

Reaching the "Hard-to-Reach"

Engaging Underserved Communities

Tulare County Supervisor Pete Vander Poel June 18, 2015

Overview

- Issues and Needs of Unincorporated Communities
- Potential or existing community infrastructure deficiencies
- Partnership between County and Utility Companies
- County department and non-profit organization participation and services offered
- Community outreach efforts
- Photos from events
- Results

Issues and Needs of Unincorporated Communities

- Poverty
 - Large percentage of individuals live below the poverty line
- Deteriorating housing
 - Most homes built decades ago out of compliance with county building codes
- Many individuals are farm workers
 - Plagued by high unemployment rates
 - Limited job opportunities
 - Low education levels
- Poor access to healthcare, crime prevention, and limited public services

Potential or Existing Community Infrastructure Deficiencies

Wastewater

- Lack of proper sewer system
- Water
 - Access to clean and/or uncontaminated drinking water
- Stormwater
 - ▶ Lack of proper drainage
- Safe Routes
 - ▶ Lack of streetlights, sidewalks, and ADA curb ramps

Community Census Information

Waukena

- ▶Population size: 175
- ▶Individuals below poverty level: 17.1%
- ▶Education: 30.8% of individuals are not high school graduates
- ►Unemployment rate: 3.8%
- ▶ Median household income: \$27,386
- ▶Housing units in community: 65
- ► Housing Structures:
 - \square Mobile homes 15.4%
 - □ Traditional Homes 84.6%
 - \square 36.9% of structures were built between 1940-1959
 - House heating fuel:
 - $_{\circ}$ Bottled, tank or LP gas 70.8%
 - $_{\circ}$ Utility gas -15.4%
 - Electricity 10.8%

Community Census Information

<u>Alpaugh</u>

- ▶**Population size:** 1,026
- ▶Individuals below poverty level: 54.5%
- ▶Education: 56.2% of individuals are not high school graduates
- ▶Unemployment rate: 42.9%
- ▶ Median household income: \$25,341
- ▶Housing units in community: 252
- ► Housing Structures:
 - ightharpoonup Mobile homes 42.5%
 - \Box Traditional Homes 53.9%
 - \square 36% of structures were built between 1960-1979
 - House heating fuel:
 - $_{\circ}$ Bottled, tank or LP gas 0%
 - $_{\circ}$ Utility gas -61.4%
 - Electricity 25.9%

Partnership between County and Utility Companies

Access Issue

- ▶ Small, rural and lowest income communities can be difficult to reach
- As a result, these communities do not get much attention
- Often times resources are spent in more populated areas where access to residents and businesses may be easier

Collaboration with county opens door for utility companies to connect with residents/businesses

- Elected official may have greater success than a utility company in bringing residents/ businesses to an informational community event
- An elected official is able to involve county resources, departments, and/or programs to benefit the community
- Having an elected official involved provides validation to the programs, as a result, more people take advantage of program offerings
- Provides elected official with an opportunity to assist the small, rural communities through the assistance of utility energy efficiency programs
- Bottom line: To help small communities with not only becoming energy efficient, but in learning more about other utility and County programs

Partnership between County and Utility Companies, (cont'd)

Assistance Programs Offered by PG&E at Events:

- Energy Savings Assistance Program
 - An income qualified weatherization program that offers customers energy-saving home improvements at no charge
- California Alternative Rates for Energy Program (CARE)
 - Program offers significant discounts on gas and electricity to income qualified customers
- Middle Income Direct Install Program (MIDI)
 - Targeted program that provides a limited number of free energy efficiency measures in homes/apartments without income qualification
 - Program has limited funding and is only offered through government partnership programs such as the Valley Innovative Energy Watch Partnership (VIEW)

The VIEW Partnership

- Collaborates with PG&E, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company, the San Joaquin Clean Energy Organization, and the local governments in Tulare County and Kings County to help communities become more energy efficient.
- Provided support and funding to assist in getting information into the hands of the residents and businesses in the community; assisted in organizing community events

Event Participants and Services Offered

Tulare County Departments

- Alcohol and Other Drug: Educational information on substance abuse as well as prevention, treatment and recovery services
- Mental Health: Individual, group, and family therapy information, health care referrals, crisis emergency assistance information
- Warmline: Number to call when an individual needs to speak with someone who will listen to their concerns without judgment or criticism
- Fire Department: Fire safety education for children and adults as well as novelty fireperson hats and stickers
- Sheriff's Department: Resources regarding the PAL youth program, the TipNow program, civil services and novelty items such as stickers
- Public Health: Free flu shots, Healthy Nutrition program information handouts as well as guides to the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
- Animal Control: Licensing of dogs and cats information, education on responsible pet ownership including information regarding spay/neuter programs available to control animal population
- Probation: Job announcements, informational fliers on county gangs, at-risk youth programs, probation services and DUI programs
- Human Services: Child Welfare Services (CWS), Foster Care Licensing information, TulareWorks handouts regarding Medi-Cal, General Assistance, and Tulare County Medical Services (TCMS)

Event Participants and Services Offered (cont'd)

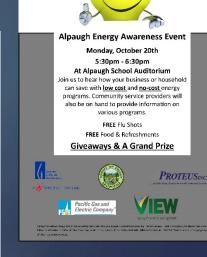
- Utility Companies and Local Non-Profits
 - ▶ PG&E, Southern California Gas Company, VIEW Partnership: Energy Savings Assistance Program, CARE Program, MIDI Program
 - ▶ **Kings View South Tulare County Mobile Unit**: Provides "in the field" culturally competent mental health services to underserved/un-served individuals of all ages and families in small communities of South Tulare County
 - Southern California Gas Company: Energy Savings Assistance Program,
 - ▶ **VIEW Partnership:** Pools their resources to offer South Valley residents and businesses energy incentives and rebates. Connects communities with money saving resources, energy efficiency tips, engaging programs and events.
 - ▶ **Proteus, Inc.:** Presence of 38-foot "Green" Mobile Unit designed to reach rural communities to promote sustainable energy, promote green sector employment opportunities and to deliver information on energy assistance programs to low-income individuals.

Community Outreach Efforts

- All marketing materials printed in English and Spanish
- Posters hung throughout communities
- Event fliers for parents distributed to school district and sent home with each student
- Letter from Supervisor mailed to each household
- Door hangers hung on each household
- Social media posts on Twitter, Facebook and County web page
- Press Release to local media outlets
- Marketing materials highlighted offering of raffle prizes and complimentary food, first aid kit and flu shots









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Event Photos

















Results

- Over 35 homes signed up for energy assistance programs
- Over 150 individuals received flu shots
- Increased awareness of various county resources and programs
- Increased awareness of accessible energy efficiency assistance programs
- Increased goodwill within communities towards county government, utility companies, and local non-profit organizations

Questions?

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Thank you!