



**Water & Sewerage
Department**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

October 16, 2019



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE TO THE BOARD



Water & Sewerage
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- The Grand River Avenue Streetscape Project is an example of successful and impactful infrastructure collaboration.
 - MDOT planned to resurface Grand River between Berg Road and Fenkell/ Southfield Freeway, while the City's Planning & Development Department was designing streetscape improvements for the same area, and the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) was planning to replace the water main.
 - Rather than these projects taking place separately, they are being done concurrently, led by MDOT – creating a collaboration that saves resources for all parties and is a less disruptive process for the community and commuters.
 - The work is almost complete on the north side of Grand River between Evergreen and Fenkell, then crews will move to the south side, followed by work between Evergreen and Berg roads next year.
- The WAVE Fund is providing \$40,000 to support Detroit households who need assistance to maintain their water service.
 - The funding is solely from the annual WAVE Charity Golf Outing held on September 9.
 - Detroit residents who need WAVE assistance can speak to Customer Care staff.
 - This is above and beyond the WRAP dollars for low-income households.
- The Stormwater Management Group – a team of 13 employees now (only 2 dedicated staff just three years ago) – is leading the effort with community partners, including The Nature Conservancy and the Erb Family Foundation, to map green stormwater infrastructure practices across the city.
 - The public will see details and photos of each project, including location on a city map.
 - The website tracks total acres managed and annual stormwater volume managed.
 - The website will be launched within a few weeks.
- Since the lead service line replacements began as part of the Asset Management Program, DWSD has replaced 527 lead services with copper (this does not include emergency replacements done by the repair crews).





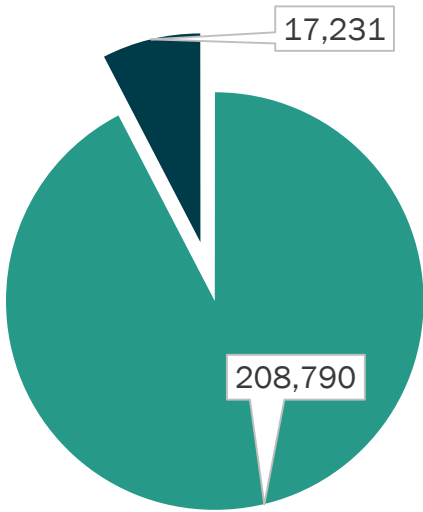
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Customer Care

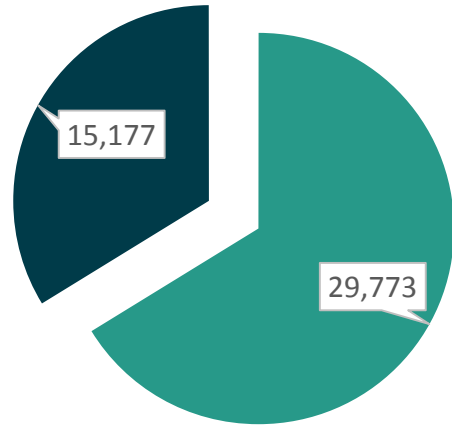
CUSTOMER CARE: Number of Active Accounts



Active Residential Accounts



Active Non-Residential Accounts



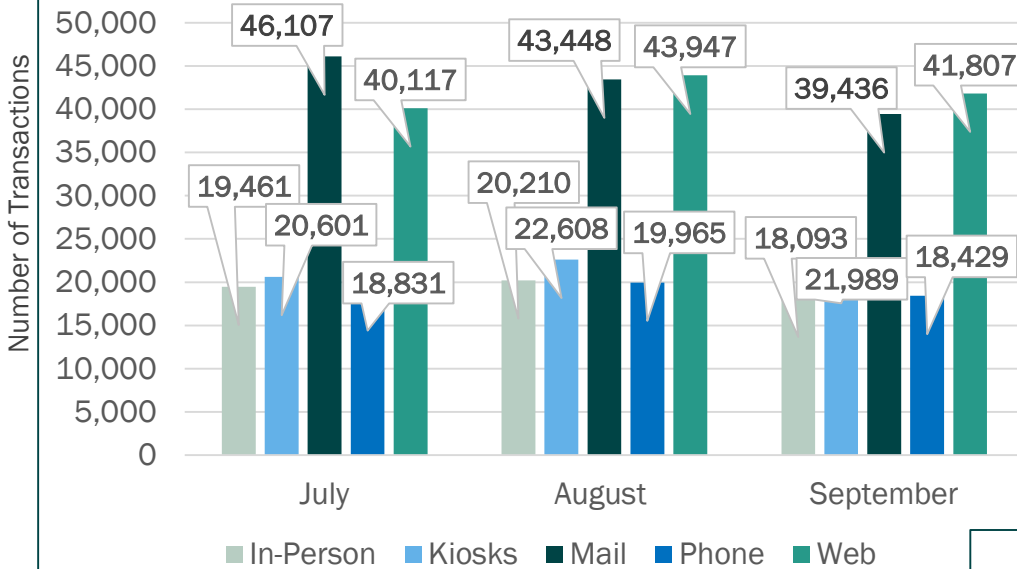
■ Water/Sewerage/Drainage ■ Drainage Only (no water service) ■ Water/Sewerage/Drainage ■ Drainage Only (no water service)

Vacant parcels, parking lots and other properties with no need for water service, receive stormwater charges only (drainage).

CUSTOMER CARE: Transactions

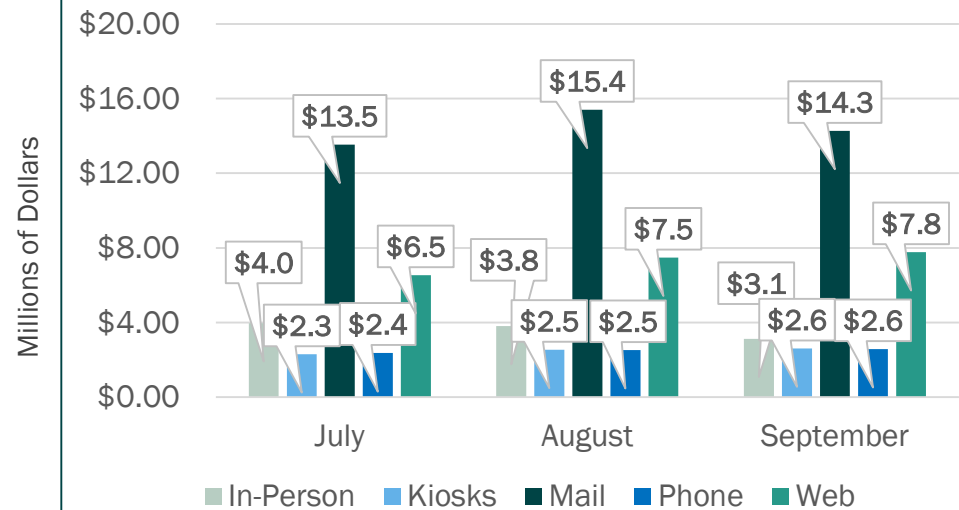


Payment Transactions by Platform Type



DWSD is presenting this payment transaction data in a three-month series to show trends.

Revenue Collected by Platform Type

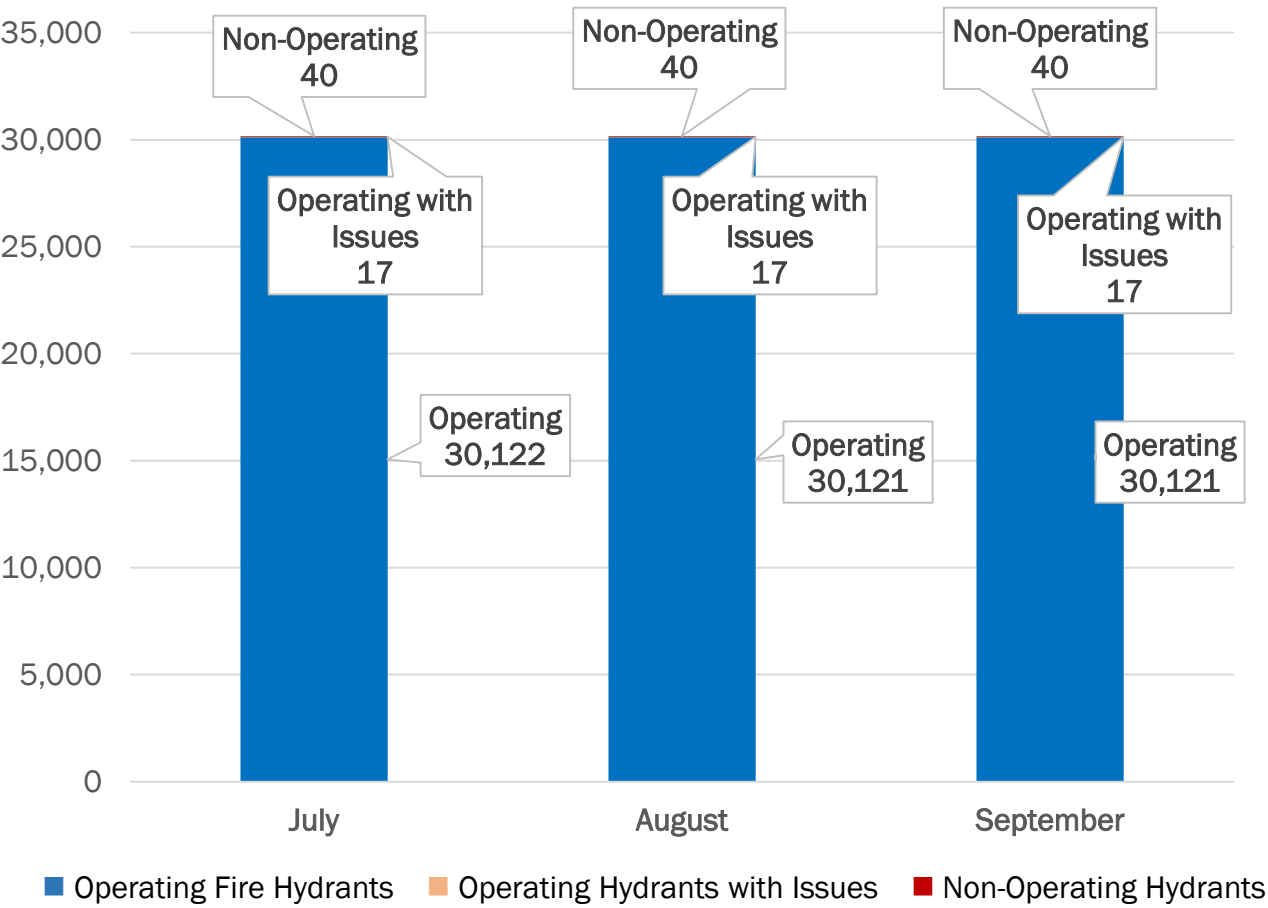




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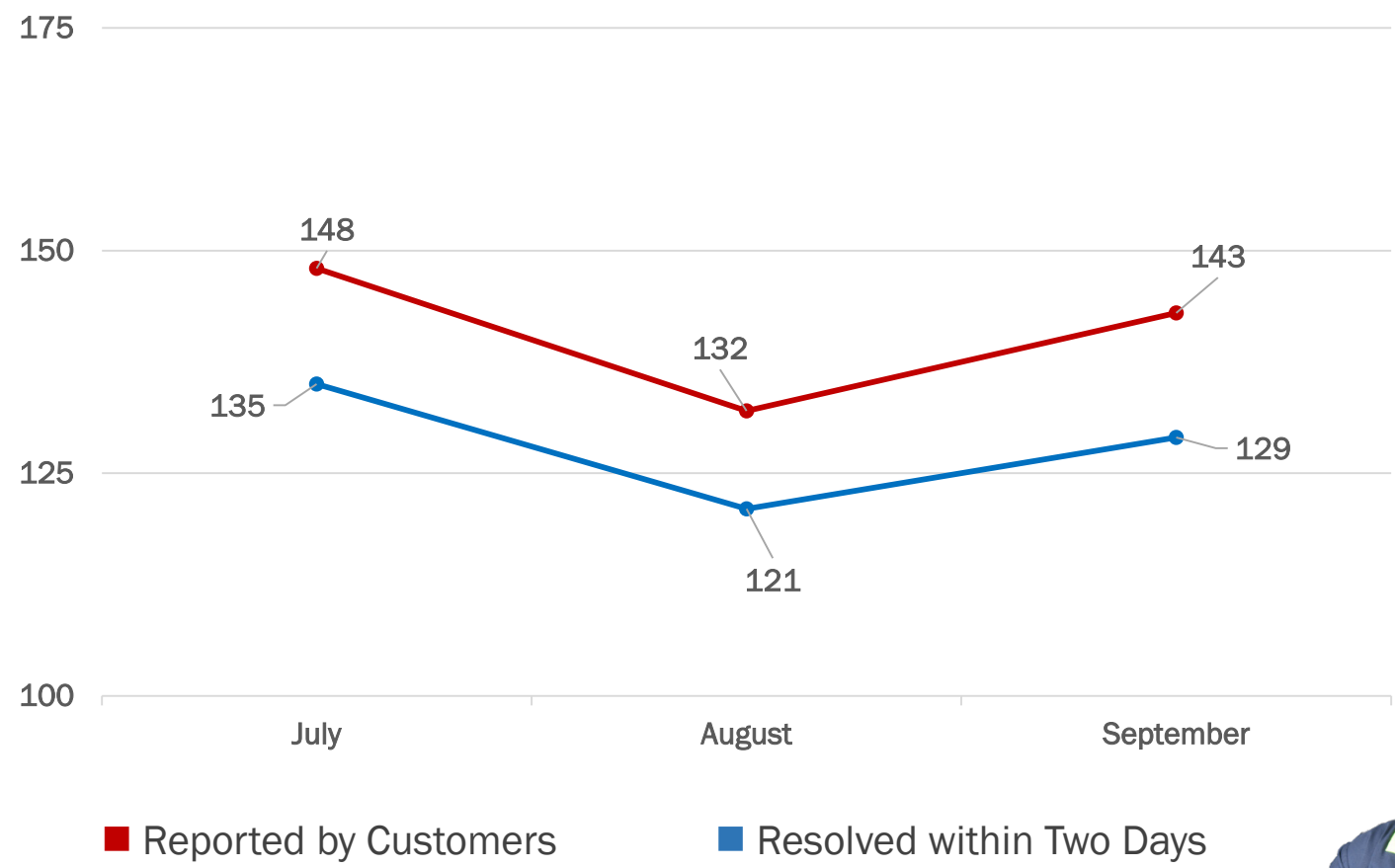
Field Services

FIELD SERVICES: Fire Hydrant Maintenance



DWSD has dedicated repair crews with specialized vehicles. Firefighters do annual inspections and the public can also report issues with hydrants using the Improve Detroit mobile app.

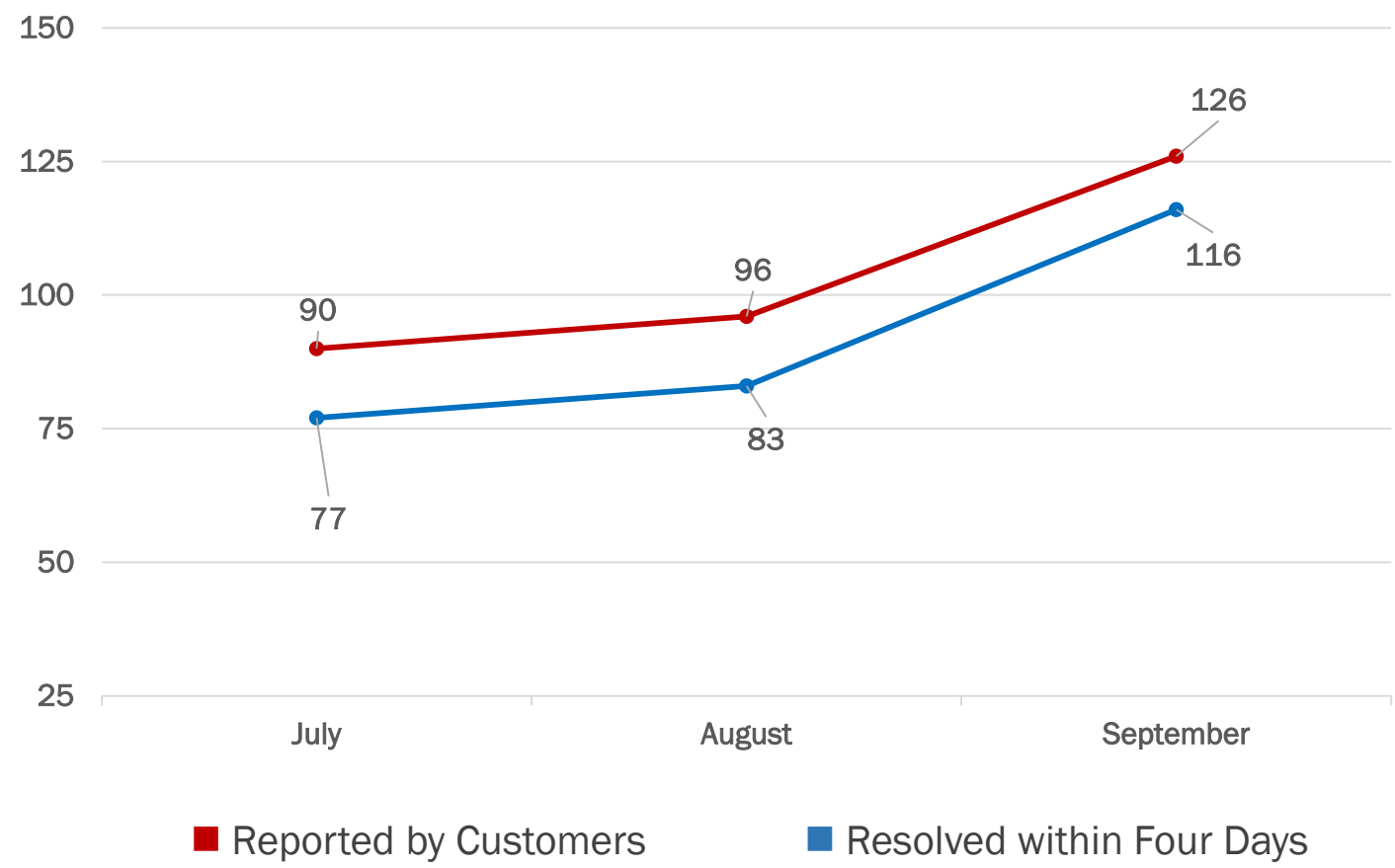
FIELD SERVICES: Running Water



The running water reports have remained relatively consistent over the past three months.

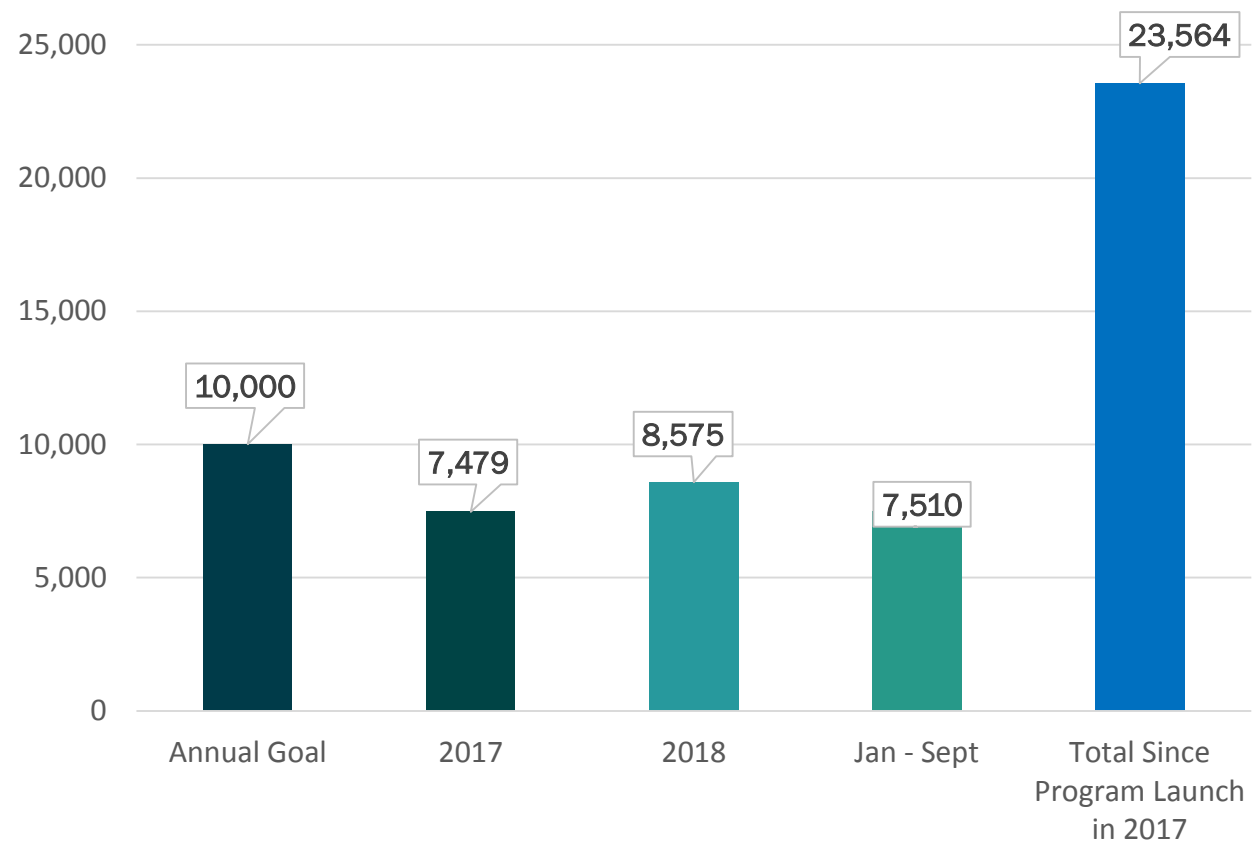


FIELD SERVICES: Water Main Breaks



When there is dramatic change in temperature --- hot or cold -- the ground can shift and cause tension on the pipes potentially resulting in water main breaks.

FIELD SERVICES: Catch Basin Inspection & Cleaning



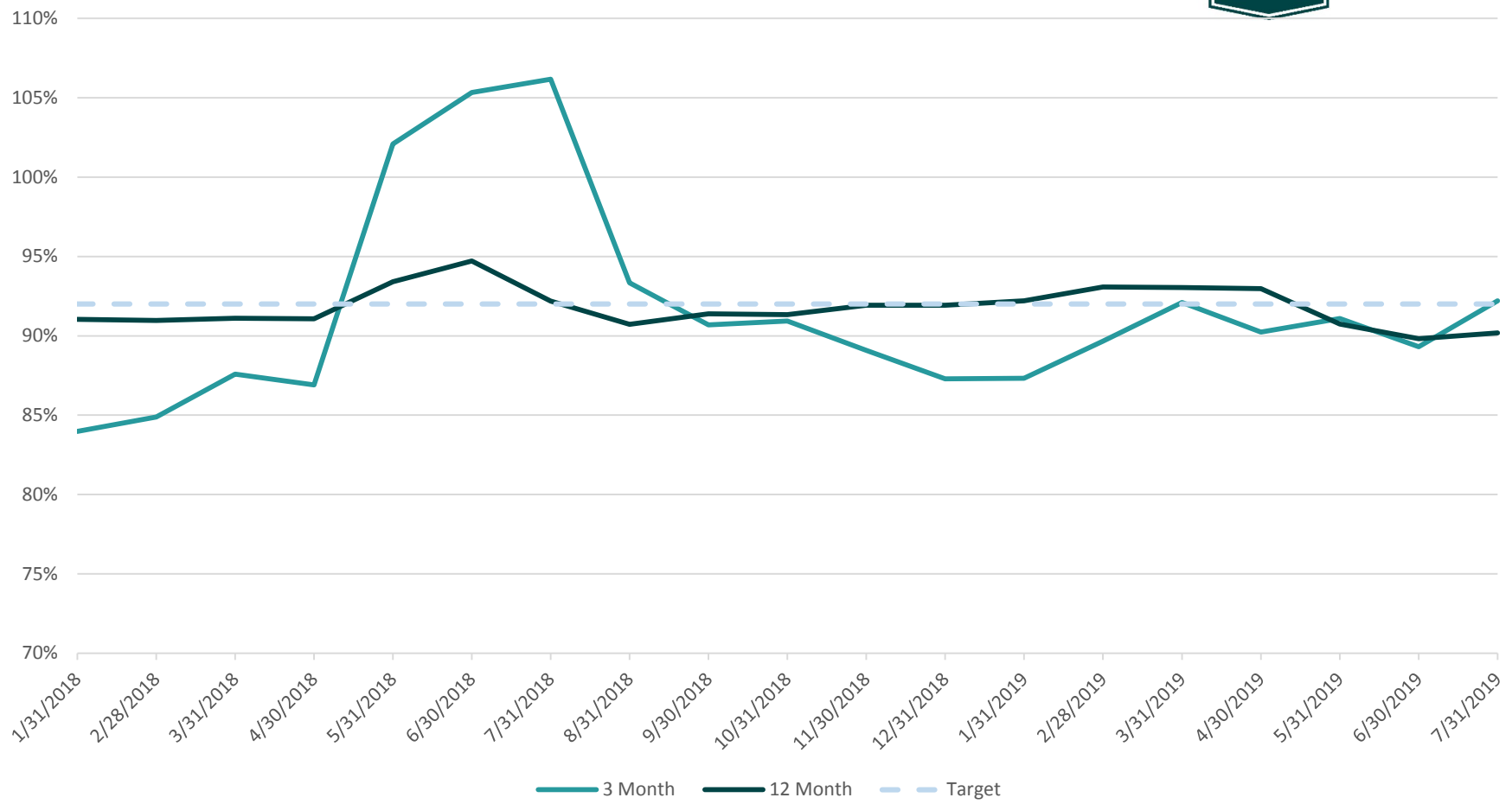
Since the catch basin inspection and cleaning program launched in 2017, crews have touched 23,564 of the estimated 90,000 catch basins. The goal is 30,000 in three years and DWSD is close to reaching that objective.



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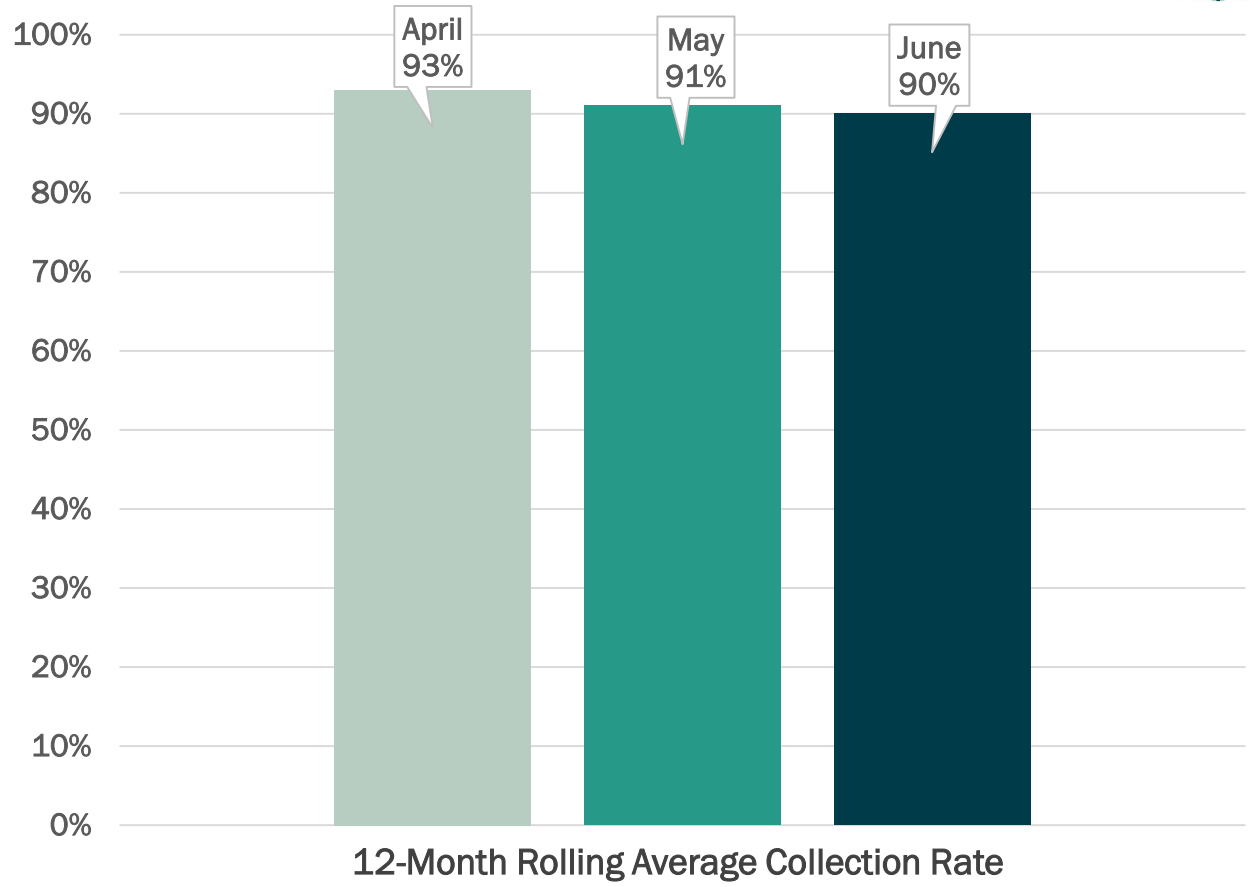
Finance

FINANCE: Bill Collection Rate



During the winter months, the collection rate historically decreases as households choose to pay their heating bills and catch up later with water bills in the spring, even moreso this past winter due to the temperatures falling well below zero for several days. Every percentage increase in the collection rate above 80 percent is an additional \$3.5 million which can be applied to the maintenance of and upgrades to the water and sewer systems.

FINANCE: Bill Collection Rate



Prior to 2016 and the bifurcation with the Great Lakes Water Authority, the bill collection rate was 77 percent. Since the current leadership began at DWSD – changing the business practices, improving technology, customer service and outreach – the collection rate has remained above 90 percent the last three years.



\$81,159,647

Water cash balance as of
August 31, 2019

\$145,202,533

Sewer cash balance as of
August 31, 2019



Legal Services

LEGAL: Claims, Hearings and Cases



3

Property damage claims

0

Basement backup damage claims appeals

12

Dispute hearings

5

Number of cases DWSD prevailed

20

Cases handled by in-house staff

10

Cases handled by outside counsel

13

Lawsuits dismissed

\$52,394

Amount in property damage claims

\$0

Basement backup damage claim appeals

\$4,500

Total claims recommended to be paid

\$28,846

Amount in dispute

\$1,286

Credited to customers based on hearing outcomes

\$27,560

Owed to DWSD after hearings

DWSD uses a mix of in-house and contracted legal counsel to handle damage claims, civil action for commercial delinquencies and lawsuits filed against the department.

Customers who have bill disputes may request a hearing at the City of Detroit Department of Appeals and Hearings.



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Investigations

INVESTIGATIONS: Results

304

[101 per month, on average]

Parcels investigated for delinquency, possible meter tampering and no meter since July 1, 2019



Money Owed to DWSD identified by Investigators

\$2,588,437

Total since July 1, 2019

\$635,244

Back billed

\$1,832,819

Future owed in 12 months

\$120,374

Water loss



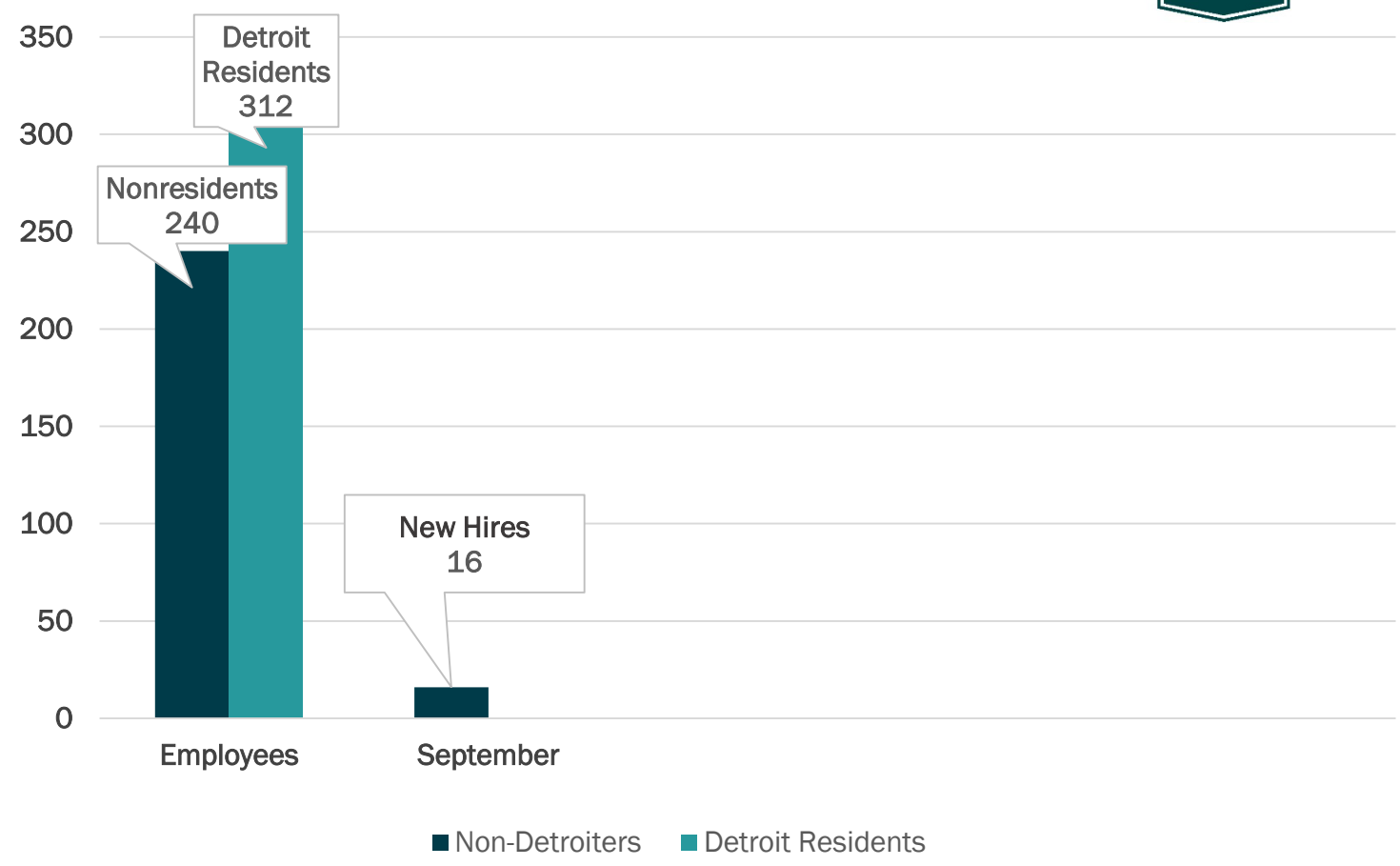
The DWSD Revenue Recovery Unit, in collaboration with customer service/billing, has identified nearly \$12 million in services owed by primarily commercial customers since its creation in August 2017. They uncovered severe delinquencies, non-working meters, unauthorized use of fire hydrants, tampering with the meters, or connected to the city's water main without a meter and/or permit. The team works closely with the DWSD collections and legal staff.



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Human Resources

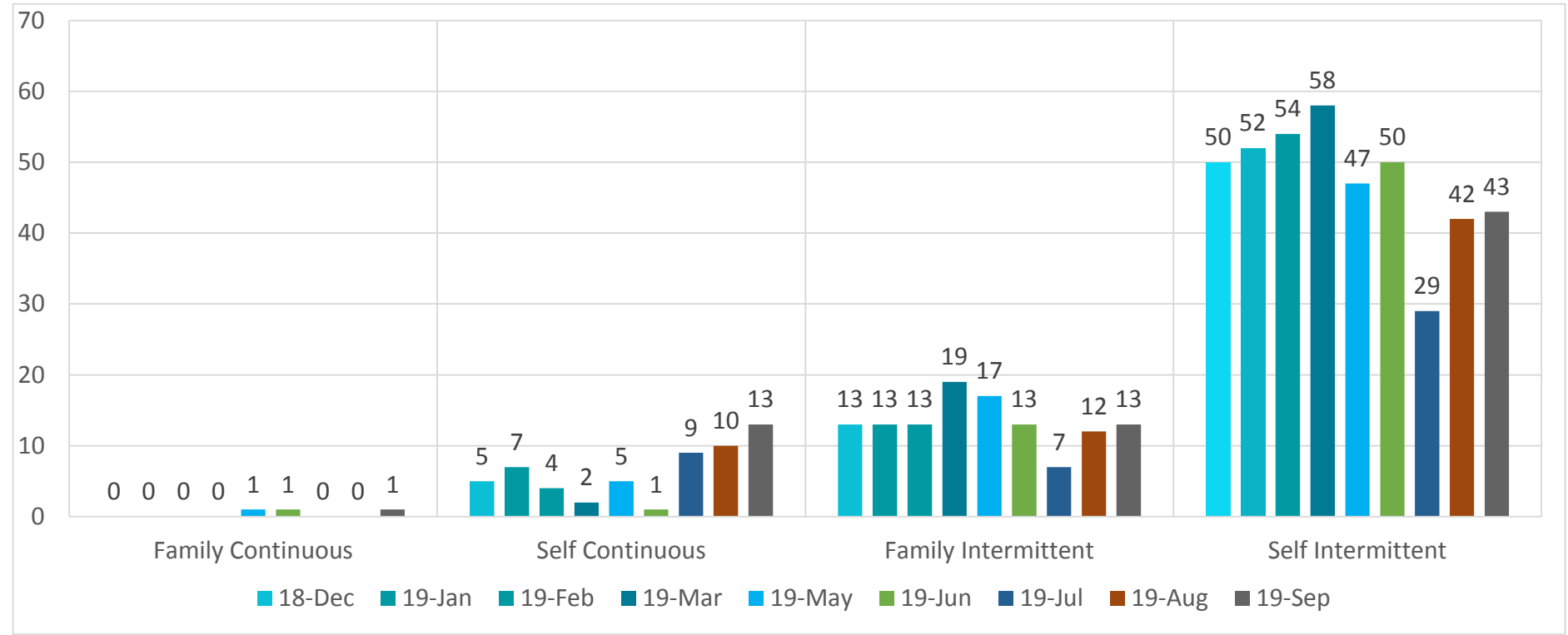
HUMAN RESOURCES: Detroit Residents and Hiring



Fifty-six percent of the DWSD workforce lives in Detroit.*

*DWSD and the City of Detroit do not require residency to be employed, per Michigan law.

HUMAN RESOURCES: Family Medical Leave Act



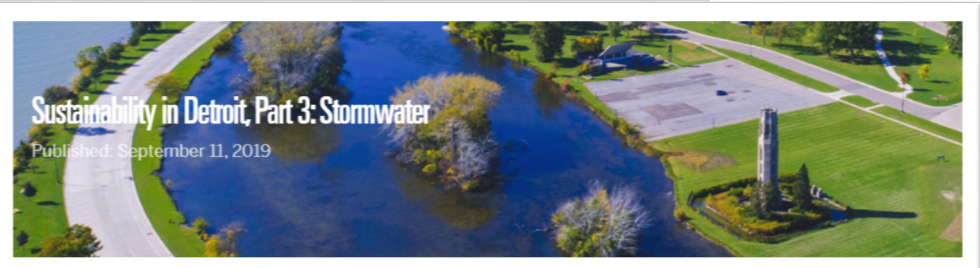
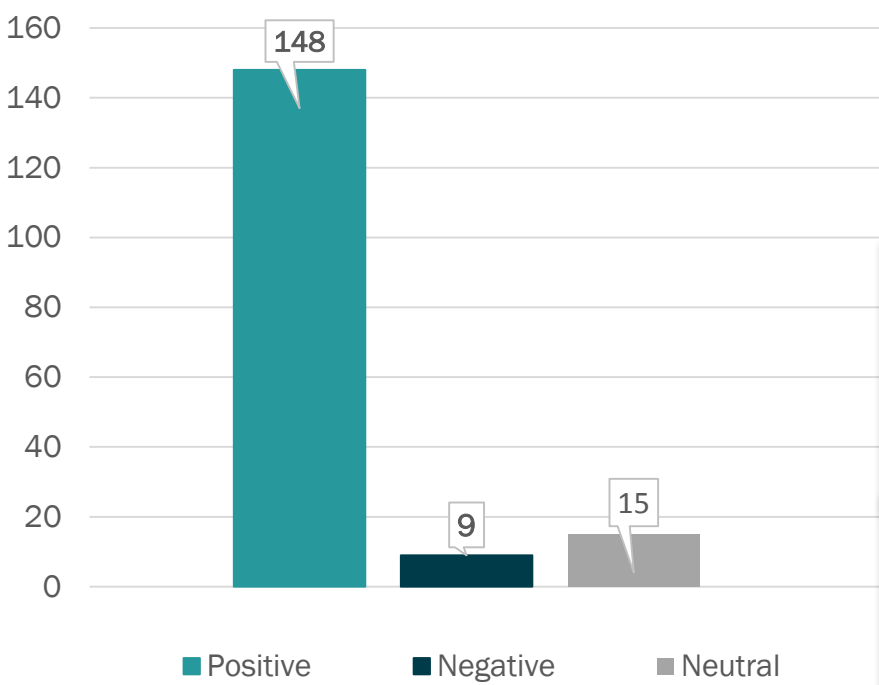


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Public Affairs

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Positive vs. Negative News Stories

DWSD News Coverage: September 1 – September 30, 2019



What does sustainability look like in Detroit, a city that is going through changes that some consider a renaissance? The Erb Institute talked with five people who are working to make Detroit more sustainable—in wildly divergent ways, from bees, to dirt, to real estate development, to stormwater. This is Part 3 of 5.

Palencia Mobley, Detroit Water and Sewerage Department

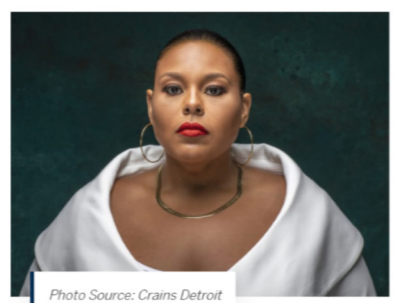


Photo Source: Crains Detroit

Nobody really knows what the climate will look like in 10 or 20 years, but this year, Detroit has seen excessive rainfall, said Palencia Mobley, deputy director and chief engineer of the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). “This year, we’ve seen river levels that we’ve never ever seen in the City of Detroit. And some people may think it’s temporary —others of us may think it’s the new normal,” she said. “How do you adapt to that?”

One way the city is adapting is through [green stormwater infrastructure \(GSI\) projects](#), such as planting trees, demolishing and “greening” vacant properties, converting impervious parking areas into pervious ones, and building swales and bioretention practices (also called rain gardens). They manage stormwater runoff by retaining the water on site or, in some cases, slowing it down before it reaches the city’s combined sewer system.

In September, the DWSD Public Affairs team saw a total of **172** media stories. The majority of the positive stories were a result of Deputy Director and Chief Engineer Palencia Mobley's Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) columns (3 in total). The other positive story promoted the GSI Workshop hosted by Detroit Future City. Most of the neutral stories were updates on the Larned Street water main break. The negative articles were about a bicyclist being hit by a DWSD employee and fire hydrant issues. Of the stories, 4 were broadcast, 162 were print/online and 6 were radio.

PLEASE NOTE: For this metric, each story/interview published or aired is counted.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Social Media Activity



20
New Facebook Followers

7,873
Total Followers on Facebook

10,158
Engagement on Facebook



10
New Twitter Followers

1,610
Total Followers on Twitter

120
Engagement on Twitter



55
New Instagram Followers

1,278
Total Followers on Instagram

24
Engagement on Instagram

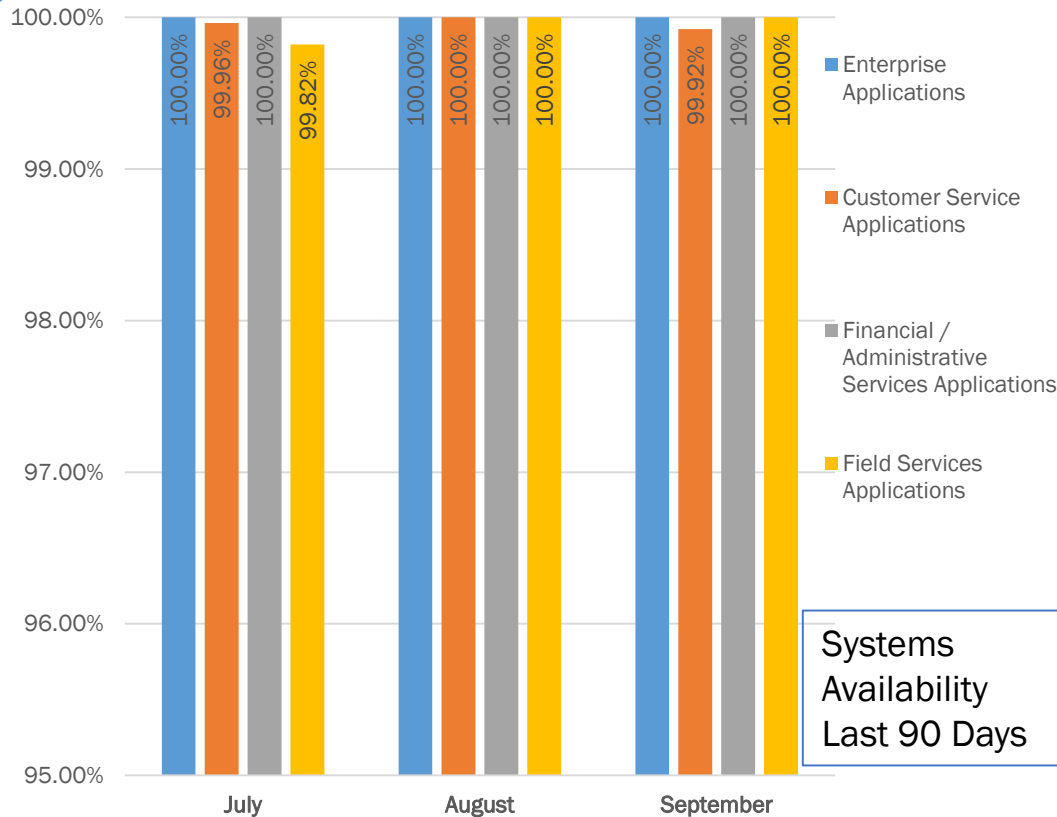


The DWSD Public Affairs team gained **85** new followers on social media in September 2019, bringing the total number of followers to **10,761**. In addition to the metrics above, Facebook saw a total of 557,670 impressions and 5,561 link clicks. The top performing post on Facebook was on September 4 about Palencia Mobley, Deputy Director and Chief Engineer, being honored as a Crain’s Detroit “40 Under 40” honoree, with 452 reactions, 49 comments and 53 shares. The top performing Twitter post was an Employee Spotlight on Brandi N. (Finance group) on September 24. The top performing Instagram post was on September 6 about washing off your fruits and vegetables collectively in a tub as a water saving tip.

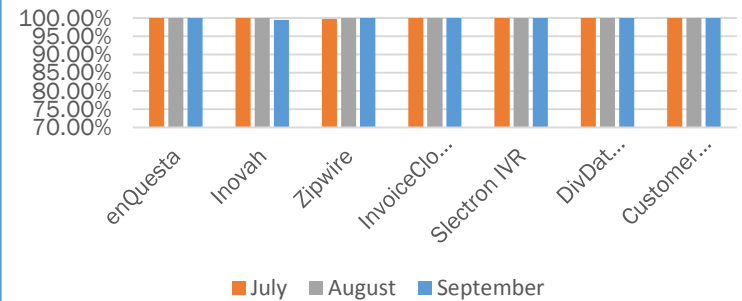


Information Technology

Technology: Application Availability



Customer Service Application Availability



99.97%

MONTHLY AVAILABILITY
99.9% = TARGET

In the Informational Technology (IT) Group, the major projects underway are the transition from Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) IT shared services which includes new network, active director, BOX.com, print/fax services, IVR upgrade to the cloud, and GIS (Geographic Information System) to City of Detroit migration; launch of fleet management programs AssetWorks, FleetFocus and FuelFocus; CityWorks to replace WAM work order system; and Customer Care Web Portal phase two.