

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com



Mining GIS

For Program Planning, Evaluation, and Justification

Cobb County Water System

- 345 Sq miles
- Northwest of Atlanta
- Serves 173,000 accounts
- 650,000 citizens
- 90% SFR
- 10% Non-Residential
- AADD 55 MGD
- Resource Challenges
- Conservation mandates



Water Efficiency and Demand

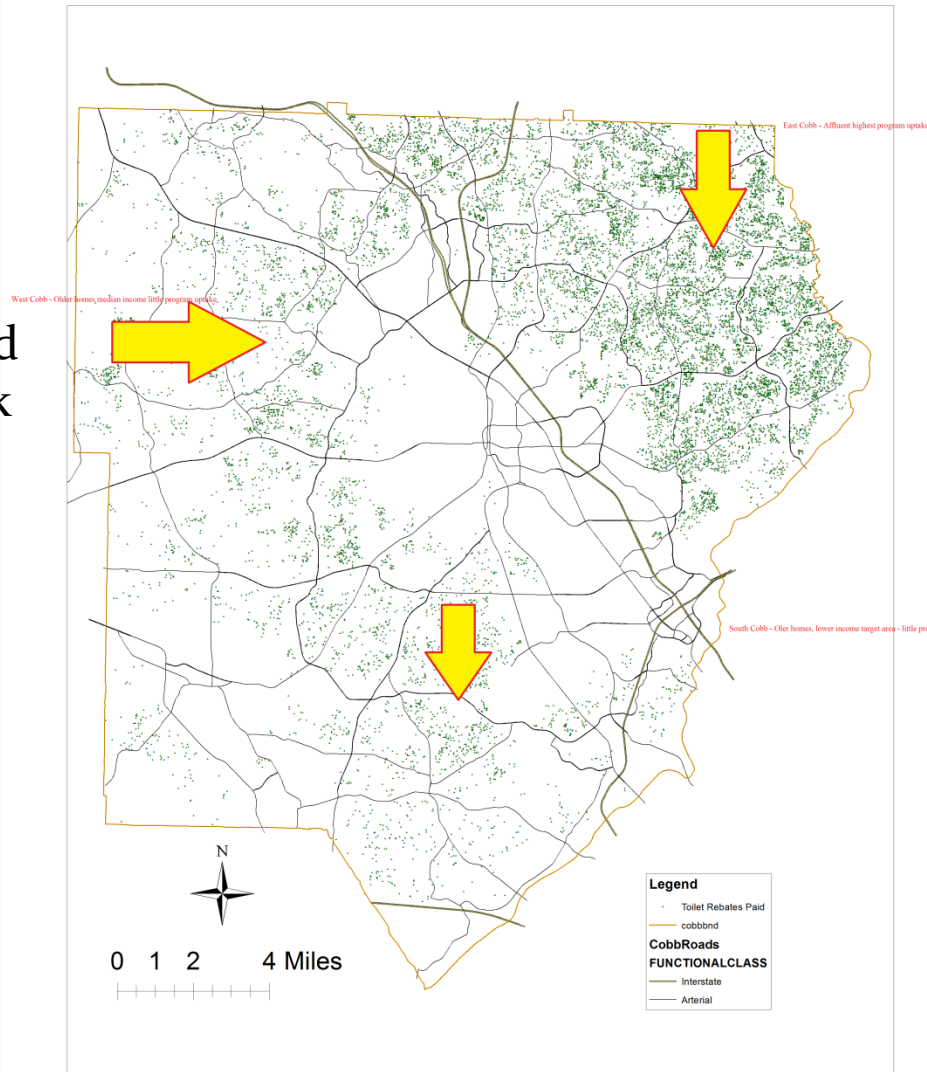


The Role in the Utility

- Revenue suck
- Brings no value
- Contrary to our mission
- Expensive
- Touchy feely program
- Cannot be used to address our real challenges
- Regulatory check box
- Unreliable savings

Rebates Paid

West Cobb –
Median
Income mixed
housing stock
age – Low
Uptake



East Cobb –
Affluent, Homes
built in '80s – High
Uptake

South Cobb –
Lower Income,
Older homes built
in 60s – Low
Uptake

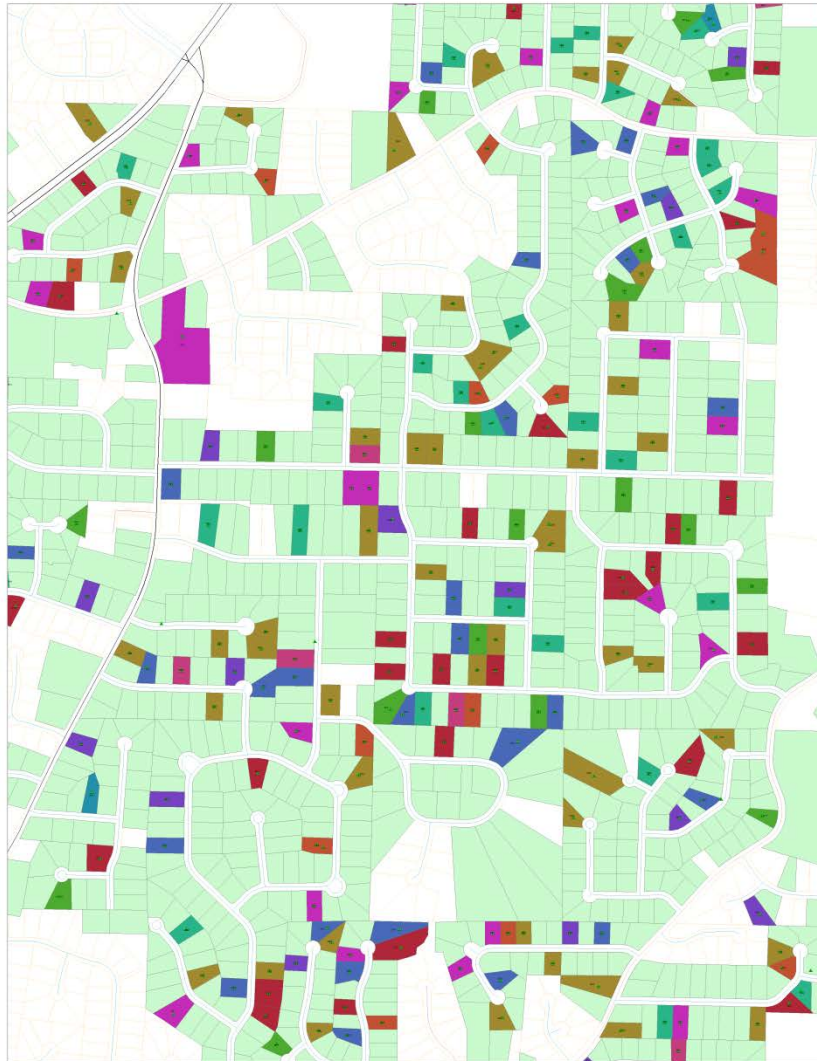
Why the Difference?

Rebates Paid



Is it word of mouth? Isolated a neighborhood to evaluate participation

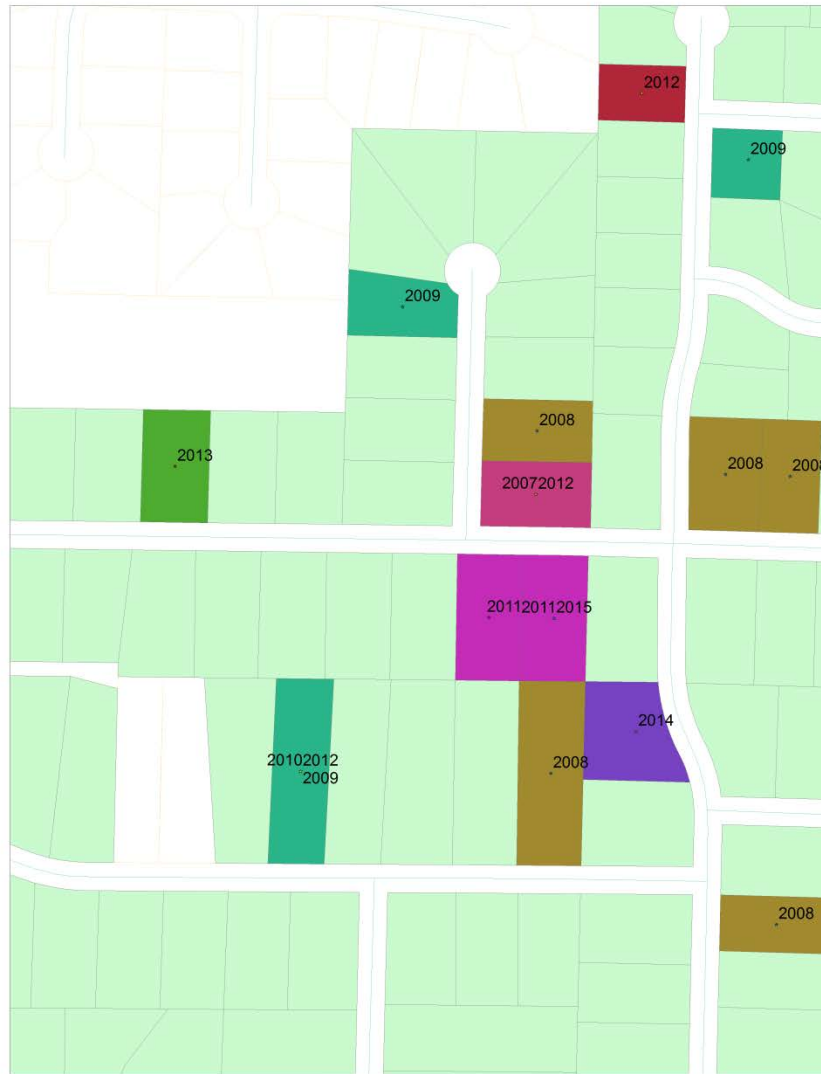
Rebates Paid by Year



If neighbors are
telling neighbors it
takes years to move
to action.

Offer 3 rebates
per property
looking for
patterns in
multi-rebate
households

Multi-Rebates Multiple Years



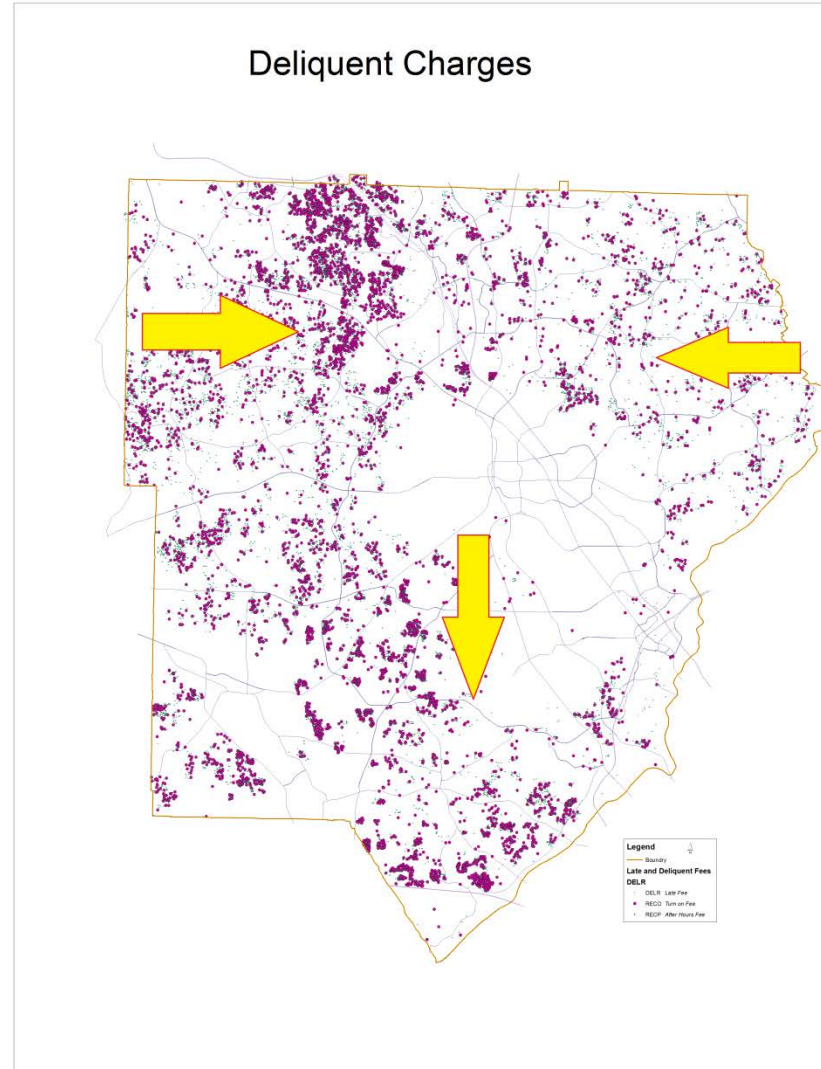
What Did We Learn?

- Need to hear the message multiple times before action
- Customers with disposable income most likely to act
- Have to find an avenue to address other geographic regions
- There is not an easily discernible pattern in high uptake neighborhoods

What are We doing?

- Home Depot Partnership
 - Targeted monthly outreach events at Home Depots in South Cobb and West Cobb
 - Tracking number of rebates received in the month following an event
- Targeted mailings
 - Rebate flyers mailed
 - Tracking applications from these mailings
- Targeting civic outreach in areas of low participation

High number
of disconnects
– low program
participation



Low number of
disconnects –
high
participation
rate

Lower than
anticipated
disconnects - ?

Rebates and Delinquency



Looked at a targeted neighborhood – delinquency and disconnects are prevalent in the neighborhood except among participants of the rebate program

Show Me the Money

- Rebates and conservation incentives role in delinquency
 - Appears to lower tendency to be delinquent
 - Greatly reduces service disconnects
- Why?
 - Also looked at senior discount – similar effect
 - Creates more of a connection
 - Appears that the utility cares about them
 - Will prioritize our bill because we are perceived as helping them

Next Considerations

- Looking at impact of other conservation initiatives
 - Retrofit kits – impacts on delinquency and participation
 - Targeting education to specific demographics
- Other potential benefits of programs
 - Impact of retrofits on sewer overflows
 - Targeted participation work like an affordability program

Demand Projections the next Frontier

- Also have the detailed demographics
- Would like to create a user profile for demographic groups to more accurately reflect current and future demand
- Also use it to assess more accurately likelihood of program participation among demographic groups
- Use GIS and demographics to more accurately assess the source and influences of peak usage.

Thank You and Questions

Co-Authors

Kathy Nguyen

Senior Project Manager , Cobb Water

770-419-6244

Kathy.nguyen@cobbcounty.org

Lisa Gonzalez

Project Manager

(770) 419-6385

Lisa.gonzalez@cobbcounty.org