



City of Arts & Innovation

Riverside Public Utilities - Power Pole Information Sheet

Q: How many utility poles does Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) oversee?

A: More than 22,000 poles. About 17,000 of these utility poles are jointly-owned by RPU and other communications and/or utility companies who are members of the Southern California Joint Pole Committee (SCJPC), which was established in 1906 out of the need to limit the number of utility poles in the field and create a uniform procedure for recording pole ownerships.

Q: How does joint ownership of power poles work?

A: Each SCJPC member has a vote and shares in the expenses of the committee according to their joint pole interests. Prior to any work, owners and lessees must agree on the scope and cost of the work, and agree to move services to the new utility poles when work is complete.

The costs of the work performed are distributed between the pole owners at a predetermined amount. However, in some cases costs can exceed the amount agreed upon and additional compensation may be requested from the cost causer.

Q: Is there any reason why a utility would keep their equipment on a utility pole after RPU has relinquished their ownership of it and moved its power lines?

A: Yes. One reason could be that the path of the new utility poles is not the best path for their equipment and/or service commitments. This could also be a reason why RPU might have to change the location of utility poles, e.g. due to roadway or building construction. Another, would be because the cost to move their equipment or lines is much higher than the reimbursement amount would be.

Q: Does the City ever allow these outside utilities to move their equipment to the new poles?

A: Yes. It is allowable and common. Prior to work on jointly-owned poles, all applicable parties must be notified of any work using a Joint Pole Authorization (JPA) form where they agree to the scope of work that needs to be done. Upon completion of a project, parties are again notified and expected to move their utilities over to their new destinations.

Q: When it's said that the City has no interest in a utility pole, did they at one time and have abandoned their interest? Is this typical when the City no longer needs a pole, the outside utilities remain on that pole?

A: Yes. In cases where RPU would need to move electric services to a new pole or poles along a new transmission path, they would notify all who are on the poles about any changes and get their agreements via a Joint Pole Authorization (JPA) form to move their services when the utility's work was completed.

Upon relocating its facilities, RPU will cut off the top of the pole one foot above the next highest owner's level and inform the remaining joint owners that they can move their services. The remaining owners are then required, as SCJPC members who approved the work and agreed to move their equipment when RPU was finished, are then required to remove the remainder of the old pole when transfers are completed.

Q: When AT&T placed their equipment on an old pole was it via a use agreement with the City? If so, to transfer it to the new pole would the agreement need to be renegotiated in order to move the equipment?

A: Yes, through a use agreement. No. AT&T is already a joint owner of the new pole, all they would have to do is transfer their facilities.

Q: How would the customer have a "say-so" in negotiating with them if the pole is in the public right of way?

A: Single-party owned and jointly-owned utility poles can be both in the right of way and privately owned properties. Customers concerned with new or old poles can call 311 or email RPUJPAdesk@riversideca.gov

Q: How can I request a pole be removed if it is blocking the view of my residence/business?

A: You can request a pole to be relocated by calling 311 or emailing RPU Energy Delivery at RPUJPAdesk@riversideca.gov and RPU will research and provide all information to the requestor.