



Taking a *Byte* out of the CCR: Pinellas County's Journey through Electronic Delivery

*Presented at the AMWA Conference
October 29, 2013*



Introduction

Pinellas County Utilities* (PCU) provides quality potable water to the unincorporated areas of Pinellas County as well as the beaches and our wholesale customers in the cities of Clearwater, Pinellas Park, Safety Harbor and Tarpon Springs.

We have produced a Consumer Confidence Report for these residents over the past 14 years.

**Currently known as the Pinellas County Department of Environment and Infrastructure (DEI)*



A Brief Pinellas County CCR History

- Past years have seen the Pinellas County CCR transform and recently evolve into the electronically delivered CCR version we have today.
 - From 1998-2007, the CCR was published as a 4-color foldout or booklet that contained the required language and data including water system updates, conservation and education programs available, even kids' activities



Pinellas County CCR History *(continued)*

- In 2008, a 2-color design was adopted in a smaller format in an effort to reduce printing and postage costs.



- By 2010, the CCR became a black & white publication containing only the required language and data.



Pinellas County CCR History *(continued)*

- **The previous Pinellas County CCR delivery methods included a “good faith” effort to reach all customers** (per CCR guidelines).
 - Direct mailing CCR to physical addresses (*vs. billing addresses*)
 - Multi-family & commercial customers as well as wholesale customers were encouraged to request multiple copies for display in public areas and for individual customer or unit distribution.
 - All CCR versions are accessible through PCU’s website as PDFs:
<http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/publications-ccr.htm>



The Cost of Delivery

- A sampling of associated costs for printing and mailing hard copy Pinellas County CCRs

	Quantity Printed	Printing Cost*	Quantity Mailed	Postage*	Mail out services	TOTAL
CCR 2007 [for 2008]	115,000 (2-color, 17"x22")	\$12,663.00	111,542	\$25,063.43	\$3,066.25	\$40,792.68
CCR 2008 [for 2009]	115,000 (2-color, 11"x17")	\$6,880.00	108,384	\$20,593.70	\$3,459.75	\$30,933.45
CCR 2009 [for 2010]	115,000 (2-color, 11"x17")	\$9,794.40	109,117	\$20,771.45	\$4,291.89	\$34,857.74
CCR 2010 [for 2011]	115,000 (b/ w, 11"x17")	\$4,277.00	108,227	\$21,004.77	\$4,599.65	\$29,881.42

**Prices vary due to paper and postage costs at time of production.*



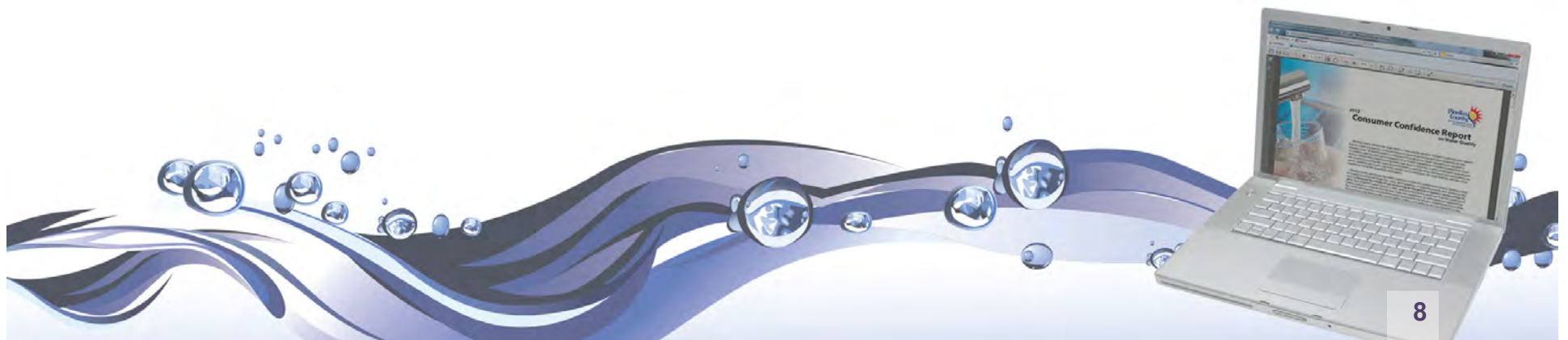
Proposed Legislation

- **Congressman C. W. Bill Young's inquiry and proposed legislation to help ease the cost of doing CCR business**
 - In early 2011, Congressman Young, in response to comments made through Pinellas County's mayors' council, began investigating new legislation that would omit the requirement to direct mail the CCR to water customers – only IF the water utility was in compliance (*no MCL violations*) for that year.
 - This initiative began as an effort to help reduce printing and postage costs associated with the mandatory delivery of annual CCRs.



Proposed Legislation *(continued)*

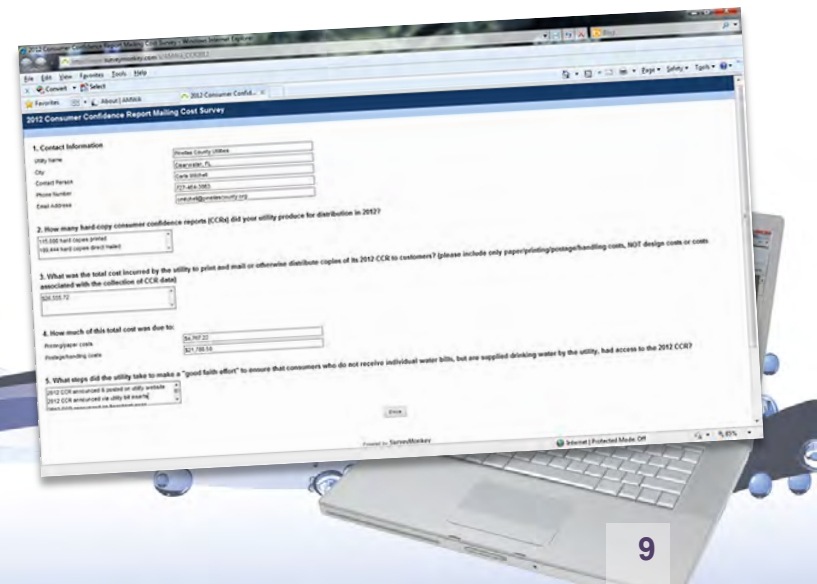
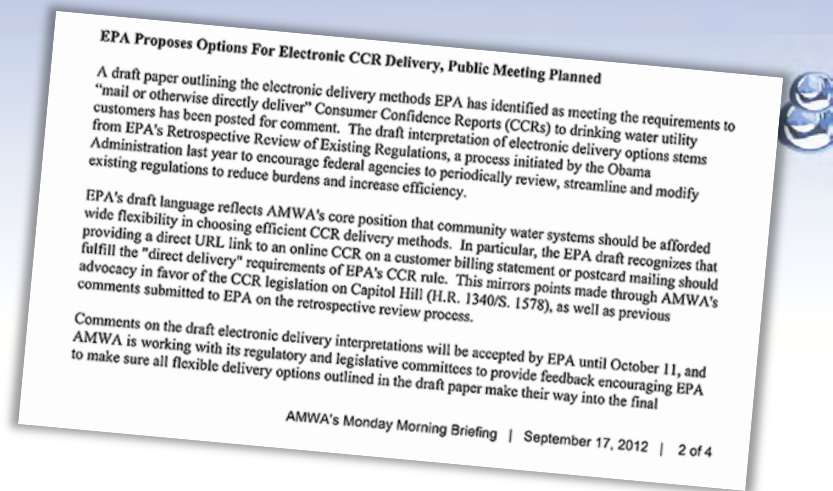
- On February 17, 2011, Congressman Young's office forwarded draft legislative language for electronic CCR delivery.
- On April 5, 2012, Congressman Bill Young (FL-10) shared a press release concerning legislation he introduced the past week that would eliminate the Consumer Confidence Report mailing requirement.



Preparing for Electronic Delivery

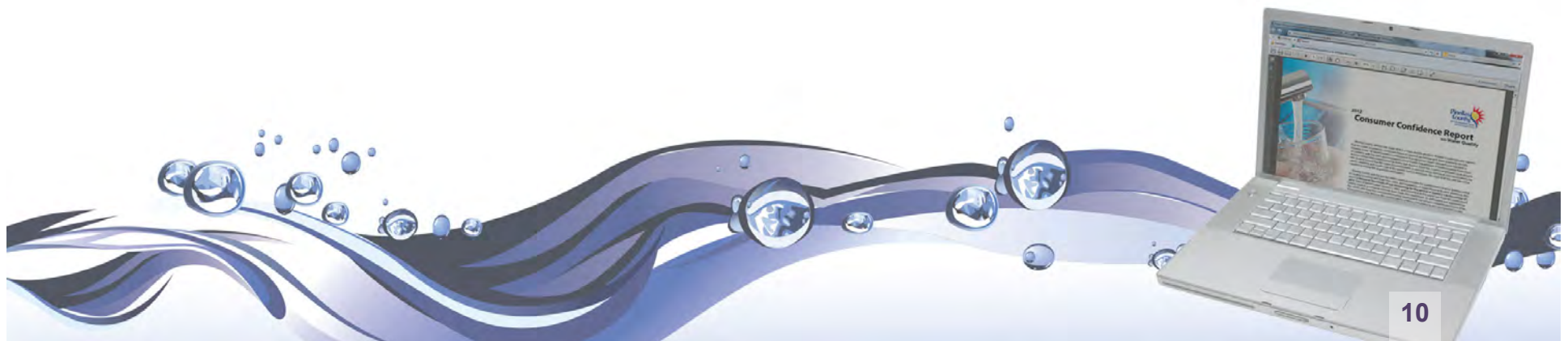
■ New proposed guidelines

- In September 2012, more definite information began surfacing and Pinellas County began researching the possibility of electronically delivering the 2012 CCR; “EPA Proposes Options For CCR Delivery, Public Meeting Planned” (*AMWA Monday Morning Briefing, 09/17/12*)
- On September 28, 2012, Pinellas County completed & submitted the AMWA CCR2012 printing & mailing cost survey to advocate for electronic delivery.



Preparing for Electronic Delivery *(continued)*

- Obtained support from our county administration and Utilities leadership.
- Approvals
 - Received final approvals from the county administrator's office, the executive director of Pinellas County Utilities and the director of Utilities' Water & Sewer division.
 - Email dated January 11, 2013:
Utilities will move forward in the **electronic delivery of the 2012 CCR** *(vs. direct mail or bill insert)*.



Preparing for Electronic Delivery *(continued)*

- Participated in the EPA webinar on the new CCR rule for electronic delivery.

- March 7, 2013: *Consumer Confidence Rule (CCR) Retrospective Review - Electronic Delivery Framework – Encore*

- This webinar covered such topics as the CCR rule retrospective review, the CCR delivery options memo and planning for your CCR delivery program.

Delivery Method Decision Matrices

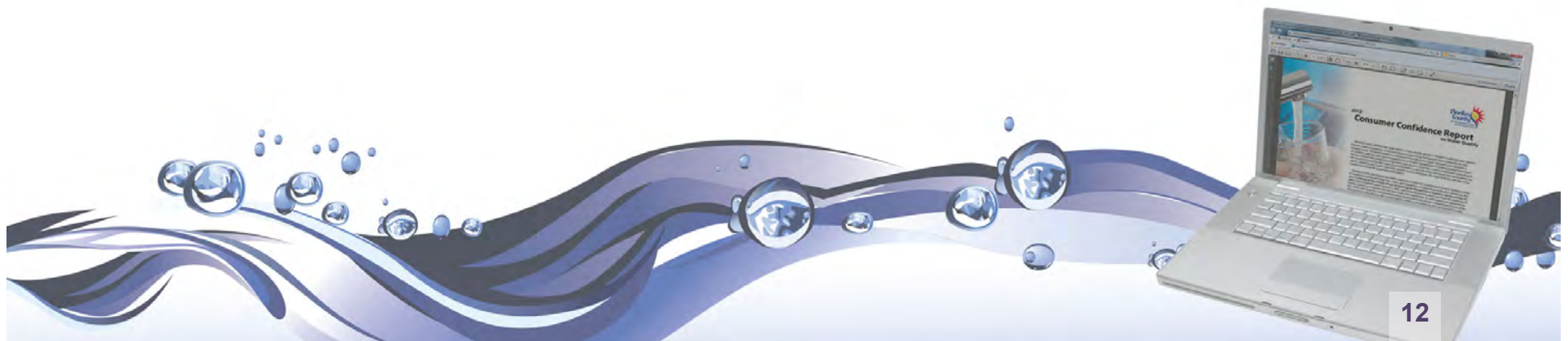
ADVANTAGES*	CCR DELIVERY METHODS				
	Mail – Paper Copy	Mail – Notification that CCR is available via direct URL	Email – direct URL to CCR	Email – CCR sent as an attachment	Email – CCR sent as an embedded image
Customers may have access to more information beyond what is required in the CCR because they are already on the Internet.		■	■		
CWS does not have to invest in new software, additional staff training or other new logistical needs for delivery.	■				
CWS has potential printing and mailing cost savings.				■	■
CWS with e-billing systems can use existing database and other resources.			■	■	■
Customer can view or receive CCR with limited or no internet access.	■				

LIMITATIONS*	CCR DELIVERY METHODS				
	Mail – Paper Copy	Mail – Notification that CCR is available via direct URL	Email – direct URL to CCR	Email – CCR sent as an attachment	Email – CCR sent as an embedded image
CWS must dedicate staff to manage more than one delivery method, including collecting and updating email addresses.			■	■	■
CWS may have to invest in new software and train staff.			■	■	■
CWS incurs printing and mailing costs.	■				
CWS needs internet access and adequate bandwidth to distribute large numbers of emails at once.			■	■	■
Customer may not receive CCR by email due to lack of software compatibility, spam filtering, firewall or file size limitations.				■	■

Found on pages 7 and 8 of the Memorandum attachment

2012 Electronic Delivery – NEXT STEPS

- **Notification to water account holders via bi-monthly utility bills**
 - 2012 CCR will be ready for electronic viewing at our designated web address by June 1. Option also given to account holders to request a hard copy if they prefer.
 - Prepared notification message to appear on April/May utility bills (04/01/13 to 05/31/13)
- **Assign direct link URL in advance**
http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/documents/CCR_2012.pdf



2012 Electronic Delivery – NEXT STEPS

- **Utility bill messaging:**

- On June 1, 2013, view the 2012 Consumer Confidence Report online at http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/documents/CCR_2012.pdf with important information about your drinking water quality. Call (727) 464-4000 to request a paper copy of this report.

(252 characters)

Pinellas County UTILITIES

Important Message: On June 1, 2013, view the 2012 Consumer Confidence Report online at http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/documents/CCR_2012.pdf with important information about your drinking water quality. Call (727) 464-4000 to request a paper copy of this report.

99 20300063274

SERVICE ADDRESS HURRICANE EVACUATION LEVEL AS SHOWN BY UTILITY RECORDS

NON

For evacuation level questions, call 727-464-3800 or go to www.pinellascounty.org/emergency

UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE 727-464-4000

SERVICE ADDRESS: ACCOUNT NUMBER: STATEMENT DATE: 05/07/13

BILLING PERIOD		METER NUMBER	METER READINGS		CONSUMPTION	SAME PERIOD
FROM	TO	DAYS	PRIOR	CURRENT	(IN 1,000 GALLONS)	LAST YEAR
03-08-13	05-07-13	61	204	207	3	7

USAGE HISTORY

DATE	CONSUMPTION (IN 1,000 GALLONS)
03/07/13	6
01/08/13	8
11/07/12	

PAYMENT RECEIVED

WATER	23.04
SEWER (PINELLAS COUNTY)	38.53
MAINTENANCE (PINELLAS COUNTY)	1.62
	34.00
	\$95.19

2012 Consumer Confidence Report

2012 Electronic Delivery – NEXT STEPS

- **Obtain local and regional water quality data**
 - Acquire water quality data from the Pinellas County Utilities' Laboratory and Tampa Bay Water, our regional water supplier.

- **Web accessibility**
 - Format 2012 CCR for easy web viewing
 - Format to allow for desktop printing (8.5" x 11") in consideration of customers
 - Upload to designated direct link by June 1 as communicated in customer billing message.



2012 Electronic Delivery – NEXT STEPS

■ Customer outreach to announce

- Feature announcement in June/July 2013 *UtiliTalk* customer bill insert.
- Home page announcements on Pinellas County Utilities and Pinellas County websites.
 - www.pinellascounty.org/utilities
 - www.pinellascounty.org



Electronic Delivery Success

- Overall, the CCR transition from traditional delivery (*USPS mail*) to electronic delivery was smooth and successful for Pinellas County.
- To date, according the Pinellas County Utilities customer service, there have been:
 - 23 CCR inquiries
 - 5 requests for hard copies to be mailed to customers
 - 7 customer complaints on the electronically delivered 2012 CCR
 - 832 visits to the website to view the 2012 CCR
(*June 1-Oct. 7, 2013*)



Preparation is the Key

- **Review the CCR guidelines.**

There are **6 options** currently available for CCR delivery. <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/ccr/regulations.cfm> or <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/ccr/upload/ccrdeliveryoptionsmemo.pdf> *(refer. page 5)*

- **Discuss options**

with your local & utility officials to decide on best choice for your organization and your customers.

- **Keep in contact**

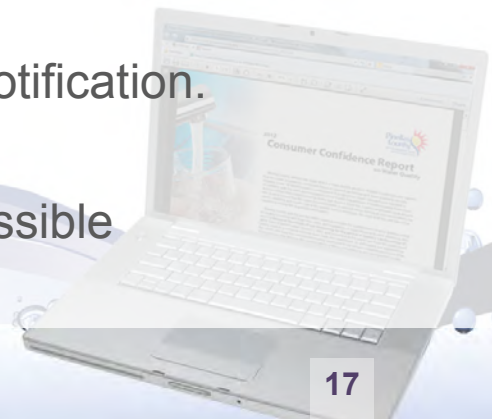
with internal partners on progress and ask for assistance from in-house experts when needed.

- **Allow time**

for proper review and approvals as well as customer notification.

- **Keep your customers in mind**

provide notifications and CCR in formats that are accessible and “friendly.”





QUESTIONS?





For more information, contact:

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Thank You!

www.pinellascounty.org/utilities

