

Staying Connected

*Tips & Tactics for Effective
External Communication
Despite Social Distance*

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

2:00 pm



Thank You for Joining!

Webinar Host & Moderator

Melissa Kuehne

Program Manager
Institute for Local Government



Webinar Overview

As local officials and staff work through this evolving public health crisis, it remains critical to share important updates, guidance and mandates with your communities.

Today's webinar will share strategies for consistently and authentically communicating with your community as we adapt to the "new normal," prepare for the return to standard operations, and anticipate any future crisis events.

Today's Agenda

Welcome & Overview

About ILG

Presentations by:

- Ryder Smith, Tripepi Smith and Associates
- David Liebler, California State Association of Counties
- Jesse Saich, El Dorado Irrigation District

Panel Discussion

Q&A

Contact Information

How to Ask a Question During the Webinar

- All webinar participants will be on MUTE during the entire call.
- Please TYPE any questions into the question box at any time during the webinar.
- The moderator will read your questions during the question period at the end of the webinar.



Non-Profit, Non-Partisan & Here to Help

ILG is the non-profit training and education affiliate of...



**California Special
Districts Association**
Districts Stronger Together



We provide practical and easy-to-use resources so local agencies can effectively implement policies on the ground.

ILG's Programs & Services

Program Areas

Leadership & Governance

Civics Education & Workforce

Public Engagement

Sustainable Communities



Services

Education & Training

Technical Assistance

Capacity Building

Convening

Our mission is to help local government leaders navigate complexity, increase capacity & build trust in their communities

ILG's FREE Resources

COVID-19

- www.ca-ilg.org/COVID-19
 - Local Government Resources
 - State and National Resources
 - Executive Orders
 - Tools and Training Opportunities
 - Local Government Response

Leadership Resources

- www.ca-ilg.org/leadership
 - Information and resources on effective boards & councils, decision-making, responsibilities and powers and more

Public Engagement Resources

- www.ca-ilg.org/engagement
 - Basics of Public Engagement
 - ILG's TIERS Public Engagement Framework
 - Partnering with Community Based Organizations
 - Language Access

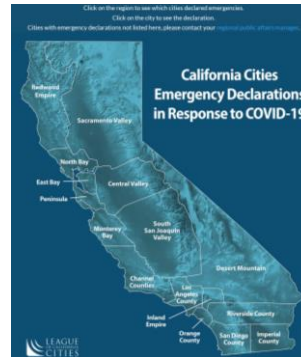
The COVID-19 Pandemic

As of April 5, 2020, there are a total of 14,336 positive cases and 343 deaths in California.

Ages of all confirmed positive cases:

- Age 0-17: 173 cases
- Age 18-49: 7,099 cases
- Age 50-64: 3,884 cases
- Age 65 and older: 3,129 cases
- Unknown/Missing: 51 cases

Stay Home Except for Essential Needs Order – March 20, 2020



www.cacities.org/Regions/California-Cities



www.counties.org/carousel/resources-regarding-coronavirus-covid-19



www.csda.net/covid-19-resources

Today's Presenters



Ryder Smith
President
Tripepi Smith and
Associates



David Liebler
Director of Public Affairs
& Member Services
California State
Association of Counties



Jesse Saich
Communications &
Media Relations Manager
El Dorado Irrigation District



COVID-19 Communications

Crisis Response Observations and the Future



TRIPEPI SMITH
marketing • technology • public affairs

April 2020

COVID-19 Clients

- American Canyon
- Bellflower
- Culver City
- Cupertino
- Hawaiian Gardens
- Huntington Beach
- Indian Wells
- La Cañada Flintridge
- Lancaster
- Lomita
- Manhattan Beach
- Rolling Hills Estates
- Tracy
- San Gabriel Valley City Manager Association
- Bellflower-Somerset Mutual Water Co.
- Inland Empire Utilities Agency
- El Toro Water District



The Role of the Public Agency

- Feds - Science and International Mitigation
- States - Broad Baseline Policies and Science and Fiscal Impacts
- Counties - Science, Implementation, Policies, Reporting, Services
- Cities - Truth, Reiterate Facts, Endurance, Life Safety, Trust, Hope, Tone
- Special Districts - Foundational Services for Civilization



COVID-19 Communication Phases

Immediate Adaptation

- Work From Home
- Assemble Team
- Gain Access and Rights
- Determine Tools and Workflow
- Absorb Information



Sustained Messaging

- Implement County Orders
- Explain Rules
- Convey Facts
- Anticipate Questions
- Identify Role of the City



Response to Phase Out

- Backing Off Rules
- Resetting Community Expectations
- Preparing for Second Wave
- Launching Economic Development



New Normal

- Setting Social Norms
- Explaining New City Operations
- Identifying New City Service Limits



Best Practices

- Creation of a COVID-19 portal on your own agency website
- Services Dashboard
- Date and Timestamp Updates
- Making the International Local
- Finding Your Agency's Lane
- Setting up a Hotline
- Spokesperson Video Message
- Implementing or Extending State and County Policies
- Zoomfest 2020 - The De Facto Platform
- Concern v. Fear

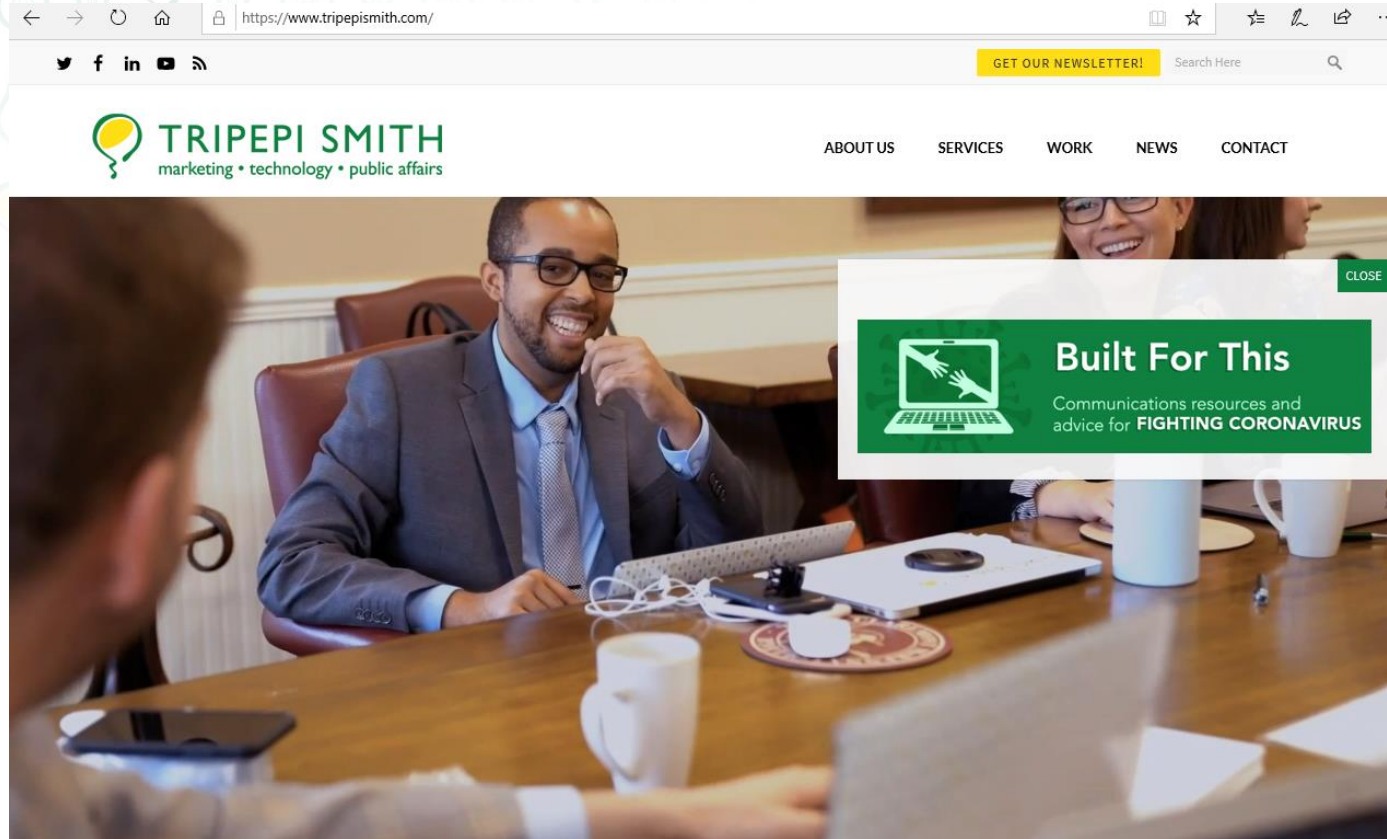


Example Communications

- Manteca Daily Briefings in 3 Languages
 - Manteca FB Page:
https://www.facebook.com/pg/cityofmanteca/videos/?ref=page_internal
- Manhattan Beach COVID-19 Portal
 - Citymb.info/coronavirus
- Grover Beach City Manager on Playgrounds v. Parks
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groverbeach/videos/2799666700088078/>
- Rolling Hills Estates Mayor's Address to Public
 - <https://youtu.be/uJF9wS0TT3E>



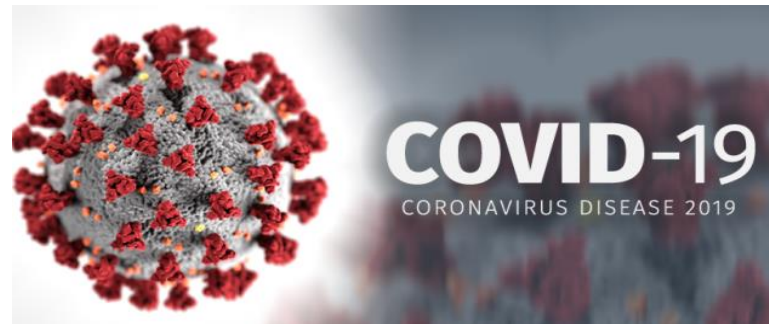
Free Coronavirus Resources



Visit our website at:
[TripepiSmith.com/Coronavirus](https://www.tripepismith.com/Coronavirus)

The County Perspective

April 7, 2020



Institute for Local Government Webinar
April 7, 2020



The COVID-19 Pandemic – A Crisis Like We’ve Never Seen

- **Unfortunately, Crises are Nothing New for Local Government in the Past Decade**
 - **Devastating Wildfires**
 - **Floods & Debris Flows**
 - **Terrorism**
 - **Public Safety Power Shutoffs**





The COVID-19 Pandemic – A Crisis Like We’ve Never Seen

- **Impacting all 58 California Counties**
- **Impacting all 40 Million California County Residents**





The Role of Counties During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Public Health**
- **Emergency Management**
- **Public Safety**
- **Working with Vulnerable Populations**
- **Public Awareness & Education**





California Counties and Crisis Communications

- **Counties Have Significant Role in Dissemination of Information Due to Public Health**
- **The Importance of Accurate and Timely Information**
- **The Importance of Educating the Public and Media**





California Counties and Crisis Communications

- **Public and Media are Starving for Information**
- **They Want Immediacy**
- **They Want Transparency**





Challenges

- **Fine Line of Getting Residents to Follow Shelter in Place & Social Distancing But Not Causing Hysteria**
- **Social Media is the Ticket – But Not All Areas of California Have Strong Internet Connectivity**
- **Patient Confidentiality – Public Wants to Know Who is Infected and Where They Live**





Challenges

- **Different Languages – Ensuring Your Audiences Get the Message**
- **Working Remotely – Ensuring Elected Officials & Key Staff are Properly Prepared and Utilizing Same Messaging**





10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

- **Work Collaboratively – Within Your Own Local Government and with Neighboring Agencies**
- **Find the Communication Tools That Connect Best With your Various Constituencies; One Size Does Not Fit All**
- **Be Visual and Be Simple When Telling Your Story – Especially on Social Media**





10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

- **Elected Officials Can Play Key Role Though Leading by Example**
- **Don't Rush to Get the Information & Messaging Out; Ensure Its Accuracy and Everyone is On Point**
- **Set Up Internal Communication Methods to Ensure Workflow is Efficient & Not Lost in the Immense Flow of Information**





10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

- **Show the Positives That are Happening In Your Communities**
- **Remember the Importance of Human Connection in This Time of Social Distancing & Place in Shelter**
- **Remember Your Internal Audiences. They Are Concerned as Well and Need Information and Support**





10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

- **Take Time for Yourself; Your Own Mental Health is Critical to Doing Your Job Effectively**





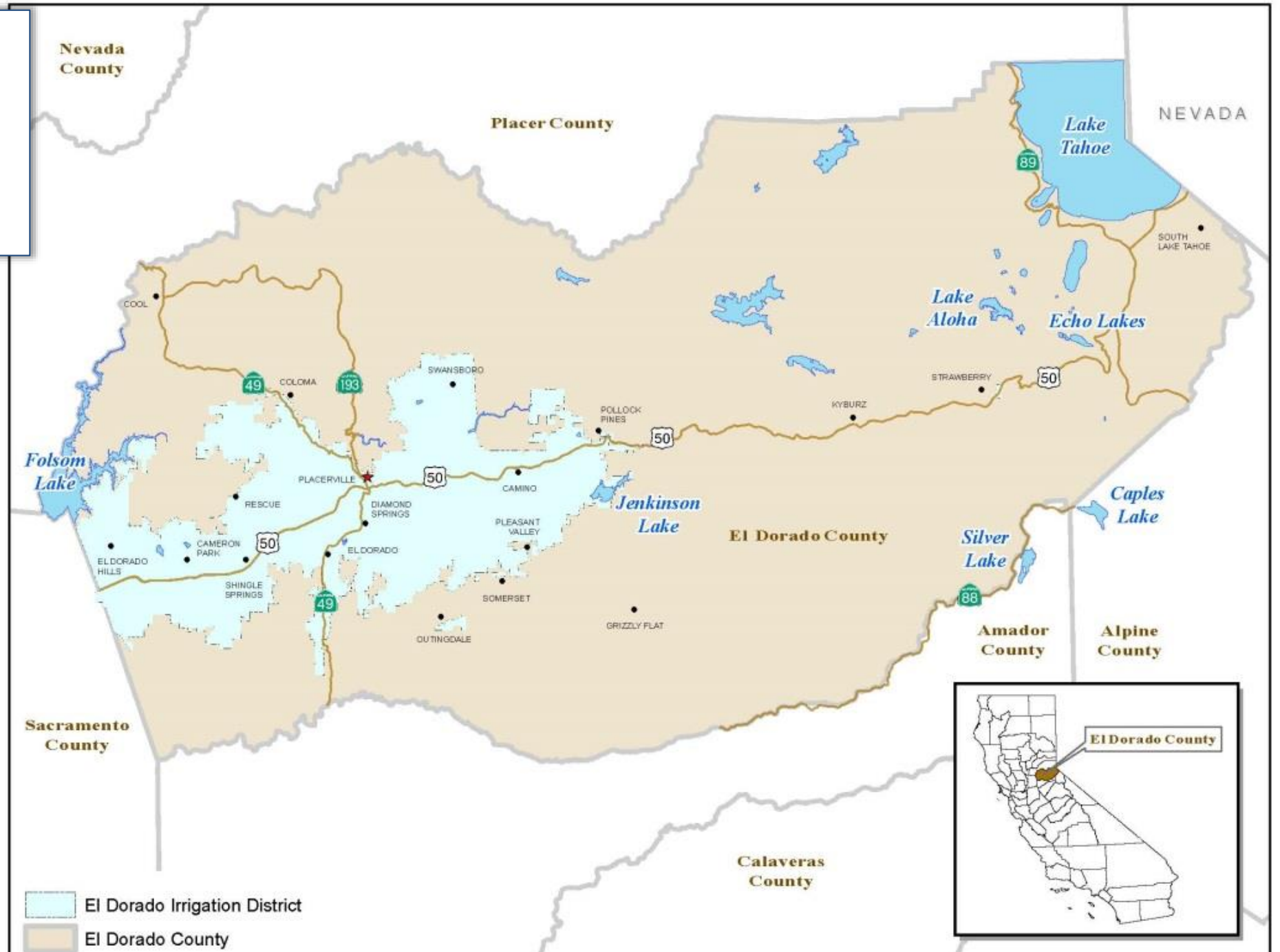
And Remember...



Communicating with EID's Customers in the Time of COVID-19



Service area:
220 square
miles



EID Customer Numbers

Water..... **42,022**

Wastewater..... **23,636**

Recycled Water.... **5,543**

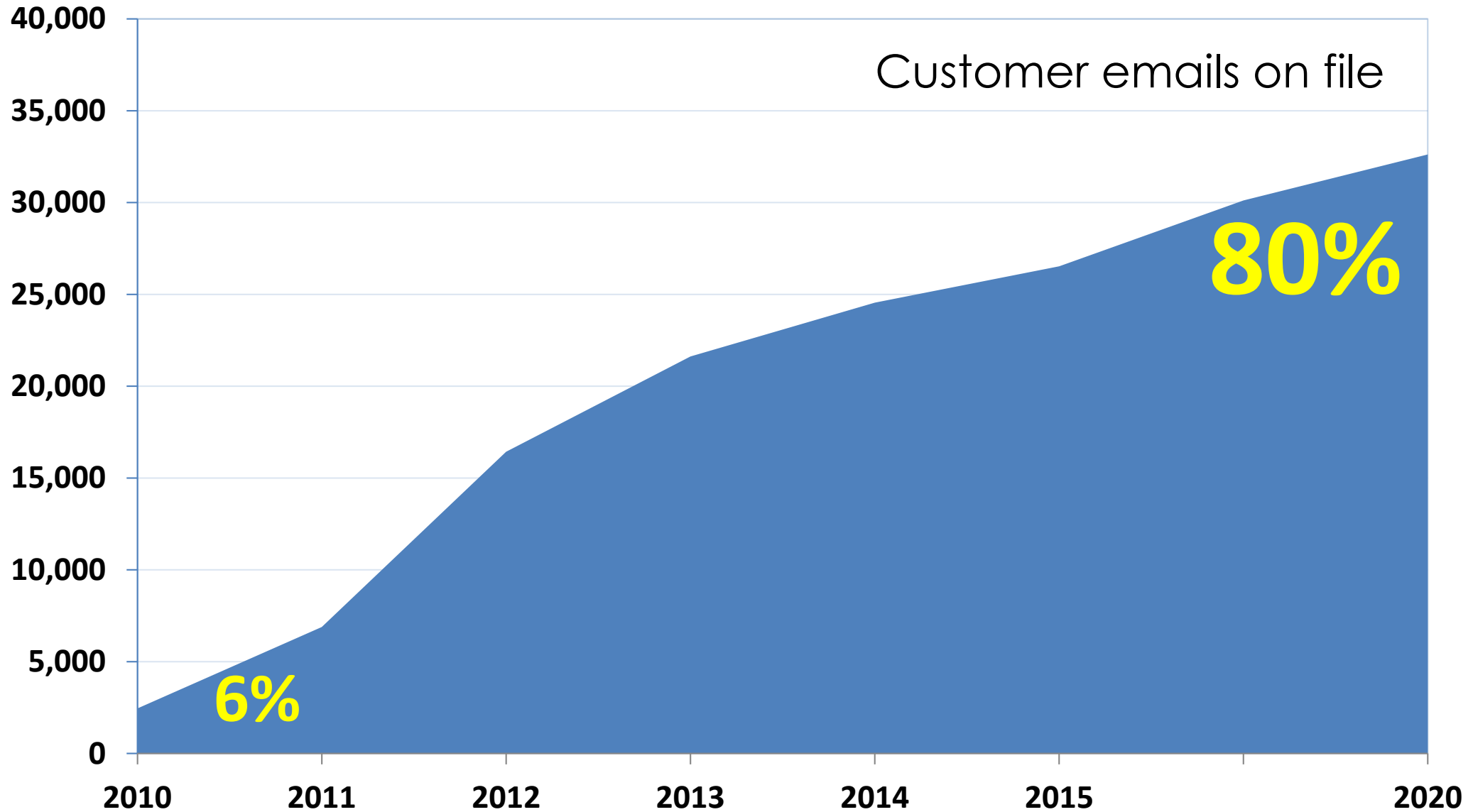
Hydroelectric

Recreation

Getting the Word Out

- Customer Newsletter
- Website/eNotification
- Facebook pages and groups
- Regional Newspaper
- Local Groups: Chambers of Commerce

Contacting our Customers



Find Your Audience

Facebook Groups offer access to large communities of people.

Message
Magnification



The image shows three Facebook group listings stacked vertically. Each listing includes a circular profile picture, the group name, the word 'Group', the number of members, and a 'Joined' button with a checkmark.

- El Dorado County Watch**
Group
39,366 members
✓ Joined
- El Dorado County Incident Information Post**
Group
21,505 members
✓ Joined
- El Dorado County Emergency & Information Page**
Group
15,549 members
✓ Joined

Successful Messaging

Each “conversation” is a public meeting. **Be available.**



Roel Olivares Jr. Has EID considered Suspending Rate Increases or Lowering Rates until the end of this National Crisis?

BTW... I really appreciate that you guys are responding so fast.. 🤓👍👍

Like · Reply · Message · 1w

Customer Response

Share your gratitude, it fosters empathy in your audience.



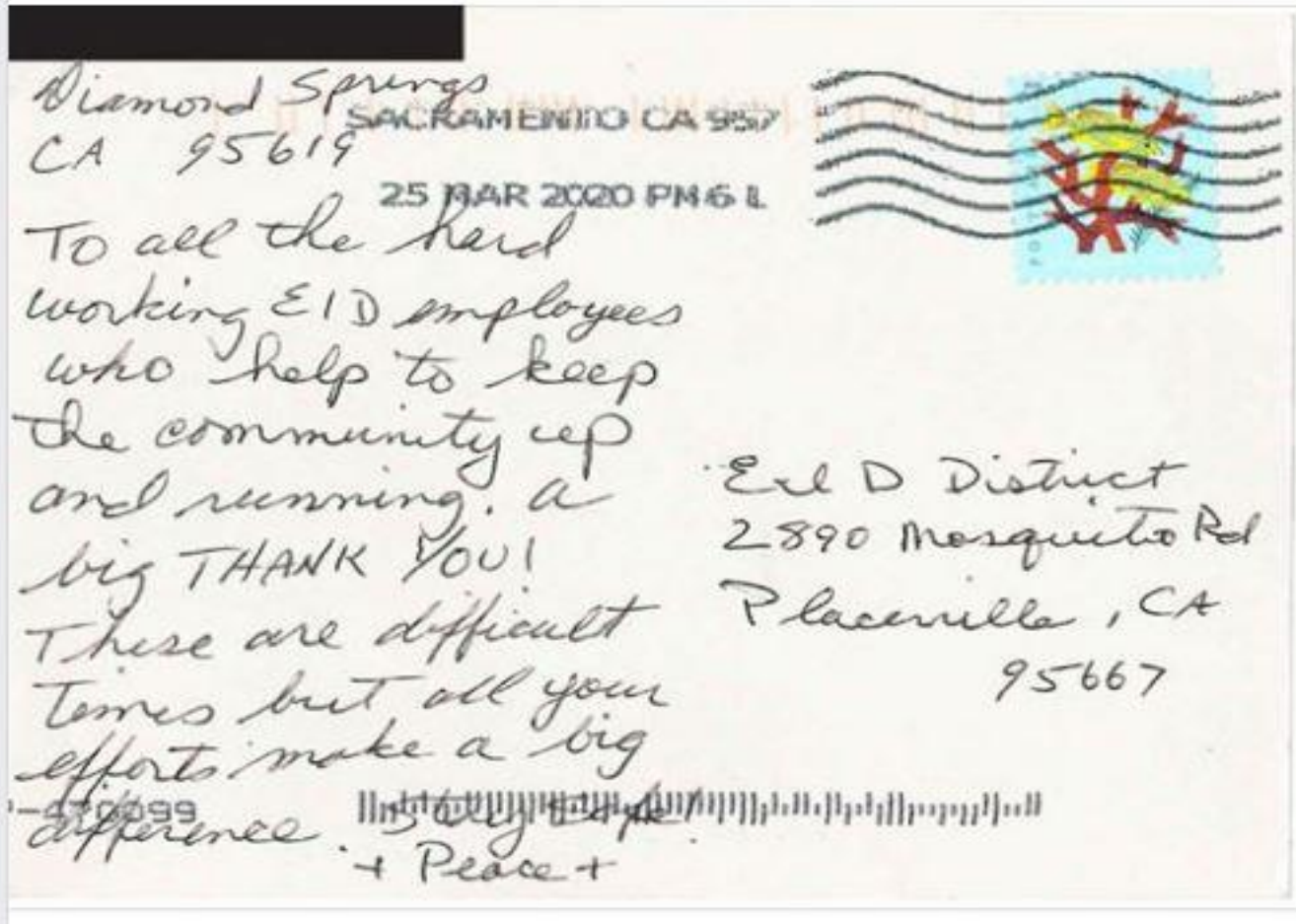
El Dorado Irrigation District

Published by Jesse Saich [?] · March 30 at 11:24 AM · 🌐

We are so grateful to receive messages like this.

We know this is a time of increased anxiety. On behalf of the women and men who are working hard to maintain the services our community relies on 24/7, thank you for your patience and understanding.

#SafeWater #KeepingOurCommunitySafe



“ “ A big thank you to all of you at EID. It is sad you need to post assurances that our drinking water is safe from the virus. Given all EID does every single day to ensure our drinking water is safe (and good tasting) I want you to know we appreciate all of your efforts very much.

Panelist Discussion



Ryder Smith

President

Tripepi Smith and Associates



David Liebler

Director of Public Affairs &
Member Services

California State Association
of Counties



Jesse Saich

Communications and Media
Relations Manager
El Dorado Irrigation District

Questions & Answers



Stay Connected & Stay Informed



@InstituteForLocalGovt



@instlocgov



Sign up for our e-Newsletter
www.ca-ilg.org/stayinformed

Thank You!

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