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VIA EMAIL TO: epkeya@michigan.gov

State of Michigan Emergency Operations Center
Michigan State Police, Emergency Management
and Homeland Security Division
7150 Harris Drive
Dimondale, Michigan 48821

c/o Amy Epkey, Senior Deputy Director
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

RE: Compliance Report Regarding Executive Order 2020-28 (COD-19) – Restoring water service to occupied residences during the COVID-19 pandemic

To Whom It May Concern,

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of the above-captioned Order, the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) submits the following report regarding access to water in its service area:

- a. An account of what efforts have been made to determine which occupied residences within the public water supply's service area do not have water service.**

RESPONSE: On March 9, Mayor Mike Duggan and Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced the Water Restart Plan designed to restore water in occupied households with water off in Detroit, amid the pending outbreak. In launching the Water Restart Plan, DWSD held a press conference to get the word out. Several media stories encouraged households with water off to contact us. We shared the details of the plan through electronic billboards, print advertisements and social media posts. We partnered with Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency to handle the intake.

To date, nearly 1,200 households have taken advantage of the plan and had their water service restored. Another 300 have avoided a service interruption. And, less than 5 homes await restoration, and based on the initial visit, many of these homes require plumbing work before DWSD can reconnect water service without creating a risk to public health. Approximately 100 homes required plumbing repairs. The department was recently awarded state grants to cover repair costs. During our outreach efforts, we have found that – contrary to media reports and posts by community activists over the years – there are a relatively small number of occupied Detroit households without water. The overwhelming majority of homes without water service are vacant.

Here are the steps we have taken to determine who is living in a household without water and the results of our efforts.

DWSD hired a third party, Detroit-based company called Human Fliers to personally visit nearly 9,000 houses, where service had once been interrupted, to determine if anyone was living without water. So far, they found 68 percent – nearly 7 in 10 – were abandoned or unoccupied houses; 15 percent were occupied and had water; 12 percent appeared to have occupants who did not answer the door; and 5 percent were confirmed to be occupied and living without water. For houses that appeared to be occupied, but no answer at the door, we called the last known phone number associated with the account at the address to check whether there are occupants living without water service.

We have also made repeated requests of water rights advocacy groups to notify us of any households they know of who are without water service. We received less than 10 names/addresses and placed those households into the Water Restart Plan.

Initially, the Water Restart Plan had unexpectedly high call volumes – 80% of which were households that already had water and were not eligible for the plan. Within days, call volumes fell precipitously – an indication that department efforts to reach customers with water service challenges is working and the Water Restart Plan, is succeeding. These households will transition to existing customer assistance programs when the crisis is over. Number of households qualifying for the program averaged 100 a day the first week of the program and now average 20 per day the past week.

Upon request, DWSD will supply data with names and addresses of all households we attempted to contact, addresses where water service had been restored, and other data the State may find useful.

Costs to implement program:

DWSD has incurred **\$1.5 million** in administrative costs to administer the Water Restart Plan. Additionally, the accounts of households restored or avoided interruption as part of the Water Restart Plan had delinquent balances totaling **\$3.4 million**, which remain due and owing. These reconnected customers will continue to accrue delinquent debt now that water is restored and their payment is capped at \$25/month during the coronavirus state of emergency.

b. The number of occupied residences within the public water supply's service area that do not have water service as a result of a shutoff due to non-payment.

As of the date of preparing this report and based upon the best available information and the efforts described above, we are aware of less than 10 homes that are without water. These households require plumbing work to ensure proper water service connection to prevent a risk to public health. Some residences have collapsed sewer lines, which cannot be repaired in a timely manner and we

are working with the City of Detroit Health and Human Services Department to secure alternative housing for these households.

c. The number of occupied residences within the public water supply's service area that do not have water service as a result of any reason other than non-payment.

See response to paragraph b above. Many of the households we touched had a combination of plumbing issues and non-payment.

d. Certification.

The undersigned certifies that DWSD has exercised best efforts to determine which occupied residences within the service area do not have water; that to the best of DWSD's knowledge and as of the date of this report no occupied residences have their water service shut off due to non-payment; that DWSD has reconnected water service for all known occupied residences that can be reconnected without creating a risk to public health; and that DWSD has exercised best efforts to remedy the conditions that prevent reconnection due to a risk to public health.

Sincerely,



Gary A Brown, Director

DNP

cc: Joneigh S. Khaldun, M.D., Chief Medical Executive and Chief Deputy Director for Health for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services