

Attn: Matthew Phillips
Detroit Water and Sewerage Department
Board of Water Commissioners
Customer Service Committee
735 Randolph St.
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Attn: Michael Einheuser, Mary E. Blackmon, Lane Coleman, John Henry Davis, Linda D. Forte,
Jane C. Garcia, Jonathan C. Kinloch
Detroit Water and Sewerage Department
Board of Water Commissioners
735 Randolph St.
Detroit, Michigan 48226

May 30, 2025

Dear Mr. Phillips, Mr. Einheuser, Ms. Blackmon, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Davis, Ms. Forte, Ms. Garcia,
and Mr. Kinloch,

I write to you to express my concern and request that you address a problem of a local landlord,
Jeffrey Cowin and Greater Midtown Property Management, LLC, owing \$34,305.27 to DWSD as
of the recent data DWSD's FOIA provided me. This problem dates back to Cowin's harassment
of me in August 2022 during which time he baselessly accused me of causing or instigating a
water shut-off, when he had not in fact paid the bill for years, if ever.

Why does DWSD neglect to uniformly enforce water payments of commercial properties that
are also residences and allow landlords to accrue thousands and thousands of dollars in debt?

In the leases of tenants including me as a former tenant, Cowin / Greater Midtown Property
Management, LLC, is responsible to pay utilities including water & sewage (rent covers utilities).
His neglect to pay water bills as specified in the lease violates contract law and consumer
protection. Attached are the latest available DWSD records by FOIA for properties of Jeffrey
Cowin, Greater Midtown Property Management, LLC, as well as screenshots of the harassment
Cowin subjected me to when I experienced a water shut-off due to illegal usage as a tenant.

Address	Balance (amount owed)	Date that amount was owed	Date last known payment	Note
110 VA Park	\$123.63	3-15-2025	3-6-2025	-
159 VA Park	\$13,882.29	1-10-2025	5-29-2024	Water shut-off: 10-30-202

866 VA Park	\$7,451.68	3-15-2025	Unknown - before 3-15-2025 to 3-09-2024, no payment	His residence?
874 VA Park	\$1,718.83	3-15-2025	9-20-2021	-
888 VA Park	\$1,270.54	2-12-2025	Unknown - before 2-12-2025, no payment since 11-2-2023	Water shut-off due to illegal usage: 8-2-2022
2431 Parker	\$226.53	3-22-2025	12-16-2024	New meter installed 1-2024, water shut-off and request for 2024
82 Alfred	\$2,702.64	3-7-2025	10-23-2024	-
82 Alfred	\$6,929.13	3-20-2025	3-20-2025	-

At issue: DWSD neglect to enforce water payments of commercial properties that are also residences contributes to a culture of absence of accountability and puts tenants as well as their families or friends, at risk for water shut-off and retaliation.

- In my experience as a tenant in August 2022, the water suddenly went off. Upon calling DWSD Customer Service I learned someone had requested the water to be shut off, and that the water bill, in arrears, had never been in Cowin's name, in recent history. DWSD Customer Service informed me I had the option of taking on the in-debt water bill in my name and paying a percentage of it in order to get the water turned back on, an appalling and illogical option of DWSD to even "offer," to suggest a tenant would take on a landlord's debt and pay a percentage of it. I informed Cowin of this problem of non-payment and politely requested he get the water back on. Cowin then in a group housemate text falsely accused me of turning the water off or requesting it to be turned off, and my housemates joined in on the bullying. Being deprived of water and sewage in the house was particularly distressing because I had COVID. I was forced to flee to my elderly parents' house, and in doing so I inadvertently put their lives at risk (father is a transplant patient) given elderly are more vulnerable to adverse outcomes of COVID. The entire experience was damaging to my health and further exacerbated unsafe conditions that combined with retaliatory harassment for a City inspection, constituted illegal eviction ("self-help" or extrajudicial landlord eviction). I have not yet been made whole.
- Additionally, it has become apparent to me that DWSD water shut-offs are inconsistent, erroneously shutting off the water of a (different) residence of an acquaintance for non-payment when she had in fact paid in full over the past year, and not requiring payment from this landlord. That inconsistency in enforcement erodes public trust in DWSD.

I will distribute print-outs of the account payment summaries and work order history at the

Board of Commissioners meeting on June 18. I look forward to learning how DWSD will improve its customer service operations such that tenants like me do not experience sudden water shut-offs and emergency displacement for water (during a pandemic, no less), sustain false allegations of a harassing landlord that we had "something to do with it, and expose vulnerable people in our community to health hazards.

Thank you.

Regards,
Bridget

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