

# Director's Report

December 17, 2025



Water & Sewerage  
Department



## Contents\*

### Metrics by Function:

• Director's Message	3
• Field Services	4
• Meter Operations	10
• Investigations	14
• Legal Services	16
• Public Affairs	18
• Customer Service	21
• Finance	23
• Human Resources	26





# Director Gary Brown's Message to the Board

## Ten years of transformation under the Duggan Administration

The dedicated and forward-thinking team at the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department (DWSD) has been driving the transformation of this 180-year-old utility into a modern, solutions-focused organization. Since our bifurcation in January 2016 with the Great Lakes Water Authority, we have positioned DWSD as “an anchor institution, solving problems in our community.”

Historically, DWSD operated the water and sewer systems for Detroit and 126 communities. Since January 1, 2016, we were given the opportunity to focus exclusively on Detroiters, maintaining and improving Detroit's local water and sewer infrastructure which serves more than 100 neighborhoods across 139 square miles.

Under our leadership team, DWSD strengthened its people, processes and infrastructure, connected with both the community and funders, and launched a series of innovative programs. These include a robust Lead Service Line Replacement Program, the Stormwater Management Group, the Lifeline Plan and EasyPay Plan, and a data-driven Capital Improvement Program, among other initiatives that enhance service and reliability.

I am most grateful for the commitment of DWSD employees—56% of whom are Detroit residents—and the many stakeholders and partners who have helped build trust, improve services, and tackle challenges with solutions. And, this could not have been accomplished without the leadership and support of Mayor Mike Duggan, the Board of Water Commissioners and the Detroit City Council. While much work remains, let's celebrate the 10 years of transforming one of the largest water utilities in America!

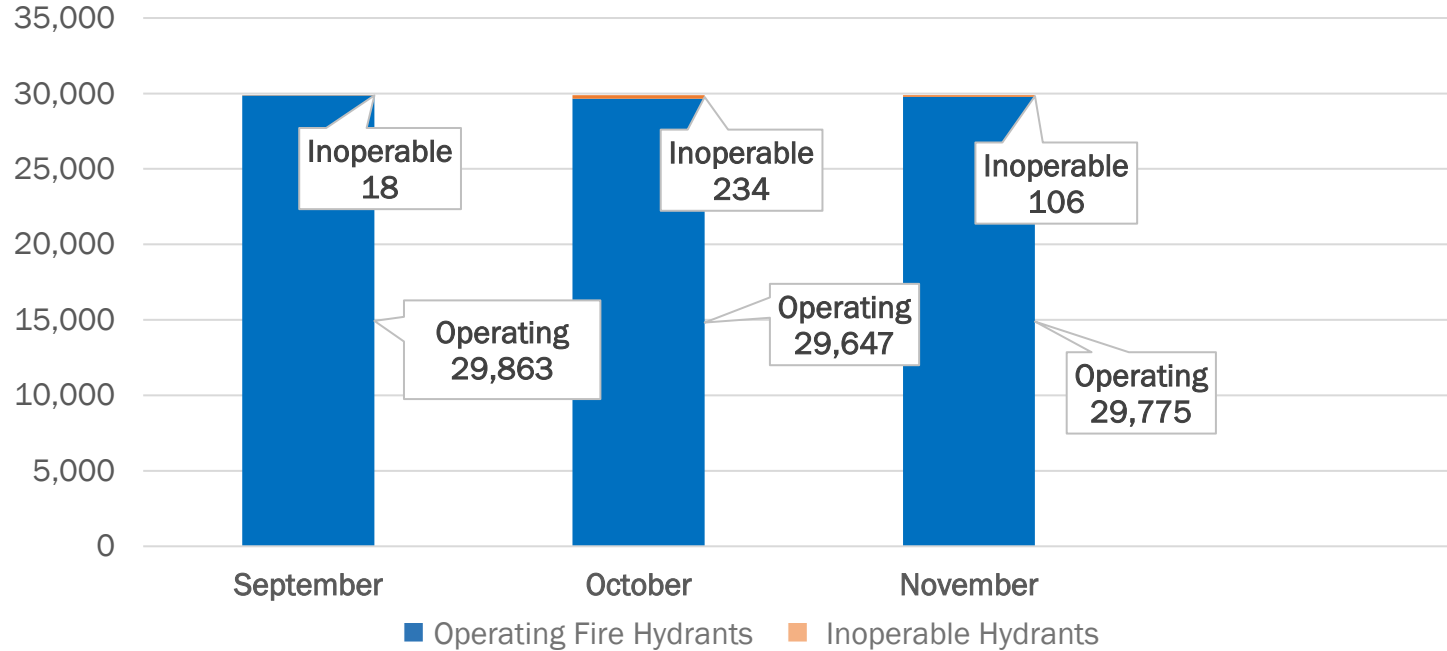


# Field Services

Sam Smalley, Deputy Director



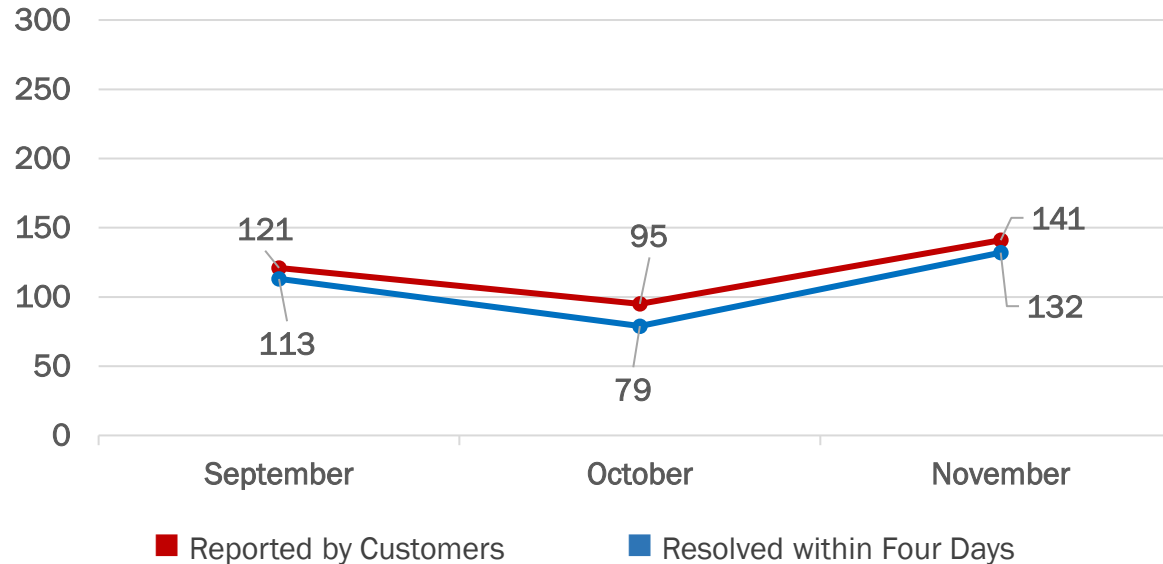
# Field Services: Fire Hydrant Maintenance



- The Detroit Fire Department's annual hydrant inspections started in October.
- DWSD teams are keeping the number of inoperable hydrants low – below 1% outage.

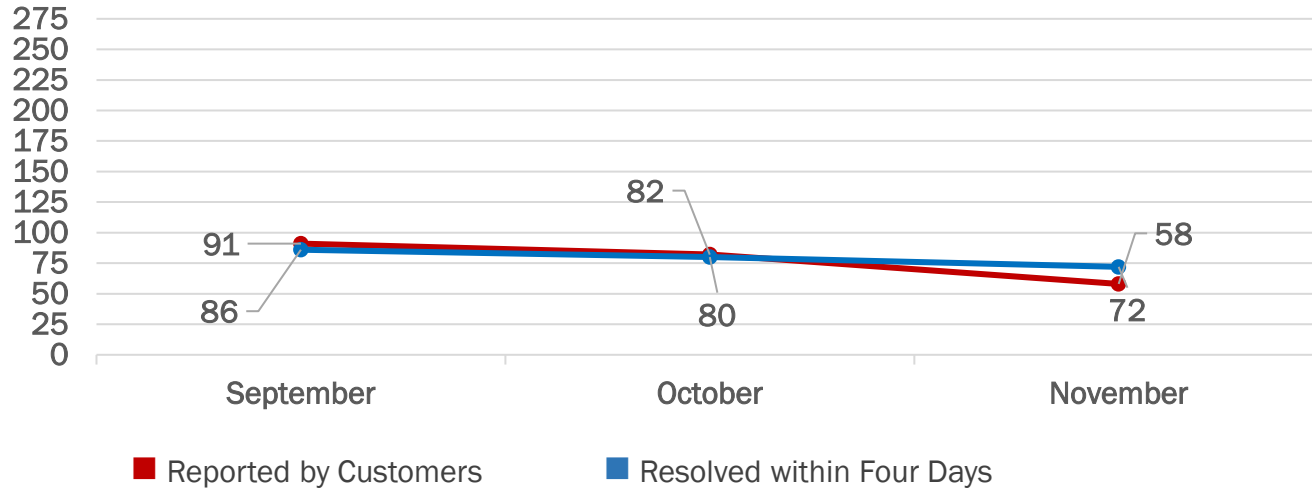


# Field Services: Running Water



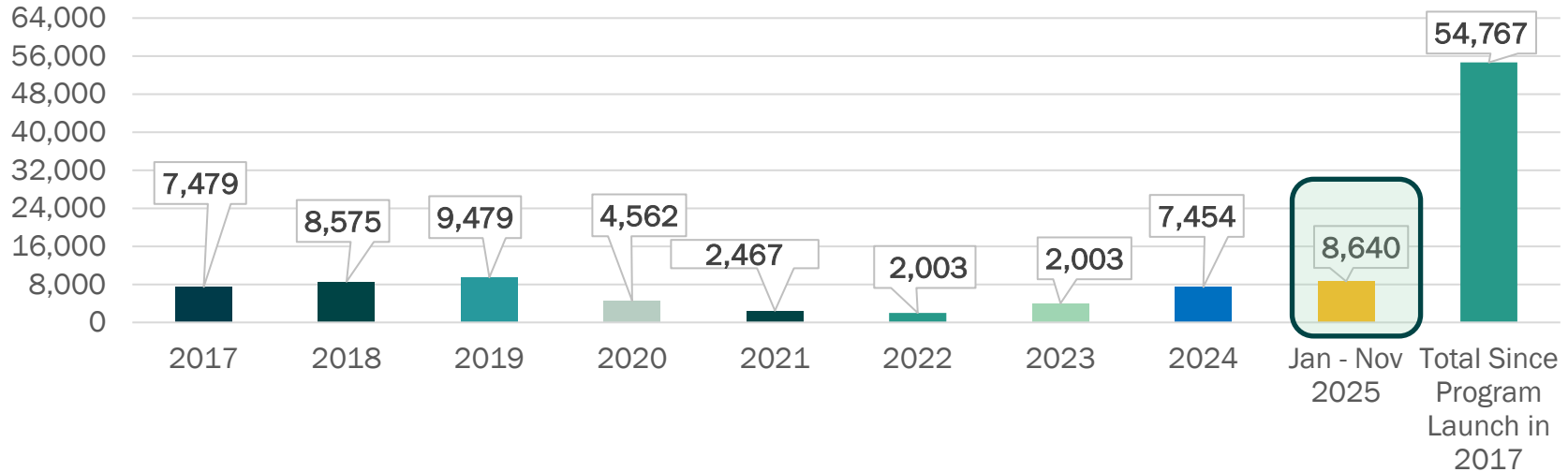
- The number of leaking water services has dropped slightly heading into the fall months with a slight uptick in November.
- The MARS Team within Maintenance & Repair is resolving the vast majority within four days.

# Field Services: Water Main Breaks



- Since the peak in the summer months, we have seen a slight drop in water main breaks in the fall season, which is typical historically as there are increased breaks in the heat of summer and the frigid cold winter.
- Water service outages and major thoroughfares are the first priority.

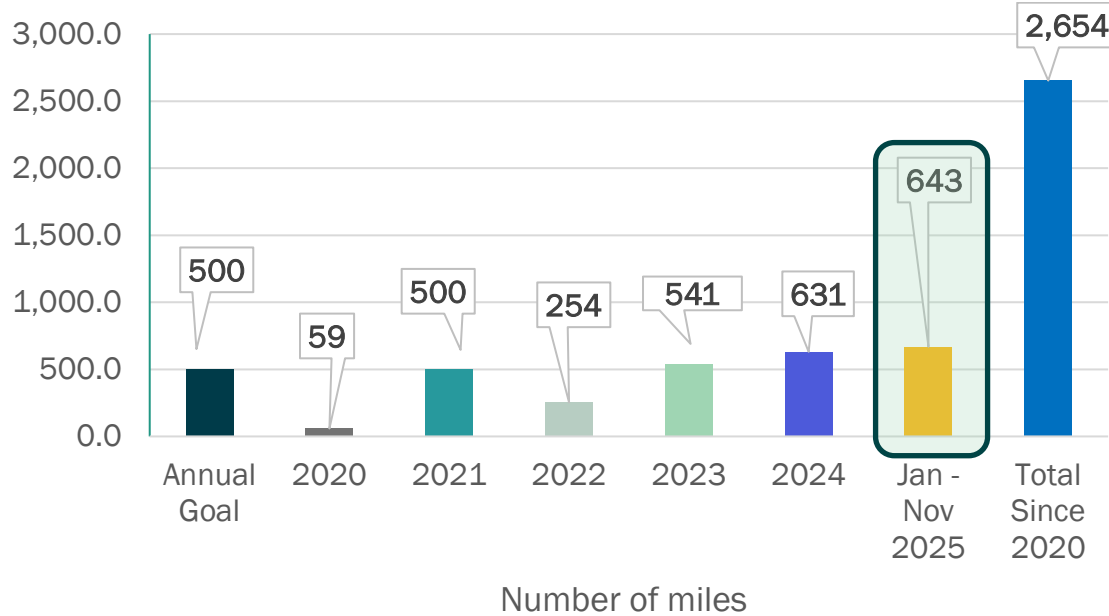
# Field Services: Catch Basin & Inspection Cleaning



- The Sewer Team has impressively sped up the pace of clogged basin cleaning the last few months.
- We are thankful to the Sewer Team on their efforts to reduce flooding in our neighborhoods.



# Field Services: Sewer Cleaning



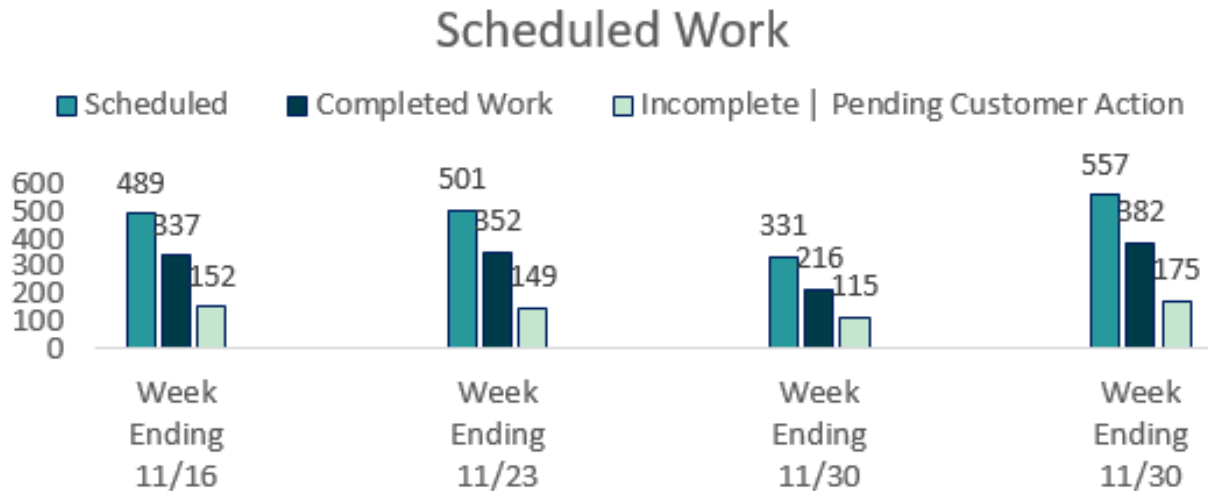
- The Sewer Team has for the second-straight year exceeded the 600 miles cleaned goal for local sewers of 24-inches in diameter or less.
- Annual sewer cleaning on a 5-6 year rotation for the entire local system is the best action DWSD can take to improve capacity for rain and snowmelt events.

# Meter Operations

Sam Smalley, Deputy Director



# Meter Operations: Scheduled Meter Work

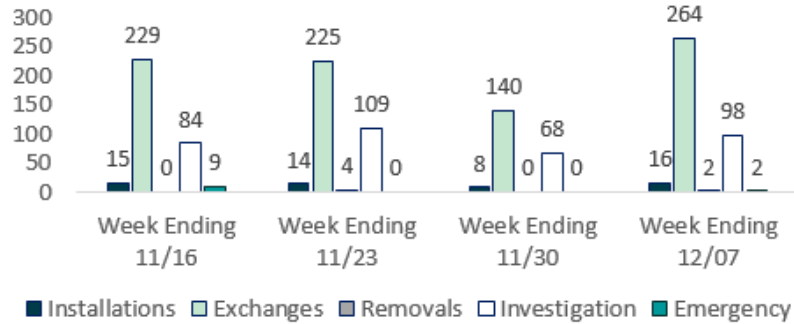


- Scheduled Meter Appointments have increased with an average of over 500 work orders weekly.
- Completed work has increased compared to this time last year by more than 30%.
- Although pending customer issues exists for some.

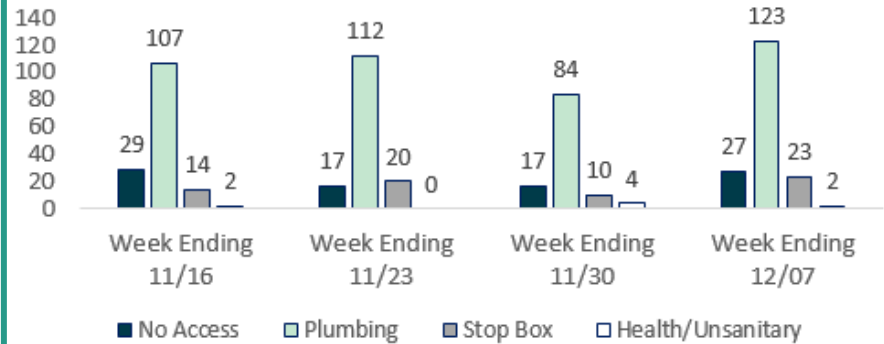
# Meter Operations: Scheduled Meter Work



## Success Details

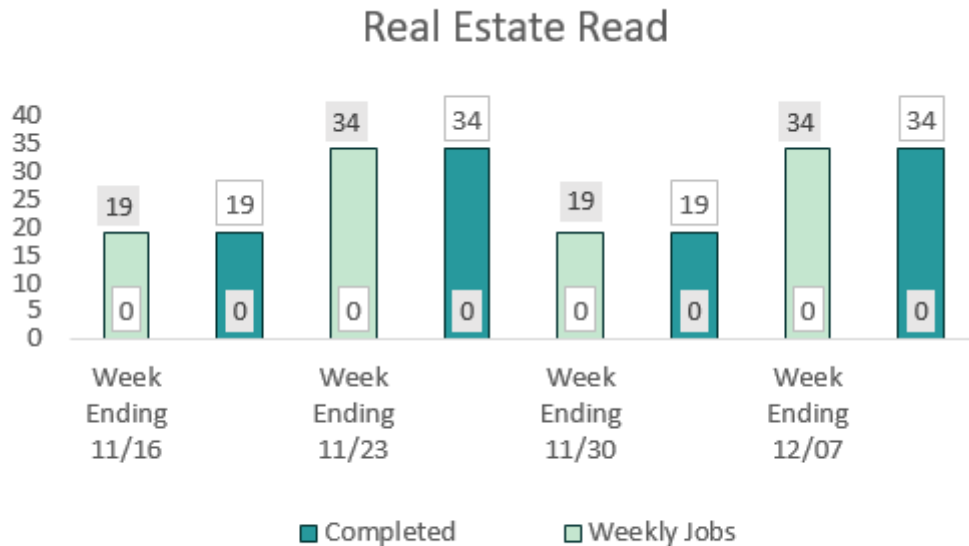


## Customer Issues



- Every week, DWSD technicians install or exchange more than 200 water meters.
- An average of more than 20 new service accounts are metered weekly.
- Meter Ops installed more than 12,000 meters in 2024.

# Meter Operations: Real Estate Reads



- We are working to increase the number of real estate work orders completed by making this work type a scheduled appointment.
- DWSD Meter Ops has been able to keep the wait for a meter appointment down to a 7-day average or less.



# Investigations

Scott MacGriff, Chief General Counsel & Compliance Officer

# Investigations: Results



**3,378**

Parcels investigated for delinquency, possible meter tampering and no meter since July 1, 2025

Money Owed to DWSD identified by Investigators

**\$14,343,171**

Total since July 1, 2024

**\$2,527,807**

Back billed

**\$3,372,550**

Future owed in 12 months

**\$8,442,814**

Water loss

Revenue Identified Since Investigation Unit Began

**\$61M**

Total since August 14, 2017

- In addition to helping resolve past due balances, the Revenue Protection Unit has helped greatly with a variety of investigations that are especially important.

# Legal Services

Scott MacGriff, Chief General Counsel & Compliance Officer

# Legal: Cases and Collections



1

Cases resolved in November 2025

0

New cases filed by DWSD

3

New cases filed against DWSD

40

Pending cases handled in-house

Collections actions: 16

Defended cases: 24

Non-defense cases: 0

## Damage Claims

211

Number of Pending Damage Claims

5

Number of Damage Claims Reviewed  
in November 2025

0

Total Settlements Offered  
in November 2025

\$0

Total Settlements Offered  
in November 2025

# Public Affairs

Bryan Peckinpagh, Public Affairs Director





# Public Affairs: Social Media Activity



27

New Facebook Followers

10,707

Total Followers on Facebook

77,387

Views on Facebook



0

New X Followers

1,873

Total Followers on X

10

Engagement on X



32

New Instagram Followers

3,023

Total Followers on Instagram

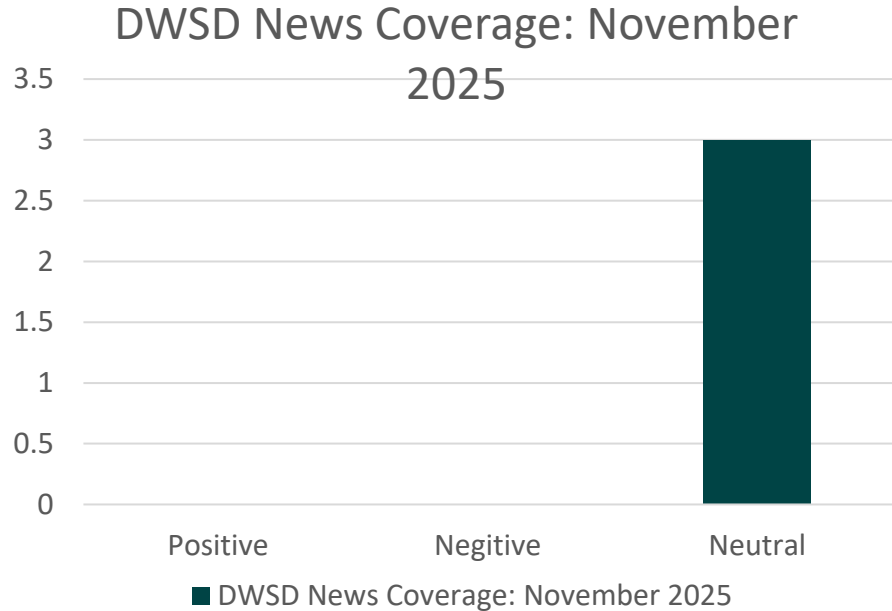
52,770

Views on Instagram



The top performing post by views for Facebook for the month of November was a fall weather tip encouraging residents to remove, drain, and store their water hose before the winter weather. The post had 1,483 views and 16 interactions. For Instagram, the top performing post by views for November was a post highlighting the Detroit Alerts 365 city emergency alert system. The post received 658 views, 461 reach, and 5 interactions.

# Public Affairs: Positive v. Negative News Stories



## NOTICE TO LIFELINE PLAN HOUSEHOLD:

### INTRODUCING LIFELINE H<sub>2</sub>O



The Lifeline Plan has transitioned to the DWSD Lifeline H<sub>2</sub>O, which offers a single affordable all-in bill amount of \$34 per month\* for eligible households.

\*Up to 6 CCF (4,500 gallons) of water usage per month and includes the monthly drainage charge. If your household uses more water in any month, you will be billed at regular DWSD rates.

#### WHY THE CHANGE?

The plan has been updated to enroll the most households possible based on currently available funding.

*The Detroit Water & Sewerage Department (DWSD) Lifeline Plan requires an income-eligible household to apply to determine if you qualify for Lifeline H<sub>2</sub>O.*

#### HOW TO APPLY AND ENROLL

##### Eligibility Requirements:

- Household income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL)
- A current DWSD account holder
- Water meter is installed and functioning
- Your account is registered in the DWSD Customer Self-Service Portal
- No past-due balance

##### You'll Need:

- Proof of household income or enrollment verification from FAP, MEAP, SNAP, or an eligible public benefit program
- DWSD Account Number

##### Submit Application

Go to [lifeline.detroitmi.gov](https://lifeline.detroitmi.gov) or scan the QR code below:



OR Call 313-435-2055



DWSD is here to help, visit [detroitmi.gov/water](https://detroitmi.gov/water) to learn more about Lifeline H<sub>2</sub>O and our EasyPay Plan.

In November, we had a total of three stories this month that mentioned the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. Of all the stories DWSD were mentioned in – one was positive, zero were negative and two stories were neutral. This month, the stories covered DWSD's new Lifeline H<sub>2</sub>O plan.

# Customer Service

# Lifeline Plan – Protected From Shut Off

Protected From Shut Off	Total
Receiving Lifeline Plan benefit	397*
Enrolled in EasyPay Plan	43,221
Total Number of Households Protected	43,618

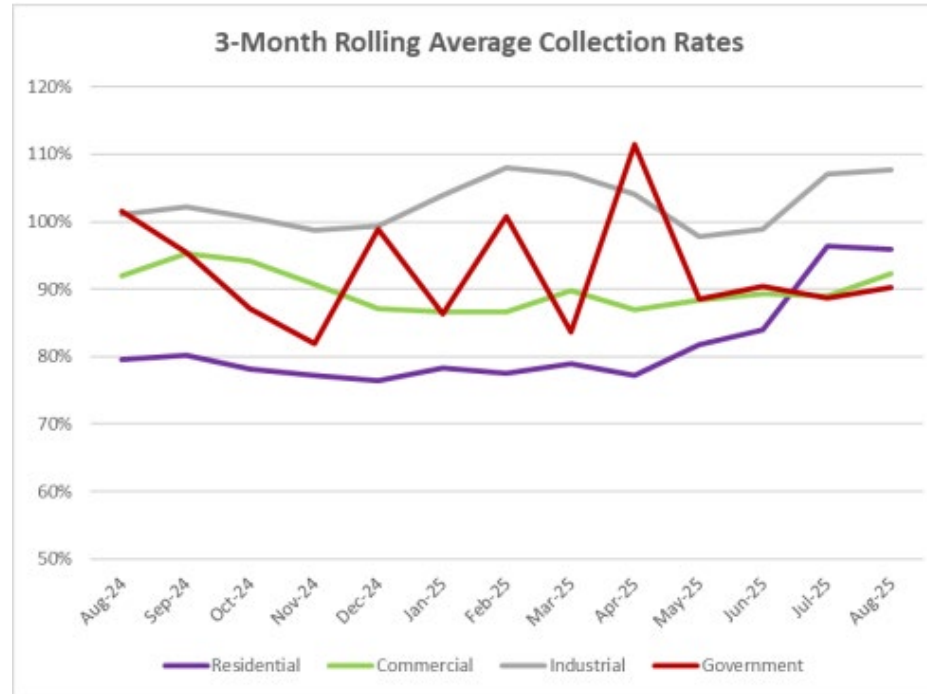
\*Lifeline benefits ended on September 30, 2025. The program restarted in November 2026 as Lifeline H<sub>2</sub>O utilizing a new income verification tool and currently available funding from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) WRAP allocation for Detroit.

# Finance



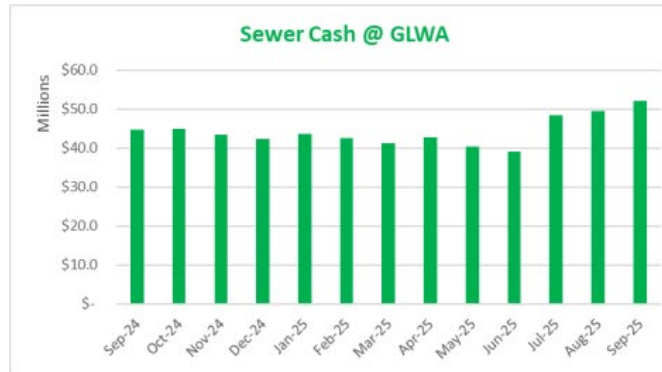
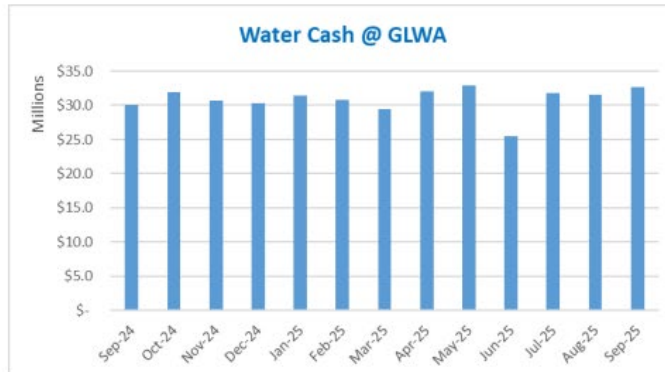
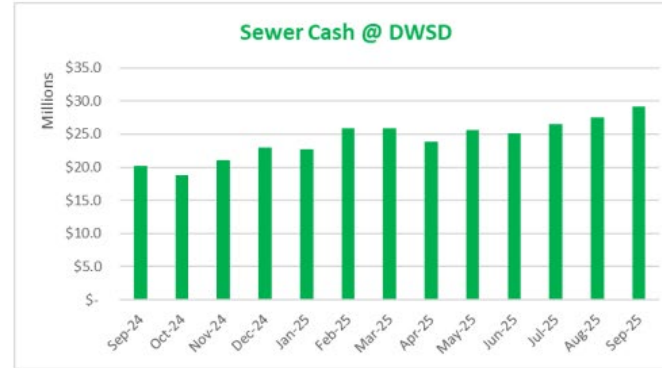
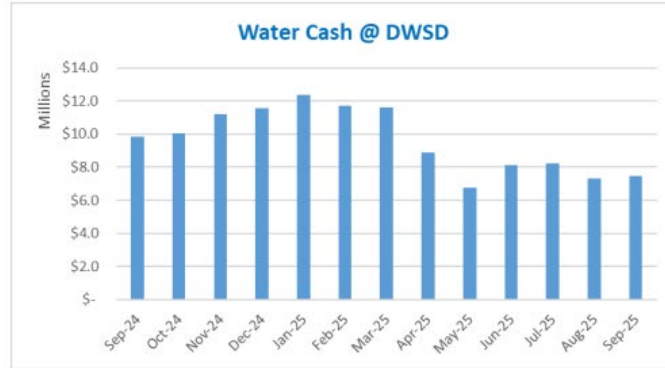


# Finance: Collection Rates



- The Finance data is provided based on the most recent month reported to the Finance Committee of the Board of Water Commissioners.

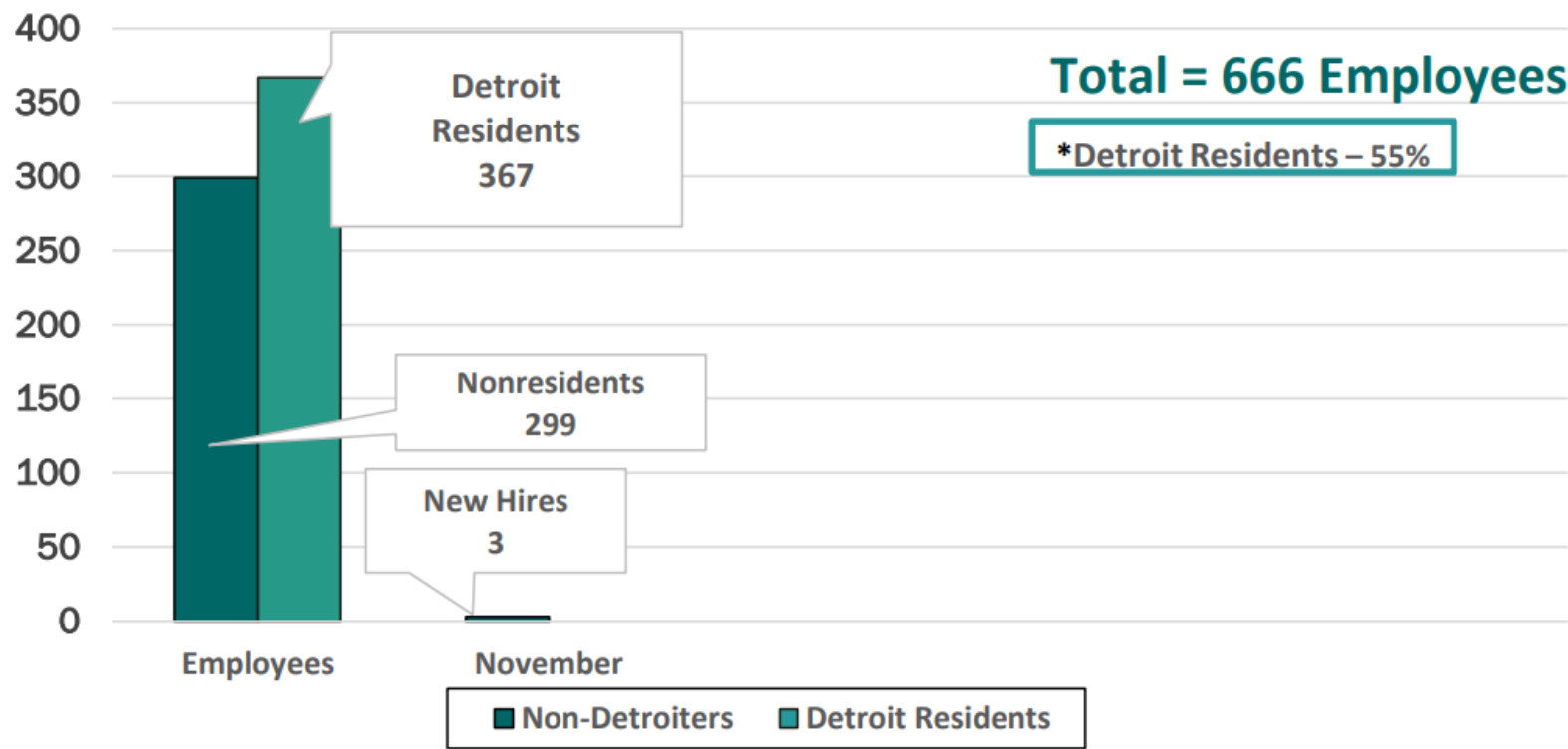
# Finance: Cash Balance



- The Finance data is provided based on the most recent month reported to the Finance Committee of the Board of Water Commissioners.

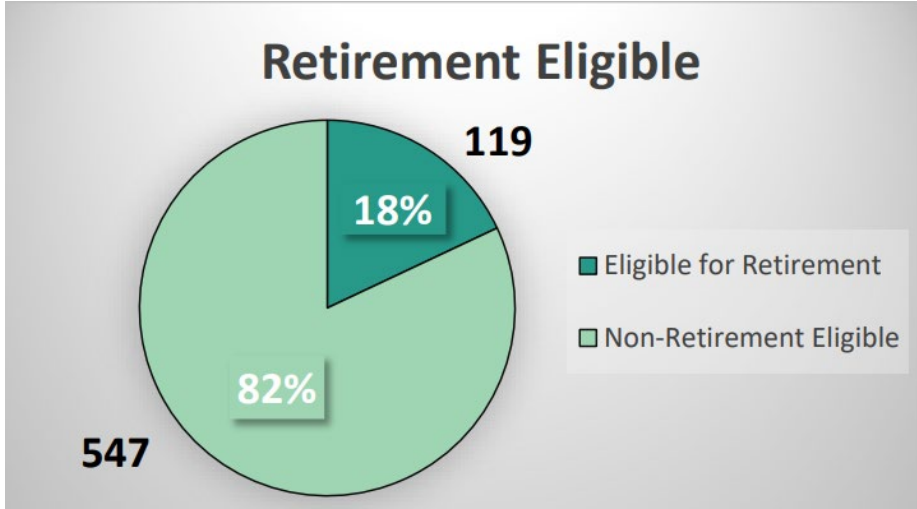
# Human Resources

# Human Resources: Detroit Residents and Hiring



# Human Resources: Retirement Eligible

With a current population of **666** employees, there are **119** DWSD employees eligible for retirement



Retirement Criteria	Total
30 YOS/Any Age (Legacy and Hybrid)	48
25 YOS/55 years old (Legacy)	23
10 YOS/60 years old (Legacy)	47
10 YOS/62 years old (Hybrid)	0
8 YOS/65 years old (Legacy)	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>119</b>

**LEGACY** = HIRED BEFORE 2014  
**HYBRID** = HIRED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2014

- Eighteen percent (18%) of DWSD’s workforce is retirement eligible
- Succession plans have been developed for retirement eligible employees and those employees who have a skill that is critical to the business.