As sections servicing a water reservoir and an antenna tower were modified, several overhead electrical lines were converted to underground lines to avoid potentially energizing the **30 feet of metal wall**. With these changes in place, BPUB has created an environment to avoid potential hazards and provide for the safety of personnel during the construction of the structure.

The Texas Department of Transportation has been restoring the roadway on International Boulevard. To meet clearance standards, BPUB relocated several distribution poles and adjusted tension on power lines.

Governed by a seven-member board, six of which are appointed by the Brownsville City Commission with the Brownsville mayor as the seventh member ex-officio, BPUB ensures decisions reflect community values. For the public power model to work, community engagement is key. Customers are able to shape BPUB's future by participating in monthly Public Utilities Board Consumer Advisory Panel (PUBCAP) meetings and board meetings, where updates and concerns are shared and addressed.

## Electric Rate Comparisons: Based on 1,000 kWh usage

Electric Rate:

**11.13¢** per kWh

Residential Bill:

**\$111.26** per kWh

Company	Rate (cents)	Bill
MVEC	11.10¢	\$110.95
Amigo Energy	13.10¢	\$130.95
Cirro Corp.	15.41¢	\$154.08
TXU	17.59¢	\$175.90
Direct Energy	16.05¢	\$160.50
IGS Energy	15.29¢	\$152.85
Reliant	16.45¢	\$164.52
Ambit Energy	18.90¢	\$188.95

Data as of September 2024: At the close of Fiscal Year 2024, BPUB maintained competitive electric rates, with residential customers paying an average of 11.13¢ per kWh based on 1,000 kWh usage. This rate remains lower than many private providers, reflecting BPUB's commitment to affordability and transparency. A detailed chart in this section illustrates how BPUB's rates compare to other providers, highlighting our focus on delivering value to our community.

# Operations

## Improving Infrastructure: A Commitment to Brownsville's Future

At the Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB), we understand that the backbone of any thriving community is its infrastructure. Over the years, the city of Brownsville has experienced remarkable growth. With this growth, the need for constant investment in our infrastructure to meet the demands of a dynamic population is paramount. Our commitment to maintaining and improving water, wastewater, and electric essential services is central to BPUB's mission. Two projects that exemplify our dedication to modernizing and enhancing infrastructure are the Downtown Brownsville Water/Wastewater Improvement Project and the transition to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). These projects will not only enhance the efficiency and reliability of our services but ensure a sustainable future for Brownsville residents.



BPUB's AMI Project kicks off this spring with installations starting in downtown Brownsville, delivering smarter and more efficient utility services.



BPUB Board and City officials broke ground on May 24, 2024, to launch the \$14.5 million ARPA-funded Downtown Water/Wastewater Improvements Project.

## Downtown Brownsville Water/Wastewater Improvement Project

This multi-phase effort will upgrade the aging water and wastewater infrastructure beneath the city's historic downtown district. As Brownsville continues to grow and evolve, it is essential that the city's original townsite remains connected to state-of-the-art utilities that support the health, safety, and convenience for both residents and businesses. The project's benefits include:

- **Enhanced Water Quality and Reliability:** Upgrading aging pipes and wastewater systems will ensure access to clean and reliable water services.
- **Reduced Risk of Leaks and Breakdowns:** The installation of modern pipes and equipment will significantly reduce the frequency of leaks and disruptions, leading to fewer service outages.
- **Support for Economic Development:** The project will provide a more robust infrastructure foundation, allowing local businesses and new developments to thrive in a revitalized downtown.
- **Environmental Protection:** By improving the wastewater systems, BPUB will reduce the risk of environmental contamination, helping protect the local ecosystem and improve the quality of life for all residents.

The project, slated to be completed by 2027, will provide the infrastructure necessary for Brownsville to continue its growth and keep pace with its expanding economy, making it a city prepared for the future.

## Transition to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)

Another crucial project in BPUB's ongoing modernization efforts is AMI. This cutting-edge technology will upgrade our meters to digital, smart devices capable of providing real-time data on usage. This project represents a significant leap forward in operational efficiency and customer service. Benefits of AMI include:

- **Accurate, Real-Time Data:** AMI allows BPUB to collect precise data about water consumption instantly, ensuring that customers are billed accurately and that issues like leaks or unusual consumption patterns can be detected quickly.
- **Improved Customer Service:** With the ability to monitor consumption in real-time, BPUB can offer better support to residents and businesses, allowing for quicker responses to concerns and inquiries.
- **Cost Savings:** AMI reduces the need for manual meter readings, cutting down operational costs and freeing up resources to improve other areas of service.
- **Environmental Impact:** By encouraging customers to track their water usage through an online portal, AMI helps promote water conservation, ultimately contributing to the sustainable management of local water resources – and lower bills for customers.

The implementation of AMI, scheduled to begin March 2025, will provide BPUB with invaluable insights into water usage patterns, allowing us to better manage resources, improve operational efficiency, and continue offering top-tier service to Brownsville's residents.



An Allegiant Utility Services technician carefully inspects a smart meter. BPUB has contracted Allegiant to install smart meter throughout the city.

# Human Resources/Organizational Development

## Upskilling the Workforce: Leadership and Learning

Through numerous initiatives, opportunities and policy changes, BPUB has shown dedication to improving the workforce, creating a supportive workplace culture and, by extension, providing better service to our community.

BPUB launched leadership training sessions during the monthly directors and managers meetings. This ensures our leaders are well-equipped to inspire and guide their teams.

BPUB expanded training programs by instituting virtual leadership

training and making it available to all employees. These online courses are designed to build essential leadership skills, such as communication, problem-solving and team-building. This initiative provides our workforce with leadership development opportunities, regardless of position.

BPUB also introduced a learning corner that offers employees a dedicated space within the organization to access various learning resources, such as books, articles and online courses, promoting a culture of continuous learning and professional development.



## Investing in the Future: BPUB Prepares Talent Through Internships

As the workforce expands and becomes more competitive, BPUB's internship program gives college students an edge as they gain experience from working alongside our employees while earning a competitive wage.

Nine students from five universities participated in BPUB's immersive 12-week internship program. These universities included Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK), University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), University of Dallas (UD), St. Edward's University (SEU) and Texas A&M University (TAMU).

Interns worked 40 hours a week, gained real-world experience in the utilities fields and obtained marketable skills to further their careers. Through the internship program, BPUB has ensured the utilities industry has a primed pool of future talent.



BPUB's dedicated electrical crew stands ready to restore power, bringing light and reliability back to our community with expertise and teamwork.

### Getting Prepared to Minimize Service Disruptions

At BPUB, safety is more than just a priority—it is a core value that underpins everything we do. In 2024, our commitment to ensuring the safety of our employees, customers, and the community reached new heights through enhanced training programs, emergency preparedness drills, and a steadfast focus on the protection of critical infrastructure.

One of the key ways BPUB ensures preparedness in times of emergency is through weather-related emergency drills. Living in a region prone to severe weather, it is essential that our team is ready to respond swiftly and efficiently to protect our services and minimize disruptions to the community. These weather drills simulate real-life scenarios, ensuring that our staff can quickly identify potential hazards, coordinate resources, and execute their roles under pressure. The drills also reinforce the importance of communication, teamwork, and adaptability, which are crucial when navigating the challenges brought on by extreme weather events.

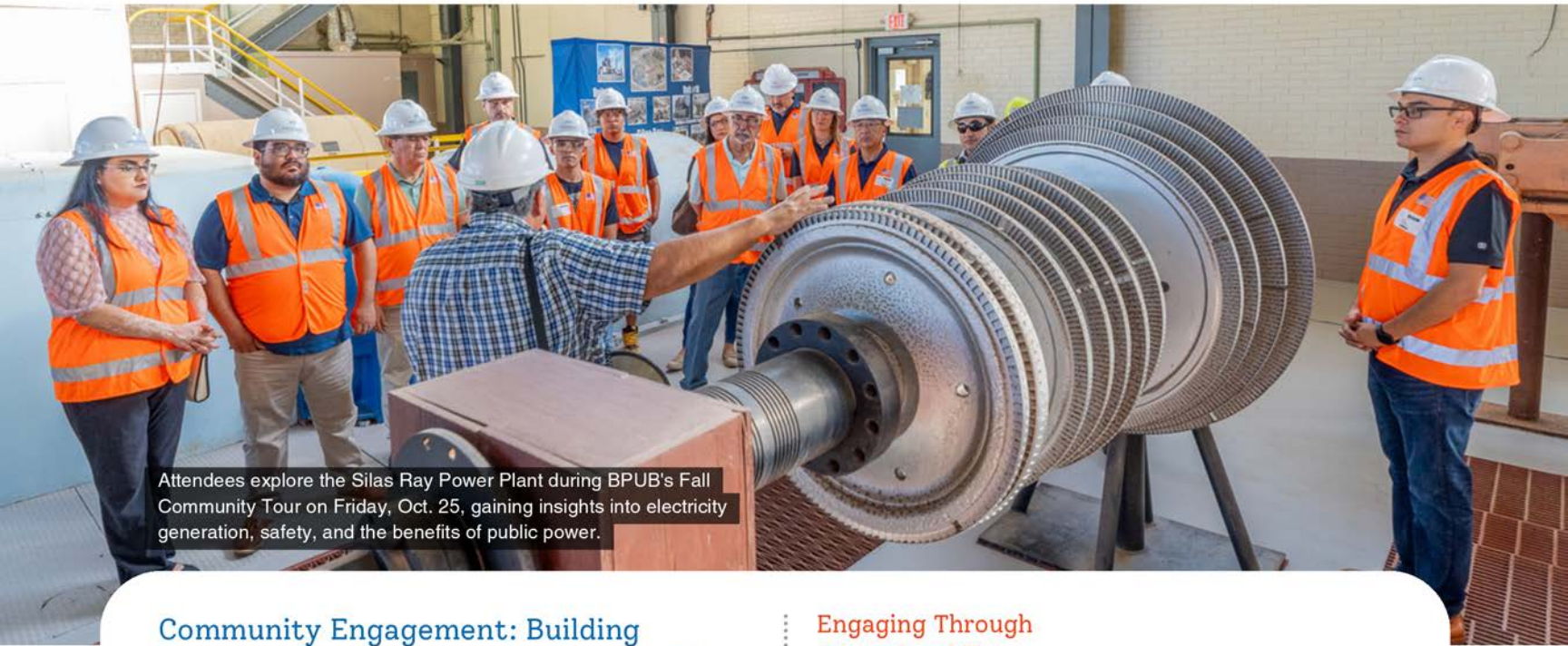
In addition to these hands-on drills, BPUB also invests in leadership development with a special focus on safeguarding our most critical assets.

As part of our ongoing commitment to operational excellence, our executive leadership team participated in the Critical Infrastructure Protection Executive Leadership Series. This comprehensive training program is designed to equip our senior leaders with the knowledge and strategies needed to assess, manage, and mitigate risks to BPUB's infrastructure. From securing power plants to safeguarding water systems, this training ensures that BPUB's leadership remains proactive in identifying vulnerabilities and implementing robust safeguards against potential threats.

Together, these initiatives help foster a culture of safety and preparedness, ensuring BPUB remains resilient in the face of adversity. Whether it's preparing for the next storm or defending our infrastructure from cyber threats, BPUB is committed to the safety of our workforce, the reliability of our services, and the well-being of the Brownsville community.

At BPUB, safety is not just a task—it's a responsibility that we carry every day. Through continued training, strategic planning, and a collective commitment to excellence, we ensure that safety remains at the heart of everything we do.

## Community Engagement



Attendees explore the Silas Ray Power Plant during BPUB's Fall Community Tour on Friday, Oct. 25, gaining insights into electricity generation, safety, and the benefits of public power.

### Community Engagement: Building Stronger Connections with Brownsville

At BPUB, community engagement is at the heart of everything we do. Our commitment to fostering relationships and creating meaningful connections with those we serve is reflected in various programs and initiatives designed to empower and inform. In 2024, BPUB continued to be a valuable partner in the Brownsville community through efforts such as the Public Utilities Board Consumer Advisory Panel (PUBCAP), educational tours, recognition of environmental efforts, and involvement in local schools. These initiatives allowed us to engage with the community and ensure that we are not only meeting the needs of today but also preparing for the future.

**Did you know?** BPUB offers tours of its water, wastewater, and electric facilities, giving Brownsville residents a behind-the-scenes look at how these essential services are delivered. Keep an eye out for upcoming opportunities to explore the operations that power and sustain our community!

### Engaging Through Educational Tours

BPUB believes that education is key to fostering a deeper understanding of how public utilities impact daily life. In 2024, BPUB hosted a variety of tours aimed at showcasing our operations and increasing awareness of the essential services we provide. Community tours offered an inside look at our water treatment facilities, wastewater plants, and electrical infrastructure. With nearly 100 participants—including University of Texas Rio Grande Valley students, U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez, the USBR, and community members—these tours helped the public understand the infrastructure behind the essential services we deliver and how we are working to keep Brownsville a thriving, sustainable city.

In addition to community tours, BPUB hosted educational tours for local schools and youth groups and participated in Brownsville's Scout Government Day. These tours are designed to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards and public service leaders. Scout Government Day, in particular, allowed young people to learn about the vital work of local government agencies and the public utility services that keep our city running smoothly.

# Community Engagement

## Strengthening Community Connections and Customer Focus

One of the cornerstones of our community outreach efforts is the Public Utilities Board Consumer Advisory Panel (PUBCAP). This group of local community leaders plays an essential role in guiding BPUB's decision-making process. PUBCAP serves as a vital conduit between BPUB and the community, ensuring that we are transparent, responsive, and in tune with the needs and concerns of our customers. Throughout 2024, PUBCAP members provided valuable feedback on issues such as service reliability, customer satisfaction, and energy efficiency programs. Their involvement strengthens our commitment to being a customer-focused utility.



## Tree Line USA Certification

Our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship was further demonstrated when BPUB received the prestigious Tree Line USA certification in 2024. This certification, awarded by the Arbor Day Foundation, recognizes BPUB's efforts to maintain and enhance the urban forest through responsible tree care practices.

One of BPUB's most important practices is the Trade-a-Tree Program. Through this program, BPUB offers to replace tall trees in customers' yards directly under a primary voltage line with a smaller tree, selected for its lower height and natural beauty, free of charge, to avoid service interruptions caused by tree branches. The new tree is planted at the proper distance from the primary line. To date, BPUB has removed 50 trees and trimmed 4,500 trees.

Customers can decline to replace the tree after it has been removed, in which case the tree or related supplies would be donated to the city of Brownsville or the Brownsville Independent School District (BISD). This year, BPUB donated shovels and water hoses to BISD in place of trees for the program.

Our work in managing trees along utility rights-of-way ensures that residents continue to benefit from healthy, beautiful tree-lined streets while keeping our community safe and environmentally sustainable. This achievement highlights BPUB's ongoing dedication to protecting the environment for future generations.

## Trade-a-Tree Program



**50**  
trees removed

**4,500**  
trees trimmed



## Community Engagement

### Empowering the Next Generation: Conservation Superheroes Drawing Contest & School Involvement

BPUB's efforts to inspire the next generation of conservationists and environmental leaders took center stage through the Conservation Superheroes Drawing Contest, which earned the Texas Public Power Association (TPPA) System Achievement Award at the 2024 TPPA Annual Conference. This contest, open to local students, challenged participants to showcase their creativity and knowledge in conserving energy and water. Winners were recognized for their innovative ideas and commitment to sustainability, reinforcing BPUB's role in shaping a more environmentally conscious future for Brownsville.

Our commitment to educational outreach also extended to local schools through initiatives like the Careers on Wheels program and career day events. Through Careers on Wheels, BPUB brought our services directly to students, offering them hands-on opportunities to explore various careers within the utilities industry. Additionally, BPUB participated in multiple career day events across local schools, where our team engaged with students, helping them envision future careers in public utilities and related fields. These efforts allowed BPUB to serve as a source of inspiration and guidance for the young minds of Brownsville.



At BPUB, we believe that strong communities are built on active engagement, education, and mutual respect. In 2024, we continued to forge connections, whether through our advisory panel, community outreach programs, or school initiatives. As we look ahead, we are committed to continuing these efforts, ensuring that our community remains well-informed, engaged, and empowered to shape the future of public utilities in Brownsville.



BPUB Staff provides water conservation tips during a local outreach event.



## Moving Forward

*Chairman's Letter*

On behalf of the Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB), it is my honor to present our FY 2023-2024 Annual Report. This year has been one of progress, innovation, and community collaboration. As we reflect on our accomplishments, we are grateful for the trust you place in us and remain dedicated to delivering the essential services that power and sustain our city.

In 2024, we continued to make strides in ensuring that our utility services remain reliable, efficient, and sustainable. The Resaca Restoration Program highlights our commitment to environmental stewardship. Our educational initiatives, such as the Conservation Superheroes Drawing Contest and school involvement programs like careers on wheels, empowered the next generation to embrace sustainability. Additionally, our community tours, including those for local schools and Scout Government Day, provided valuable insight into the important work we do to keep Brownsville thriving.

The work of the Public Utilities Board Consumer Advisory Panel (PUBCAP) has been crucial in maintaining an open dialogue with the community, guiding us in our decision-making and ensuring that we remain responsive to your needs. Through these efforts and more, BPUB has continued to be a partner you can rely on in every sense.

As we look toward the future, our vision remains focused on enhancing service reliability, sustainability, and community engagement. We are committed to advancing new initiatives that promote energy and water conservation, strengthening our infrastructure, and embracing the latest technologies to meet the evolving needs of Brownsville. Most importantly, we will continue to listen to and engage with you—the heart of our mission—so that we can work together toward a brighter, more sustainable future. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead and to working with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,  
Arthur "Art" Rendon,  
Brownsville Public Utilities Board



**BROWNSVILLE**  
**PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD**

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