Tapping into the power of behavioral science

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What is behavioural science?

A multidisciplinary field that draws from psychology, sociology, public health, and economics to explain complex mechanisms that shape human behaviour.

Social norms constitute a social standard from which people typically do not want to deviate, often unconsciously.

How does it work?

Evidence shows that the need to be within a societal norm is more motivating than many economic incentives

Individual exhibits target behavior

e.g. low water use

Message encouraging normalized behavior moves individual back toward the "crowd."

e.g. "Most people use more water than you."

An injunctive norm is used to counteract this effect

e.g. "low water use is admirable"

How do we encourage change?

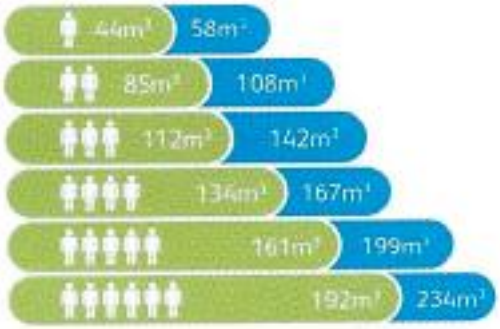
Step 1: Engage

More questions than answers

Where am I?
Compared to whom?
How did I do?
Is it good or not?
Why is it high?
Do I have a leak?

How did this compare
to previous years?
Am I doing better?
Have my changes
Made a difference?

Why did my bill go
up so much?
What has changed?
What can I do to save?



How do you compare?

You currently use around 1,742m³ (cubic metres) of water a year. Use this table to see how your water use compares with the average household. Using less will help you reduce your water and energy bills, while helping protect future supplies.
For tips visit

Volume used		
	Type of reading	Reading
New reading on 27 October 2016	Actual	2531
Previous reading on 06 May 2016	Actual	1701
Total volume used		**830m³**

Account activity

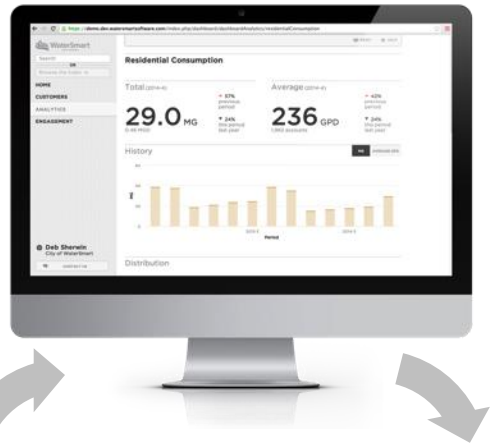
Amount due at last bill (dated 09 May 2016)	
Payments made since last bill – thank you	
Total new charges for this period	
Total amount due	

Use the Data!

UTILITY DATA
Meters, Programs & Incentives

EXTERNAL DATA
Surveys, Property, Climate

ANALYZE
Utility Dashboard

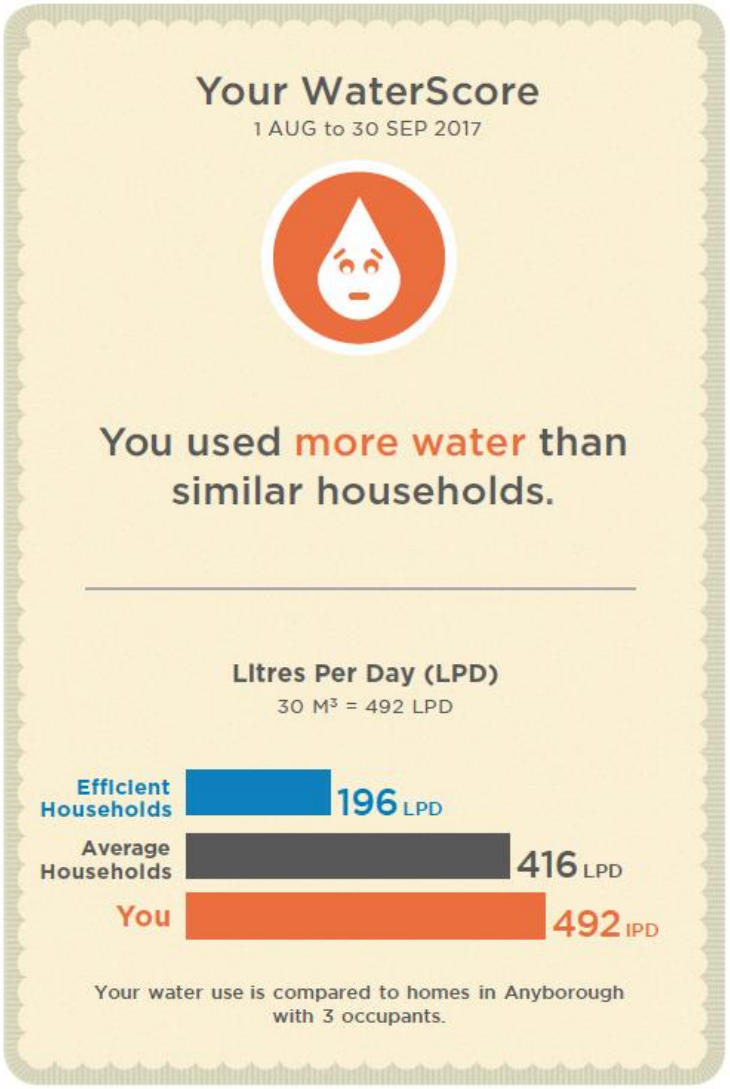


MEASURE
Report results, outcomes, and trends

ENGAGE
Customer Portal, Outbound Comm.

Social norm comparison

Injunctive
norms convey
what is,
or is not,
socially accepted



Countering the Boomerang Effect

Affirmative messages can keep already-compliant individuals focused on the target behavior.

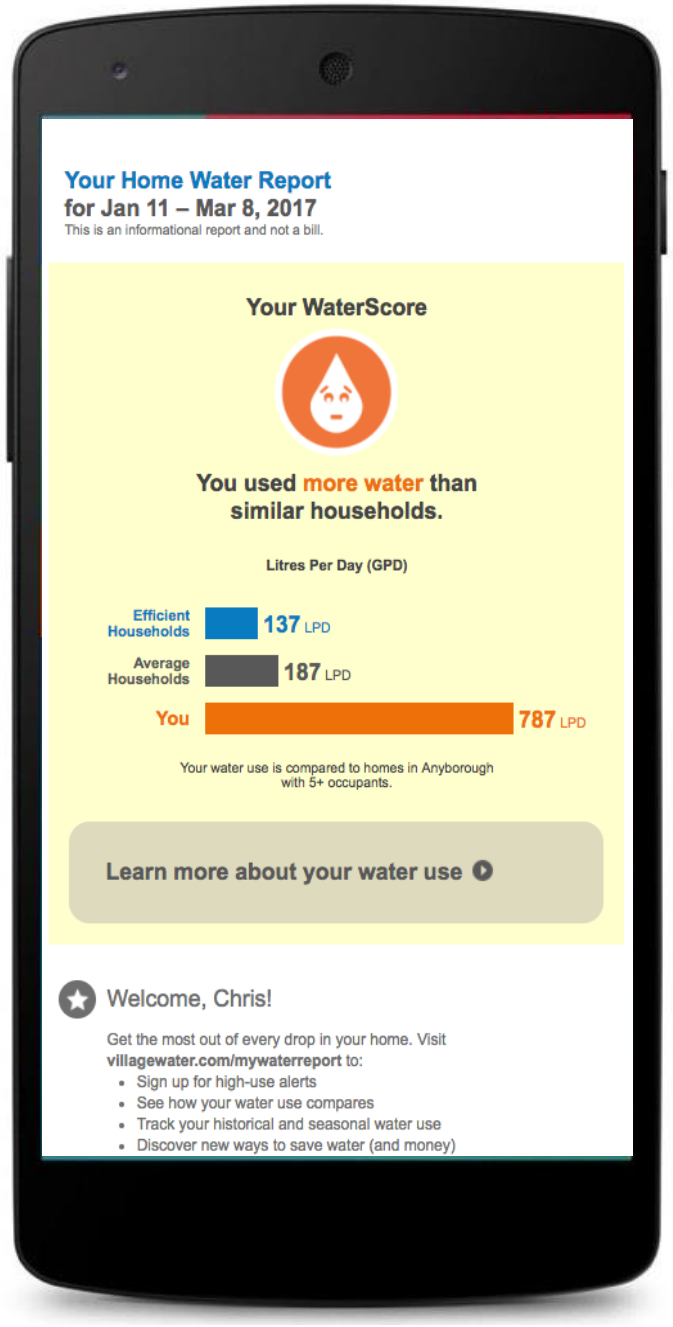
Form relevant reference groups

Compare individuals to others that are as similar as possible

Step 2: Make it easy

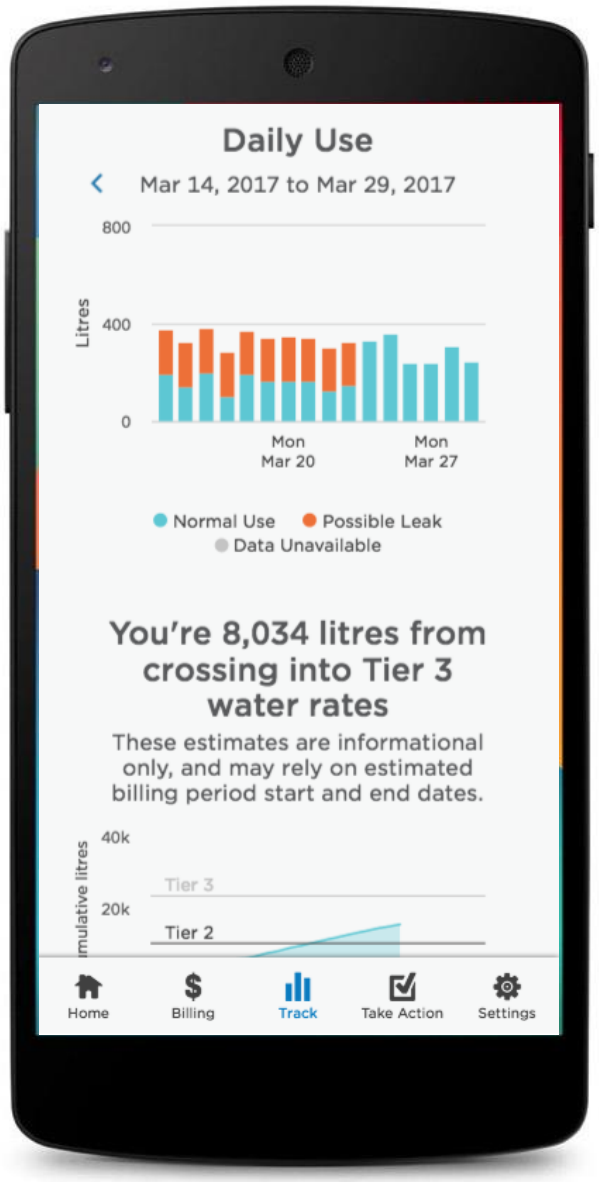
Push Water Report

- Injunctive norms
- Empathetic Gauge
- Liters Per Day



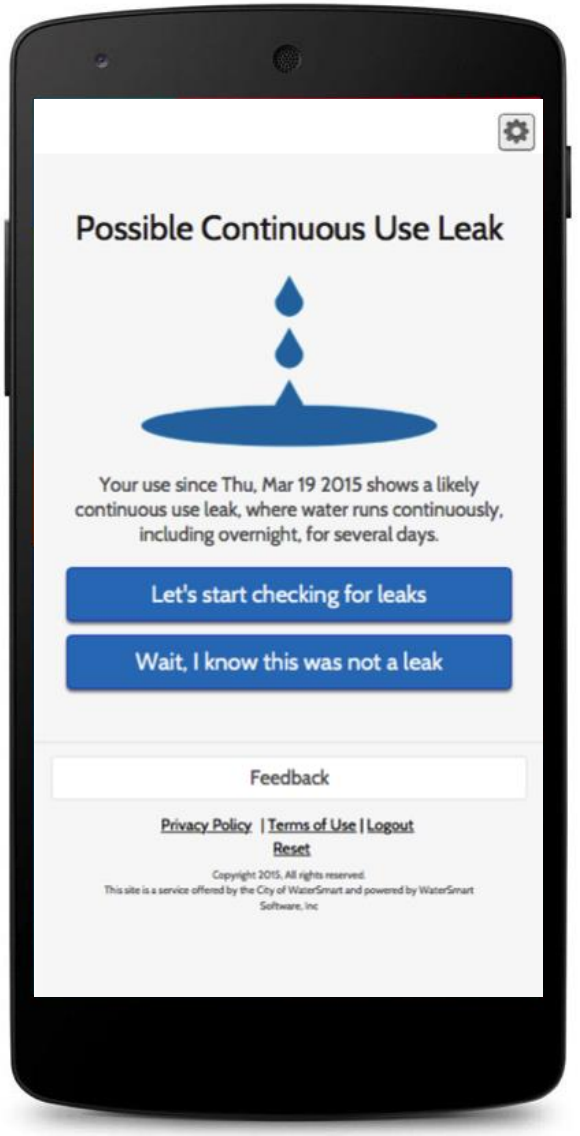
More frequent consumption data

- Interval consumption data
- Animated bar chart
- Leak alerting



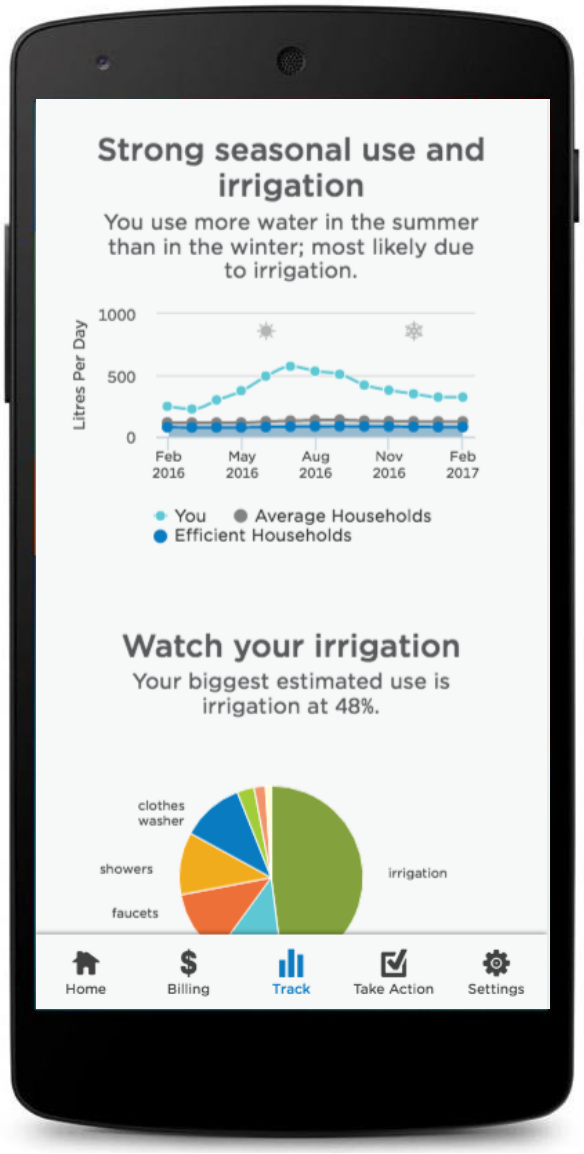
Leak identification & solutions

- Easy-to-understand leak identification process
- Plain language explanation of why a leak is suspected
- Leak detection check list and interactive video content
- Leak alert dismissal button
- Learning enabled



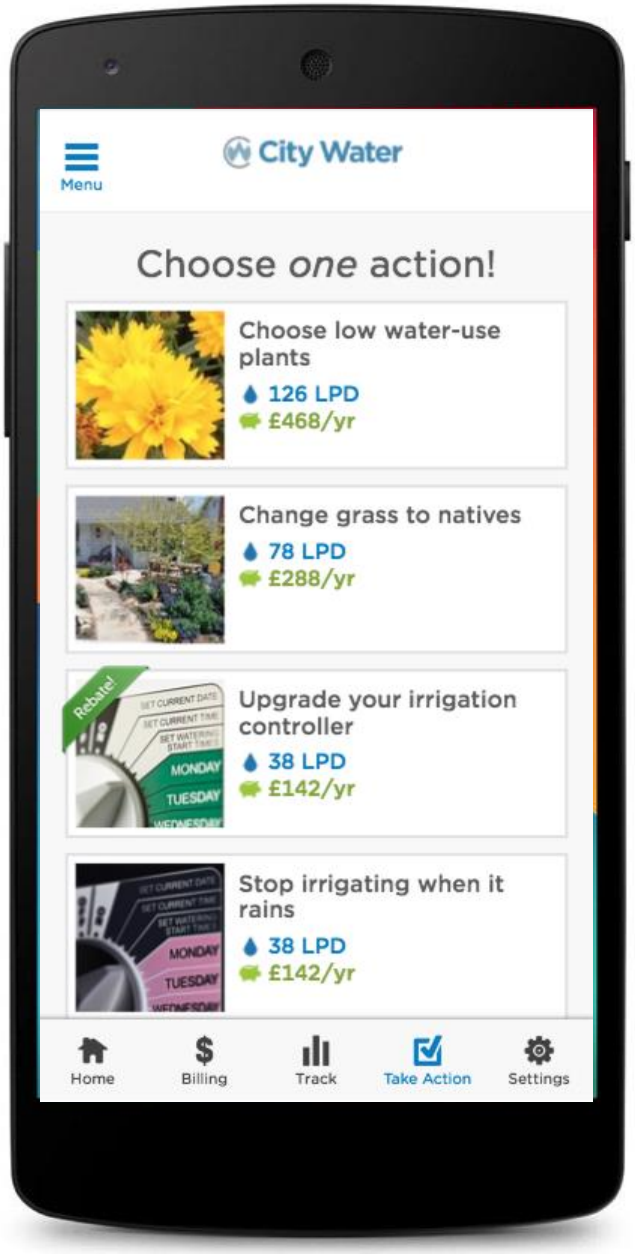
Seasonal & disaggregated usage

- Seasonal consumption graph
- Disaggregation pie chart
- Highlights largest use
- Interactive pie chart
- Animation on touch



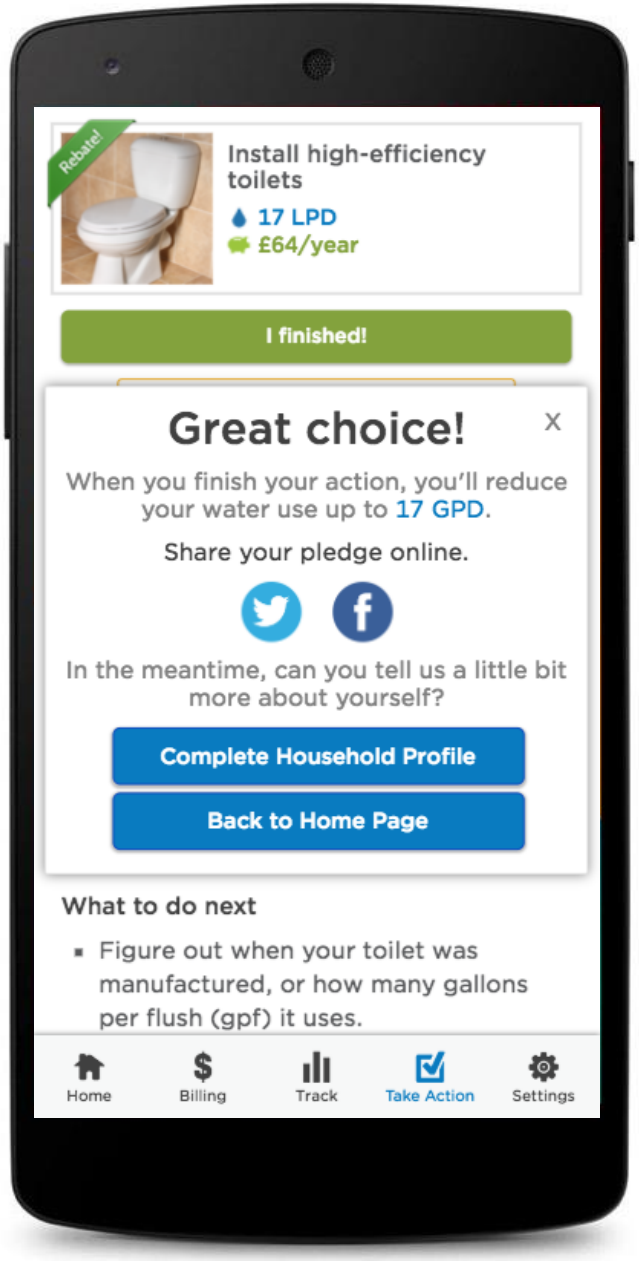
Saving actions

- Household specific water saving recommendations
- Personalized & Targeted
- LPD and £/year estimates
- Progress status indicator
- Special offer flags



Social pledges

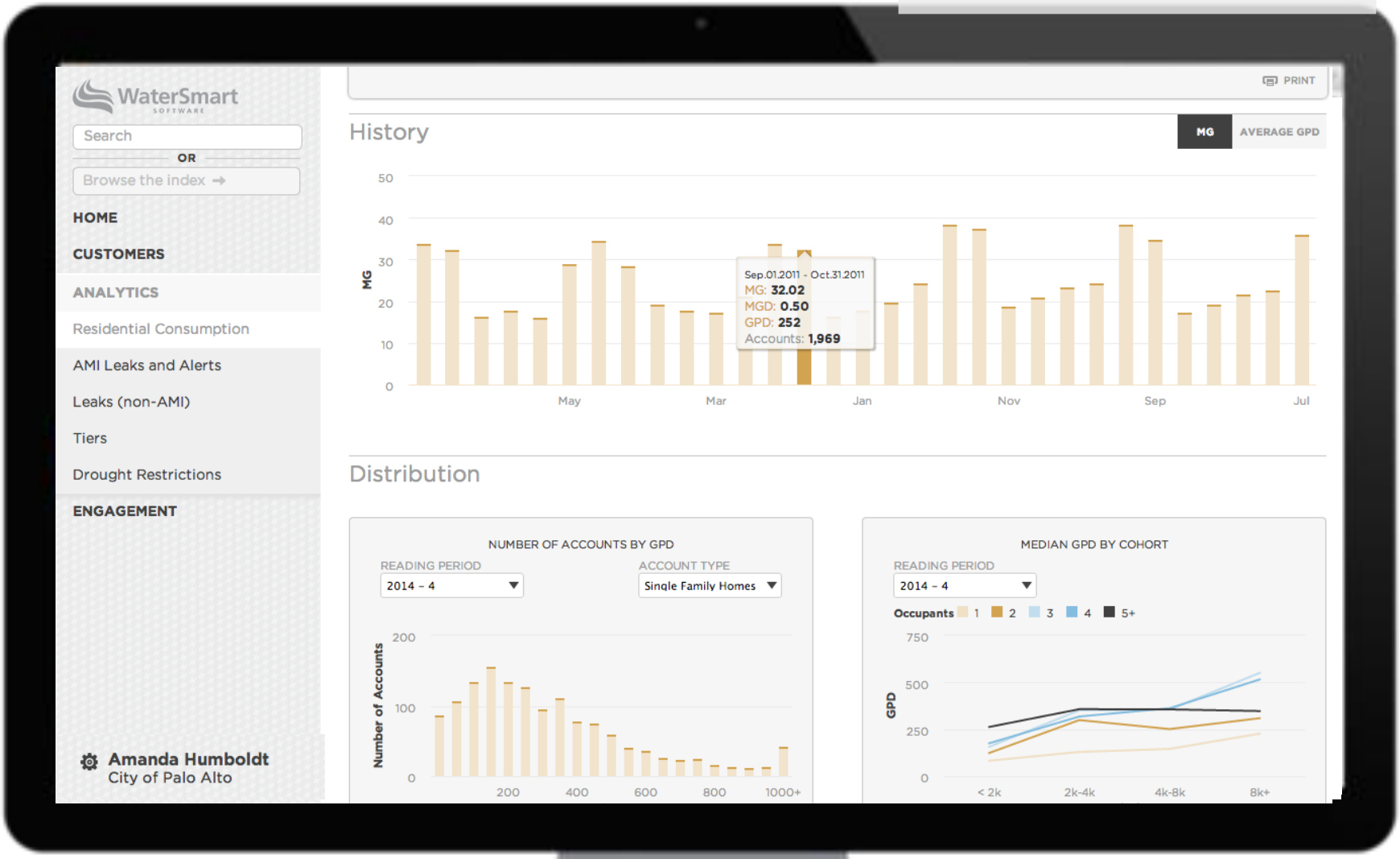
- One-click posting of pledge to Twitter and Facebook
- Public commitment increases likelihood of completing action
- Social pledge reinforces benefits among local community



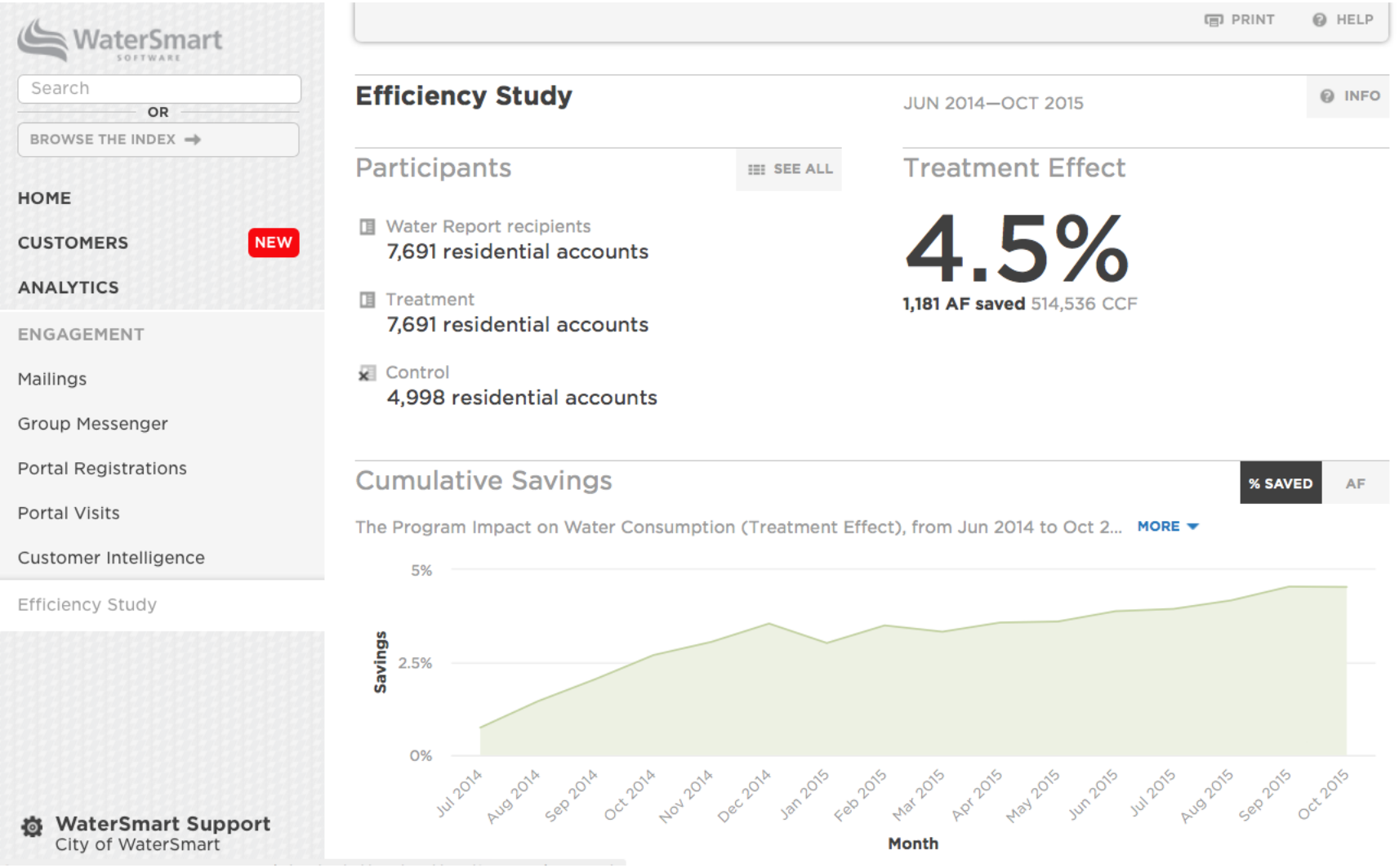
Step 3: Create evidence

Analysis

Utility Dashboard
- Improve customer support
- Measure program effectiveness
- Promote conservation
- Streamline reporting

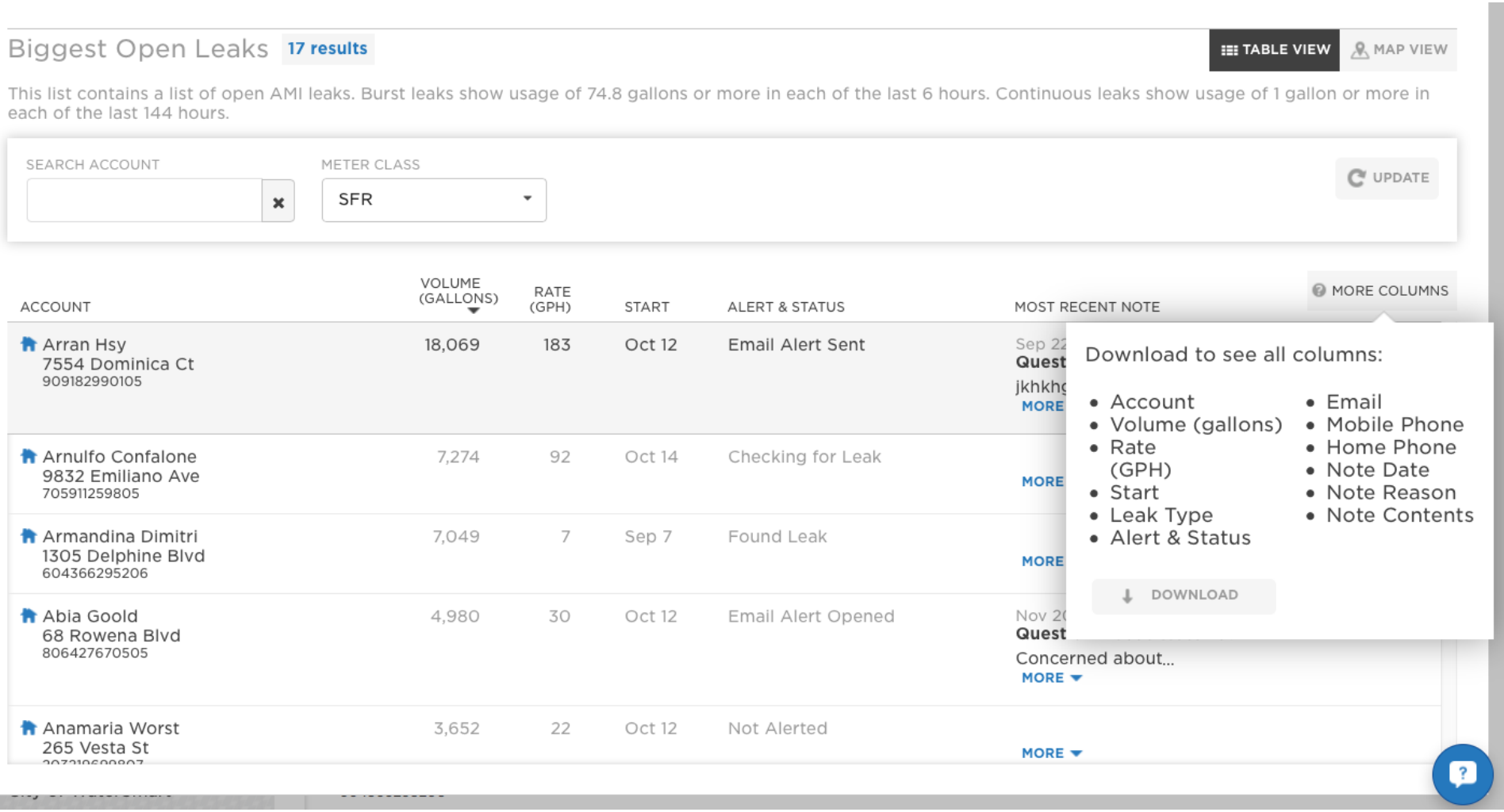


Efficiency Results

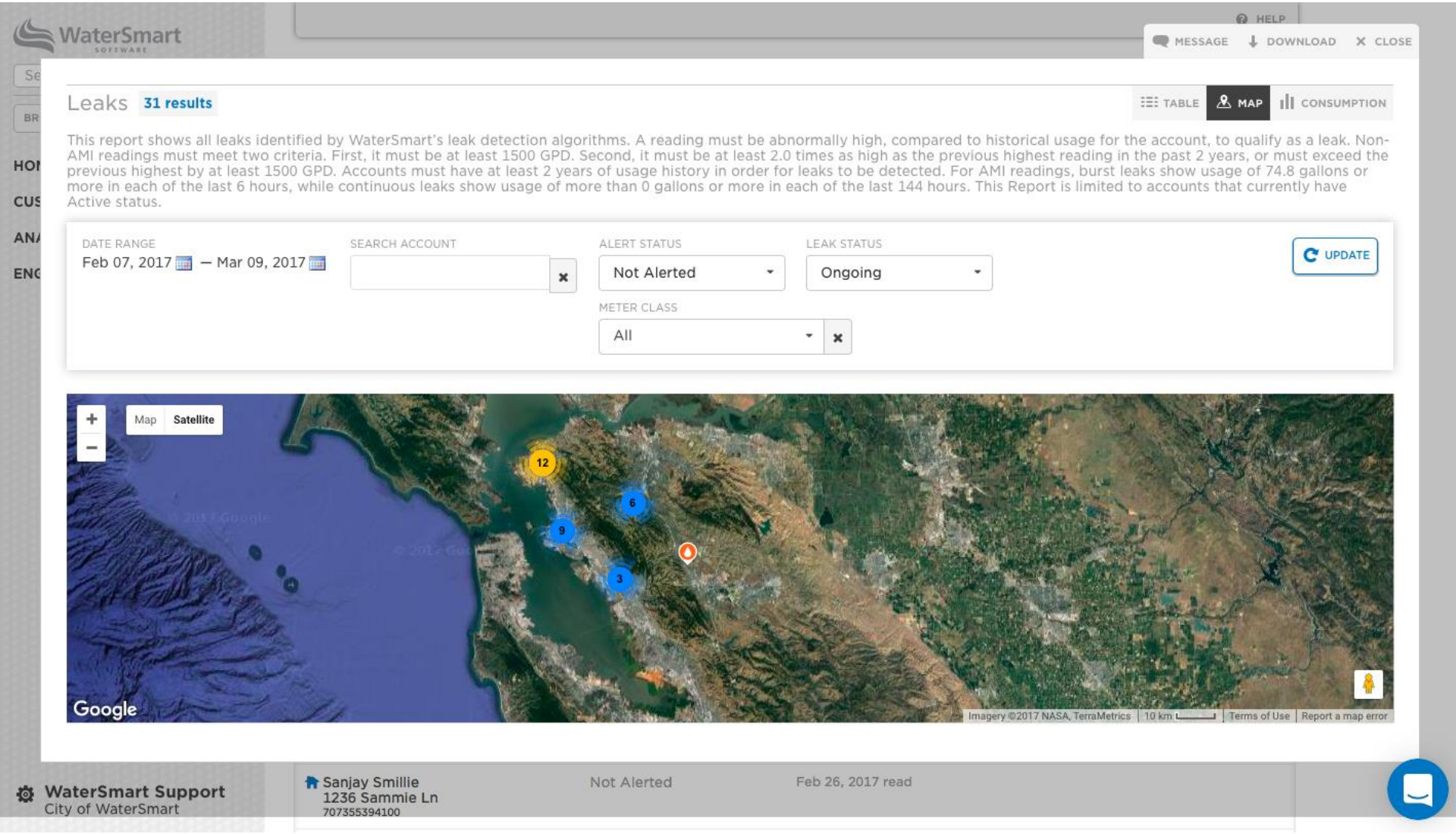


Leak Alerts and Resolution

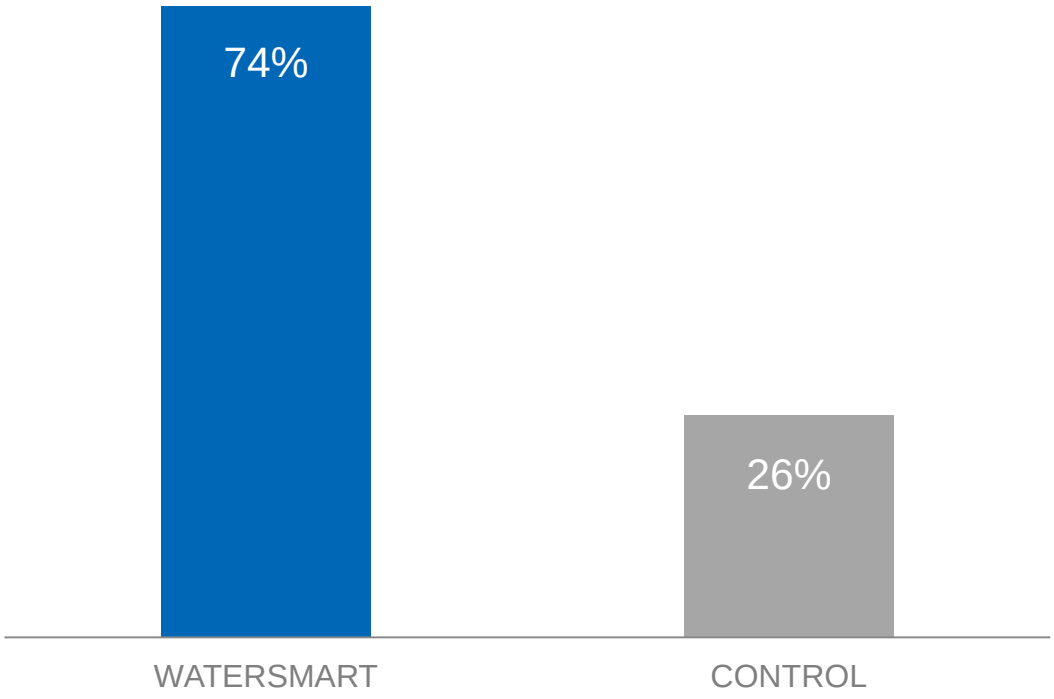
Biggest Open Leaks



Leaks Located on Map



OUTCOME 1
Positive engagement

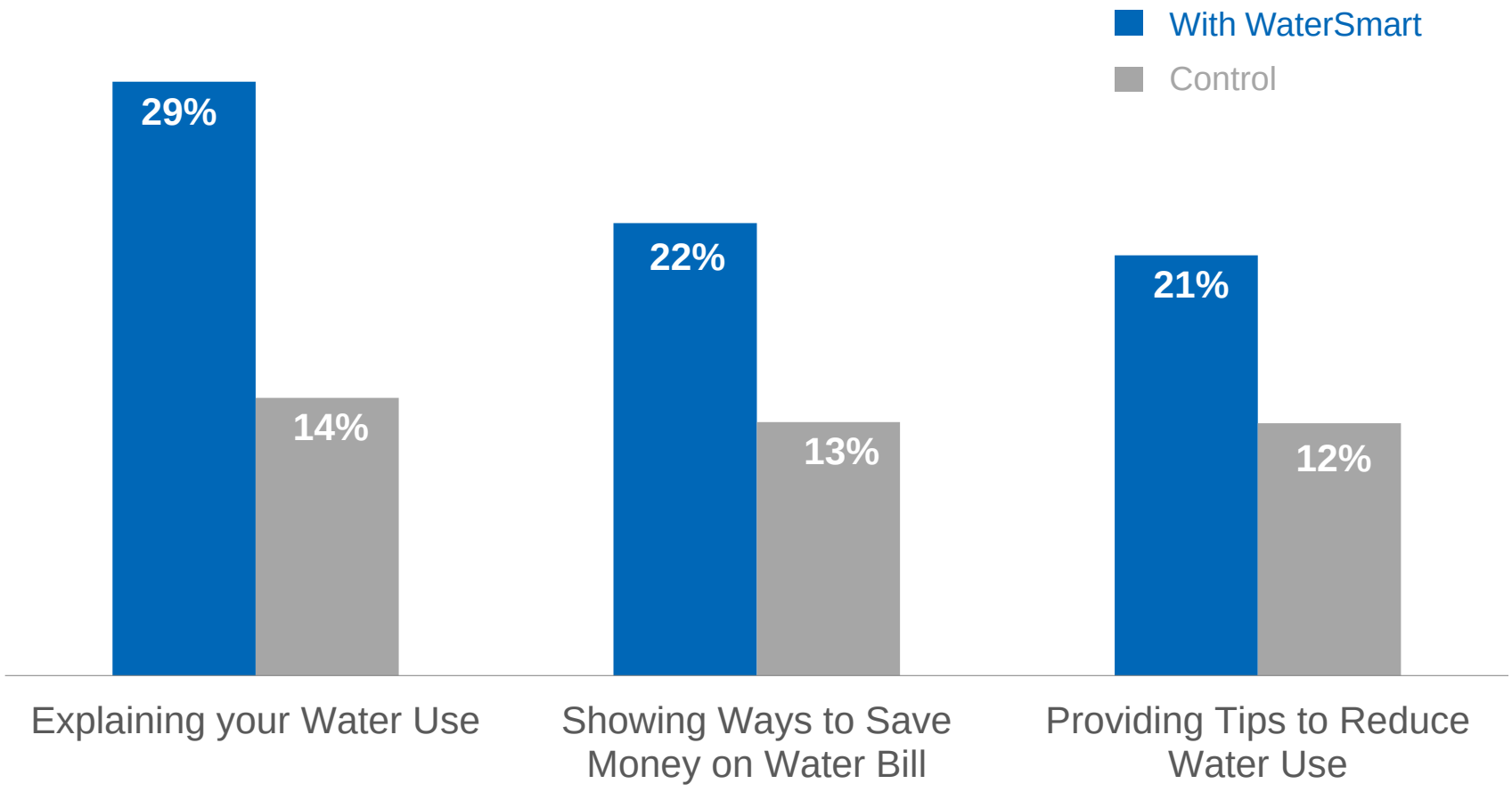


Requested Onsite Water Consultation

3x
CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Independent Evaluation by California Water Foundation, December 2013

OUTCOME 2
Satisfied customers



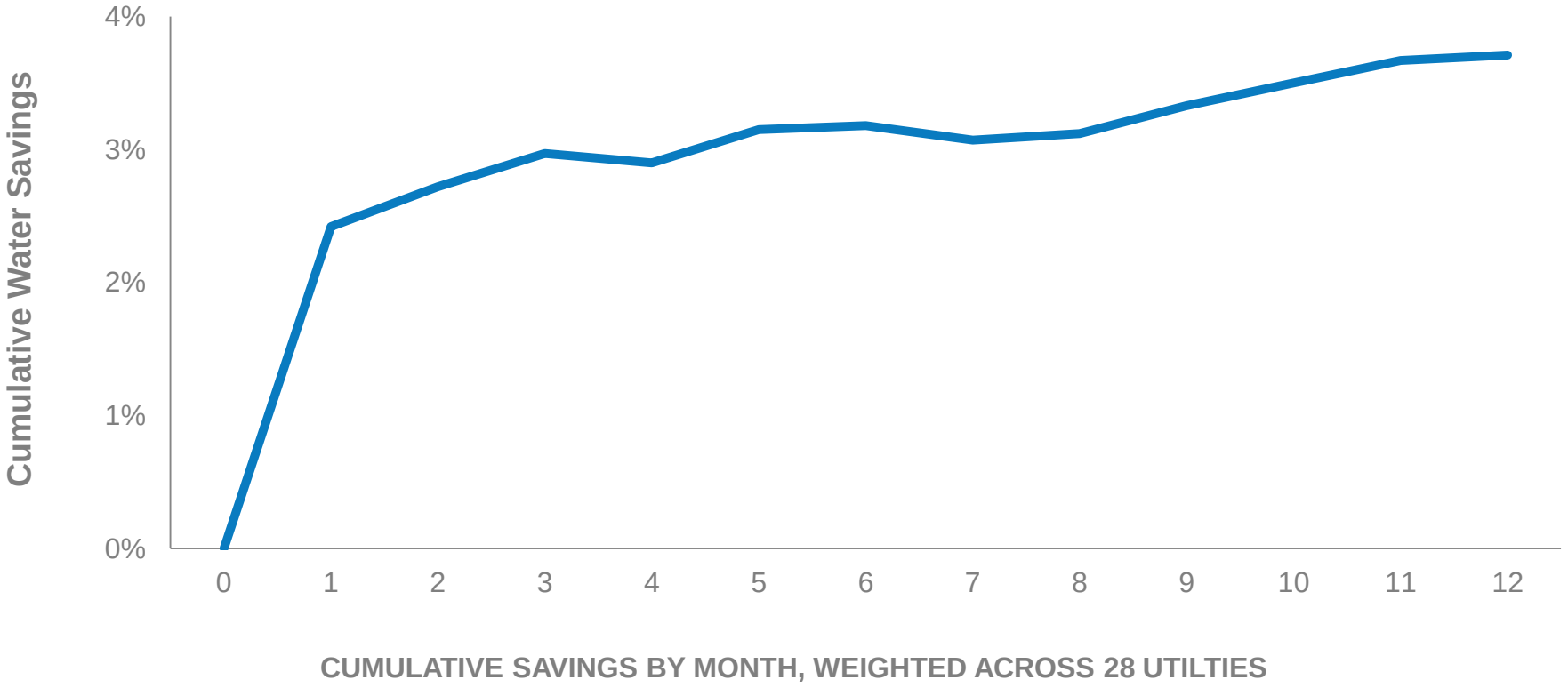
% CUSTOMERS WHO RATED THE UTILITY "EXCELLENT"

OUTCOME 3

Increase water-use efficiency

2–5%

PROVEN SAVINGS



CUMULATIVE SAVINGS BY MONTH, WEIGHTED ACROSS 28 UTILTIES

Step 1: Engage customers

Step 2: Make it easy

Step 3: Create evidence

For more, download the white paper at:

Watersmart.com/media/tapping-behavioral-science/

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