



**Water & Sewerage
Department**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 20, 2020



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE TO THE BOARD



- The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) executive team made the tough and responsible decision to furlough 336 employees due to reduced revenue from bill payments resulting from temporary job losses in our community amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - No DWSD employees were laid off.
 - The furloughs are through July 31, 2020.
 - Financials will be closely monitored to either reduce, end or extend the furloughs.
 - DWSD will implement other cost reduction measures.
- The DWSD staff continued to restore water to occupied houses as part of the COVID-19 Water Restart Plan.
 - More than 1,600 households had service restored by the end of April – updated data is provided daily at www.detroitmi.gov on the City's COVID-19 Dashboard.
 - Contrary to some members of the community, there are not thousands of households without water service.
- Mayor Mike Duggan and Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency announced in April the CARES program with \$11 million in funding, \$3 million of which is earmarked for water assistance.
 - DWSD customers enrolled in the Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) or the 10/30/50 Plan will receive a \$250 account credit toward their past due balance.
 - An additional \$1 million will be available to allow more households to enroll in WRAP – 550 of the households that were restored in March/April through the COVID-19 Water Restart Plan have been enrolled in WRAP, so far.
 - Income-eligible households that need plumbing repairs may qualify for assistance up to \$5,000 per house.
- The Tiger Dam installation to help reduce flooding from expected high Detroit River water levels this spring, and protect the Conner Creek Combined Sewer Overflow Facility will be completed in May.
 - The installation is a collaborative effort with DWSD, the General Services Department and the Army Corps of Engineers.





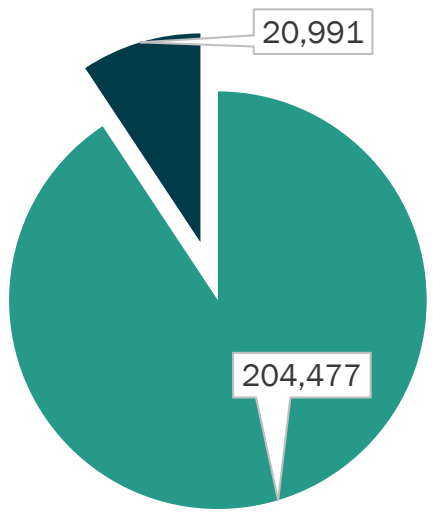
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Customer Care

CUSTOMER CARE: Number of Active Accounts

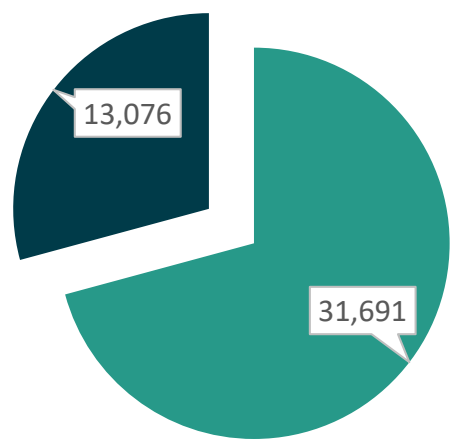


Active Residential Accounts



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

Active Non-Residential Accounts



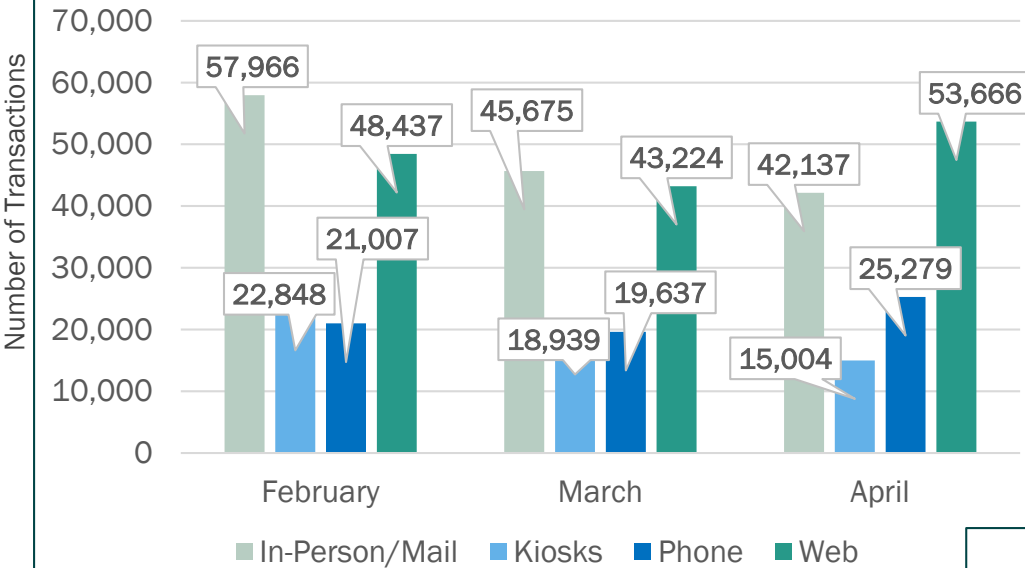
■ Water/Sewerage/Drainage ■ Drainage Only (no water service)

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

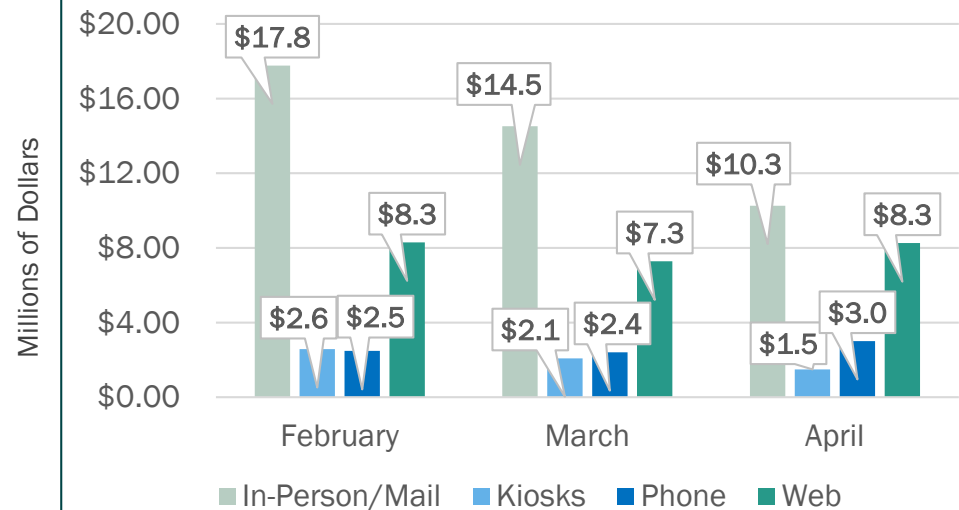
CUSTOMER CARE: Transactions



Payment Transactions by Platform Type



Revenue Collected by Platform Type



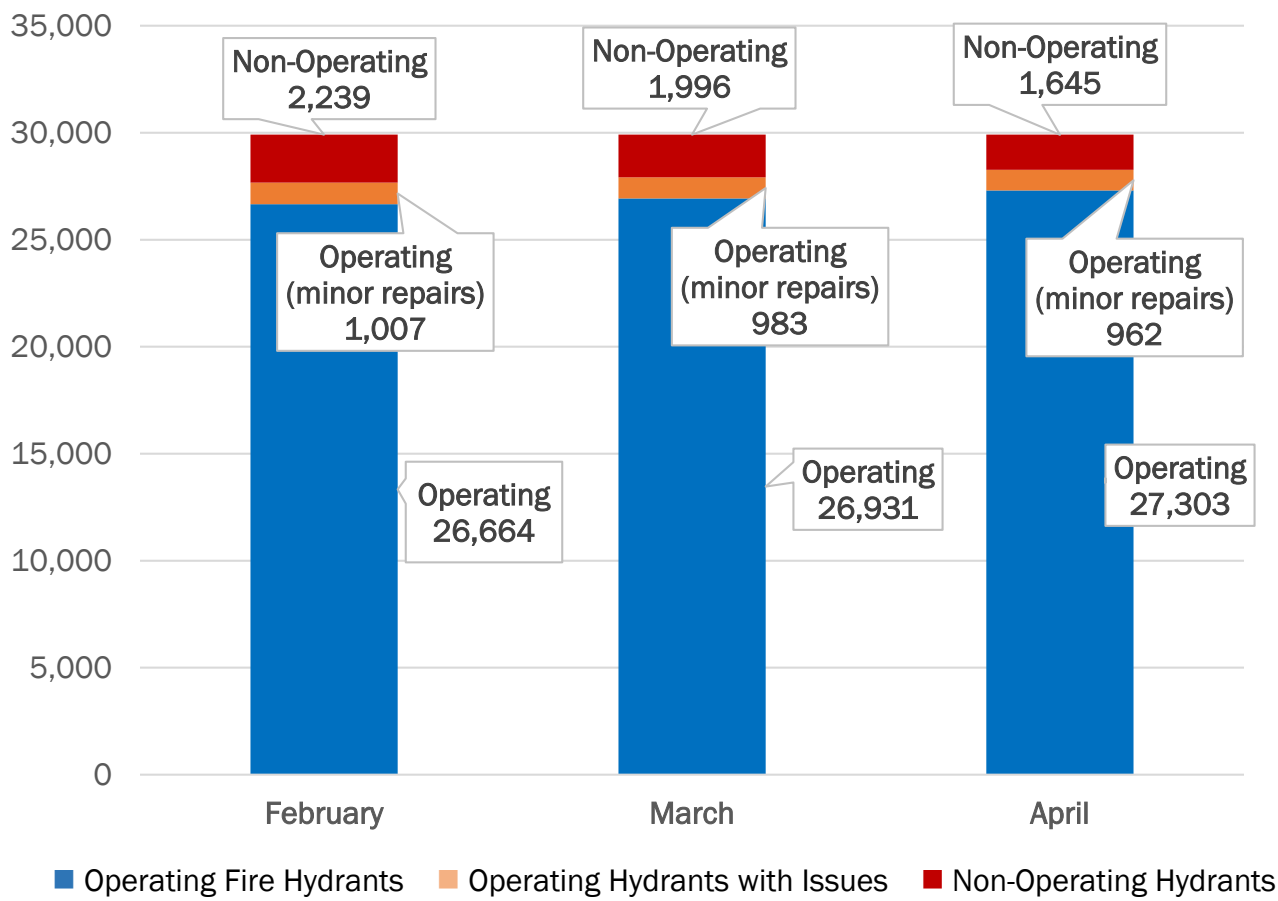
The economic impact of COVID-19 on bill collections begins to appear in March 2020 when some customers suffer job loss, as well as Customer Care Centers and several kiosk locations temporarily close due to Governor Whitmer's Stay at Home, Stay Safe order.



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Field Services

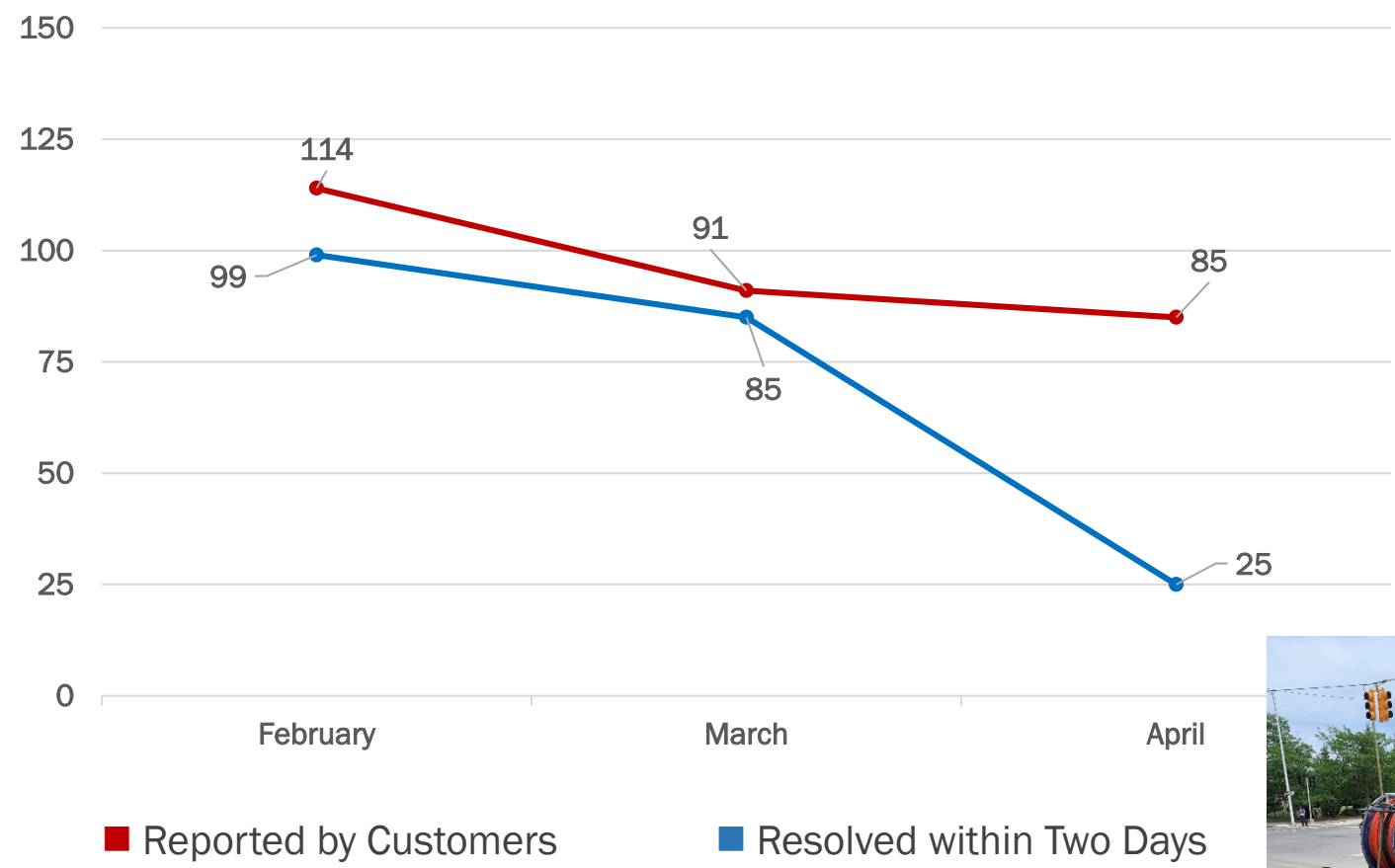
FIELD SERVICES: Fire Hydrant Maintenance



During the COVID-19 pandemic, DWSD continued to make fire hydrant maintenance a priority as can be seen by the repair trends over the last three months.

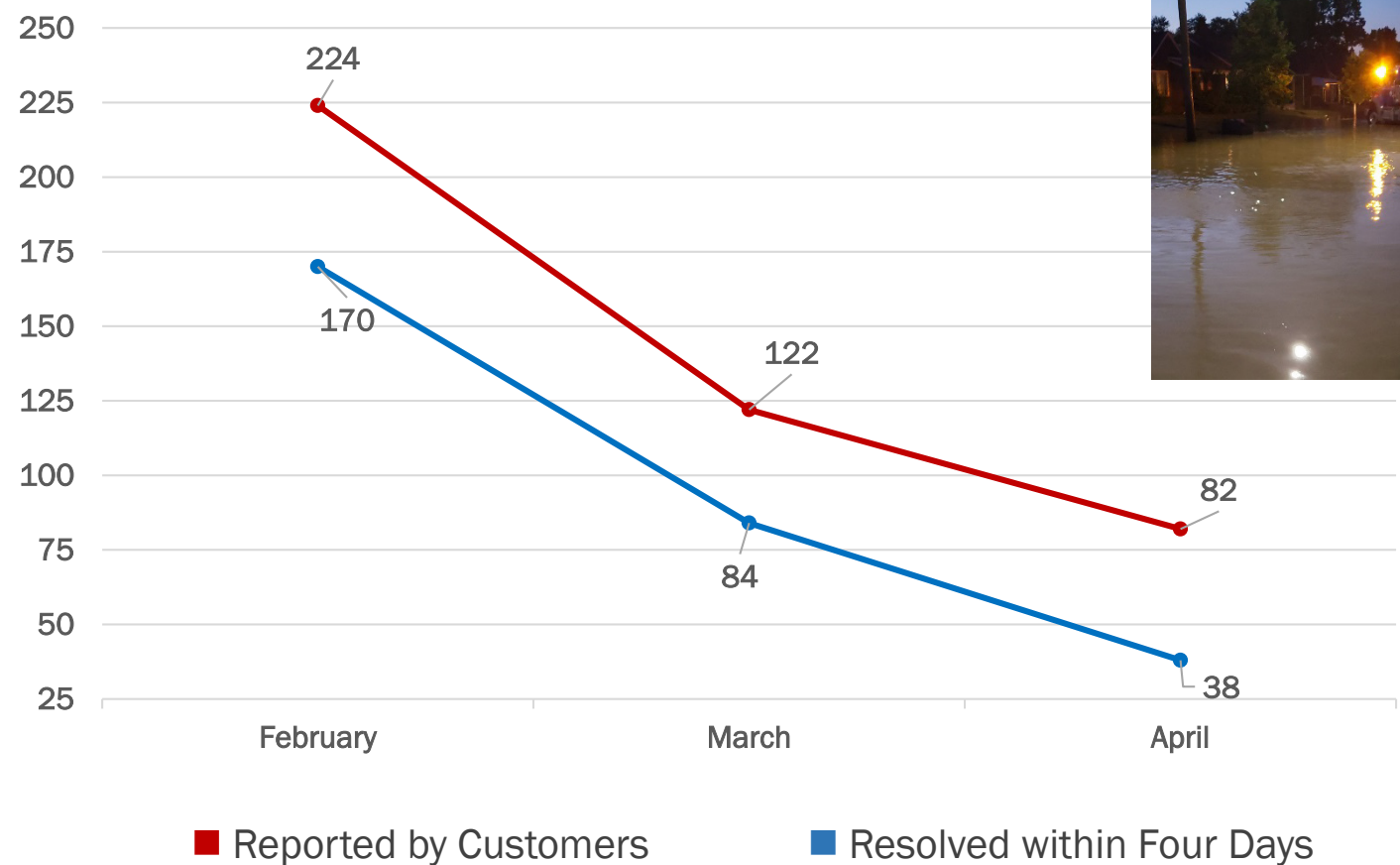


FIELD SERVICES: Running Water



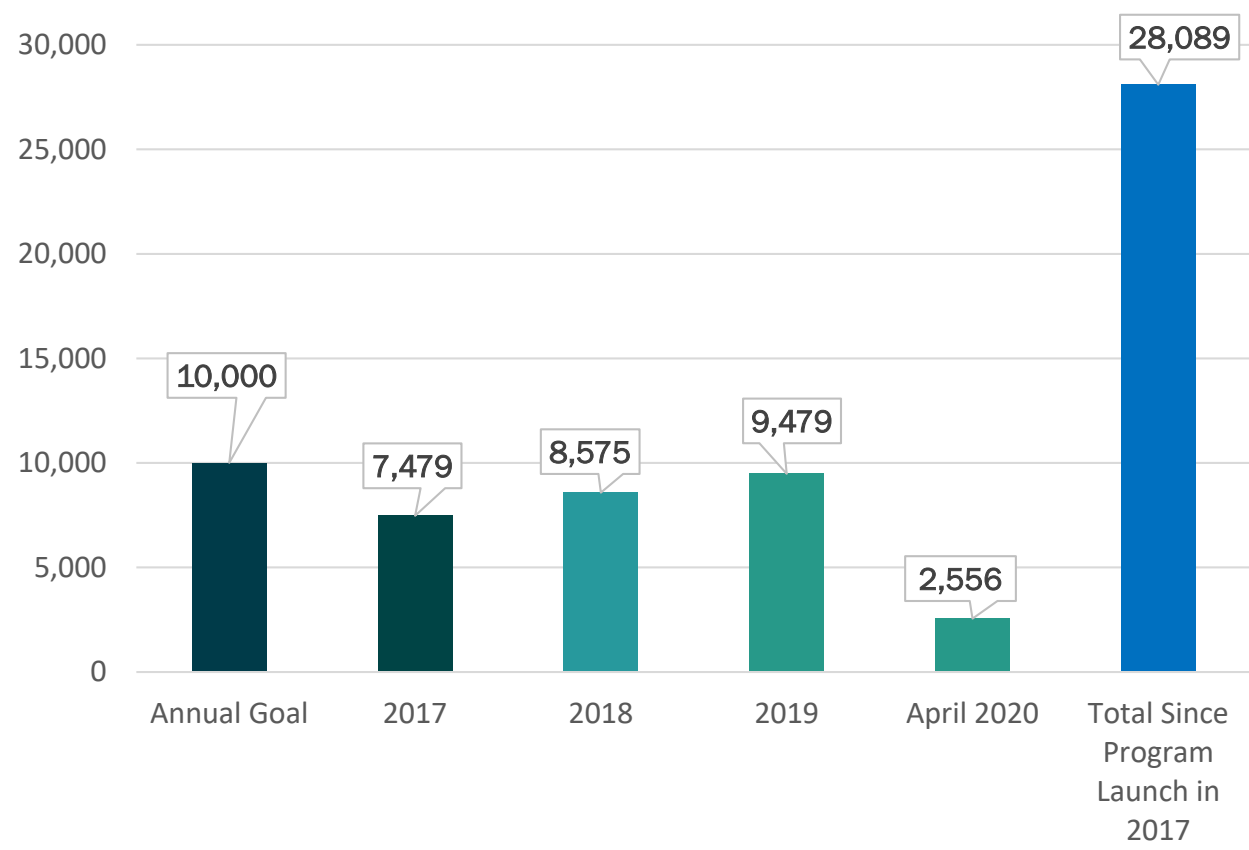
Due to the COVID-19 outbreak with the governor’s stay-at-home order and the economic impact resulting in temporary staff furloughs, DWSD is prioritizing work orders based on customer impact (i.e., number of customers affected).

FIELD SERVICES: Water Main Breaks



Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, DWSD is prioritizing work orders based on impact to customers. 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. Fortunately this year’s winter has been historically warm.

FIELD SERVICES: Catch Basin Inspection & Cleaning



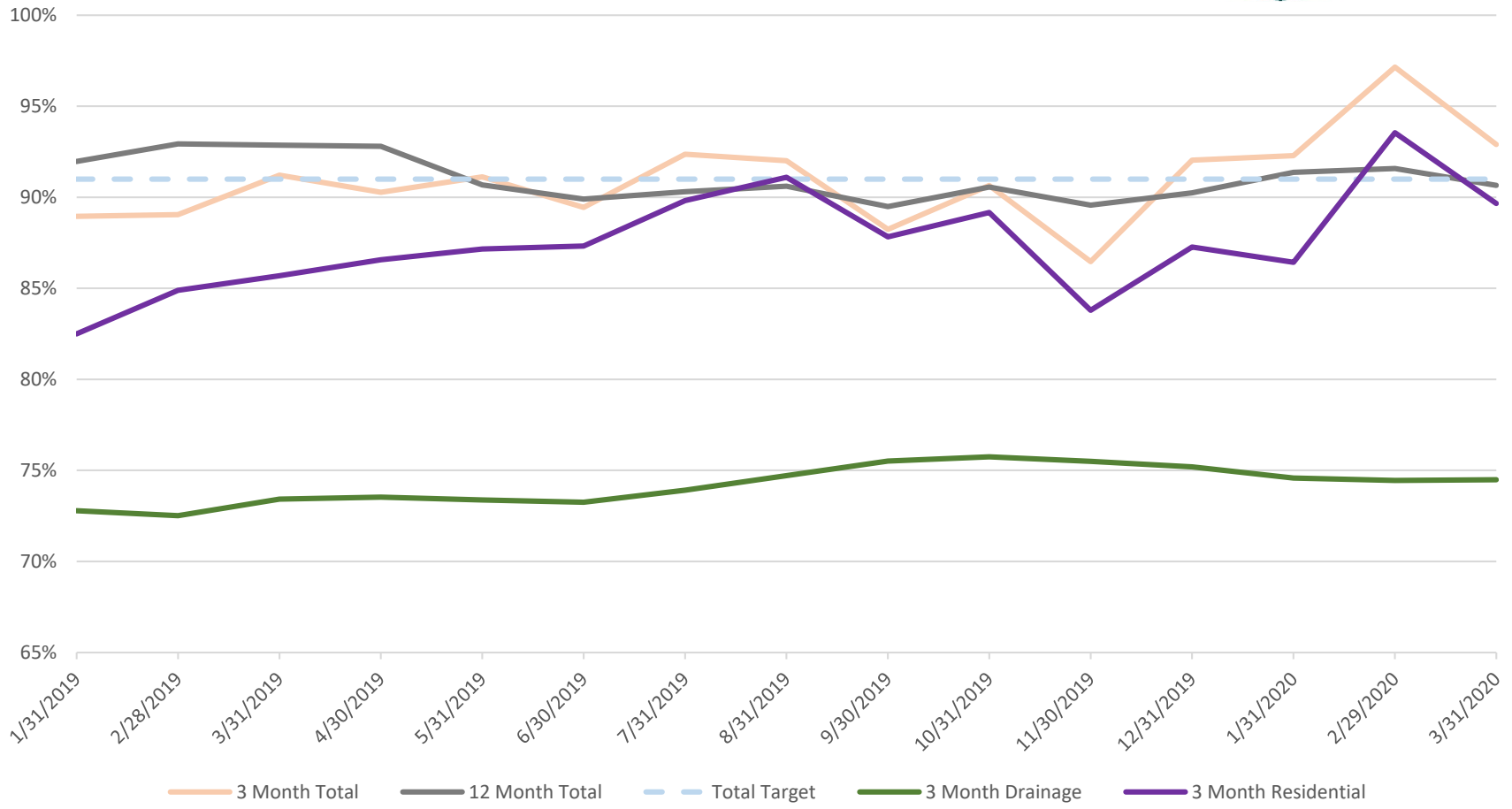
Since the catch basin inspection and cleaning program launched in 2017, crews have touched more than 28,000 of the estimated 90,000 catch basins. The goal is 30,000 by August 2020 and DWSD is expected to exceed this objective.



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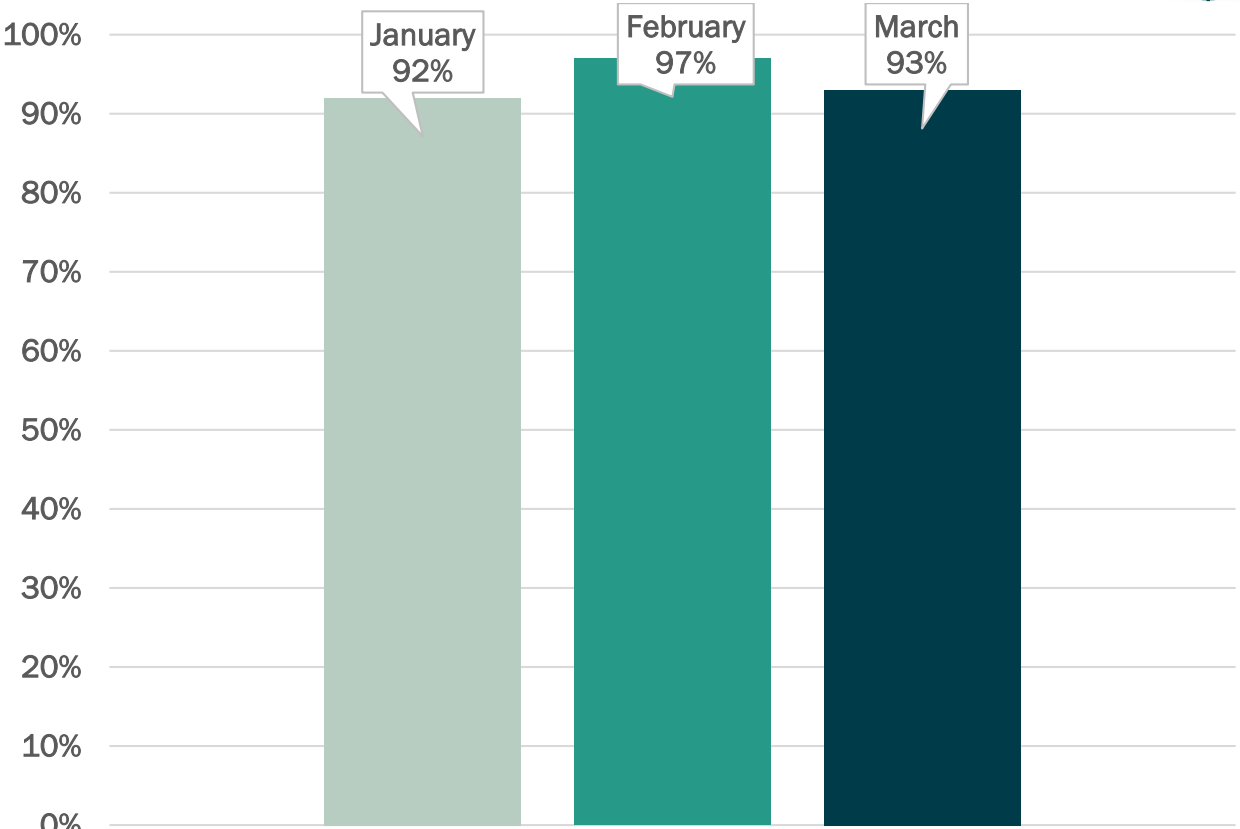
Finance

FINANCE: Bill Collection Rate



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact, there has been significant impact on the collection rate. The leadership team will work every avenue to stabilize the collections amid the crisis.

FINANCE: Bill Collection Rate



3-Month Rolling Average Collection Rate for All Accounts

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.



\$78,334,328

Water cash balance as of
March 31, 2020

\$125,521,631

Sewer cash balance as of
March 31, 2020

The operating cash days-on-hand as of March 31, 2020 is 121 days. The target is 120 days.

Due to when the books close after each month and following the reconciliation, the Finance Group data in this section is from two months prior to this report.



Legal Services

LEGAL: Claims, Hearings and Cases



25

Cases handled by
in-house staff

9

Cases handled by
outside counsel

0

Lawsuits dismissed

11

Lawsuits dismissed in
FY2020

Postponed

Dispute hearings

Postponed

Number of cases
DWSD prevailed

N/A

Property damage claims

Postponed

Amount in property
damage claims

Postponed

Amount of total claims
recommended to be paid

Postponed

Amount in dispute

Postponed

Credited to customers
based on hearing outcomes

Postponed

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.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and Governor Whitmer’s Stay at Home, Stay Safe Order, the legal proceedings have been postponed.



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Investigations

INVESTIGATIONS: Results

740

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



Money Owed to DWSD identified by Investigators

\$3,868,569

Total since July 1, 2019

\$850,172

Back billed

\$2,847,049

Future owed in 12 months

\$171,348

Water loss



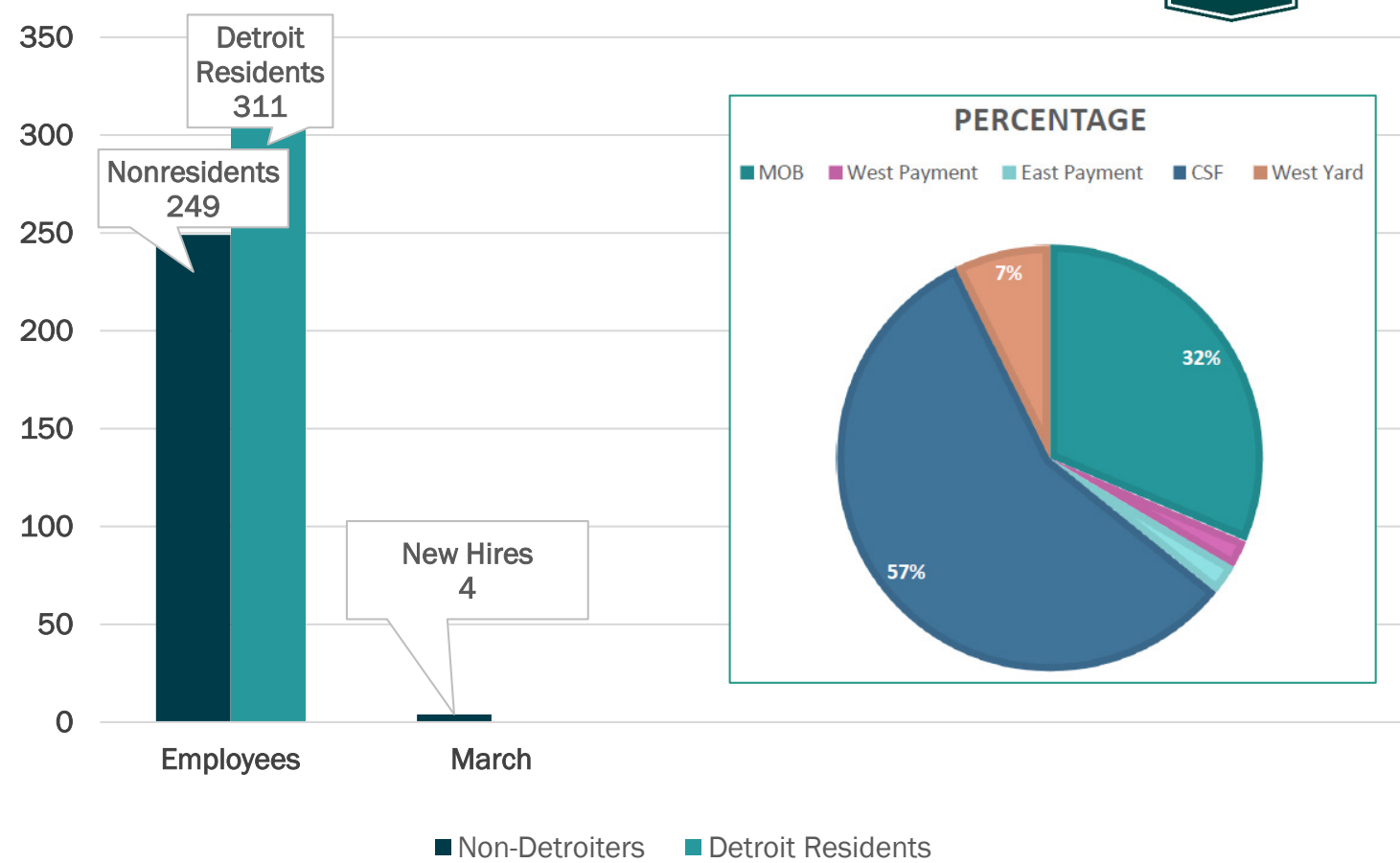
The DWSD Revenue Recovery Unit has postponed most of its in-person investigations due to the Governor’s Stay Home, Stay Safe Order for the COVID-19 pandemic. Since August 2017, the unit, in collaboration with customer service/billing, has identified more than \$12 million in services owed by primarily commercial customers. They uncover severe delinquencies, non-working meters, unauthorized use of fire hydrants, meter tampering, or connected to the city’s water main without a meter and/or permit. The unit works closely with the collections and legal staff.



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Human Resources

HUMAN RESOURCES: Detroit Residents and Hiring



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

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

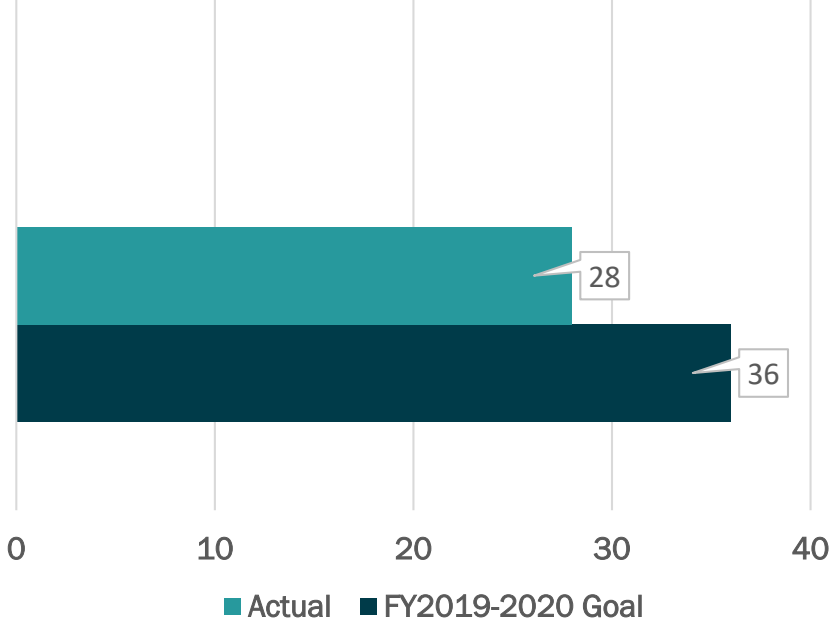


Public Affairs

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Good News



DWSD Good News Media Stories:
FY2019-2020



The Detroit News

OPINION

Opinion: Detroit keeps the water running

Gary A. BrownPublished 11:00 p.m. ET April 1, 2020

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EMAIL

MORE

Now, more than ever, we need to come together as a city during the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak.

During this crisis, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is operating near full capacity — focusing on water restorations, customer service, and emergency water and sewer repairs.

On March 9, Mayor Mike Duggan and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced the Water Restart Plan designed to restore water in occupied households with water off in Detroit, amid the pending outbreak

This month, the team garnered 2 positive pitched news stories. The first was an Opinion Piece (Op-Ed) by Director Brown detailing DWSD’s Water Restart Plan and that every customer has the opportunity to get their water restored. The second was a media alert to customers asking them to be proactive and remove trash and debris from catch basins to reduce street flooding in preparation of the rain that was predicted.

PLEASE NOTE: For this metric, news stories are only counted once per topic, not by the number of media outlets picking up the story.

LOCAL NEWS

Detroit preps for potential flooding, urges residents to help reduce impact

Kayla Clarke, Web Producer

Published: April 29, 2020, 8:22 pm

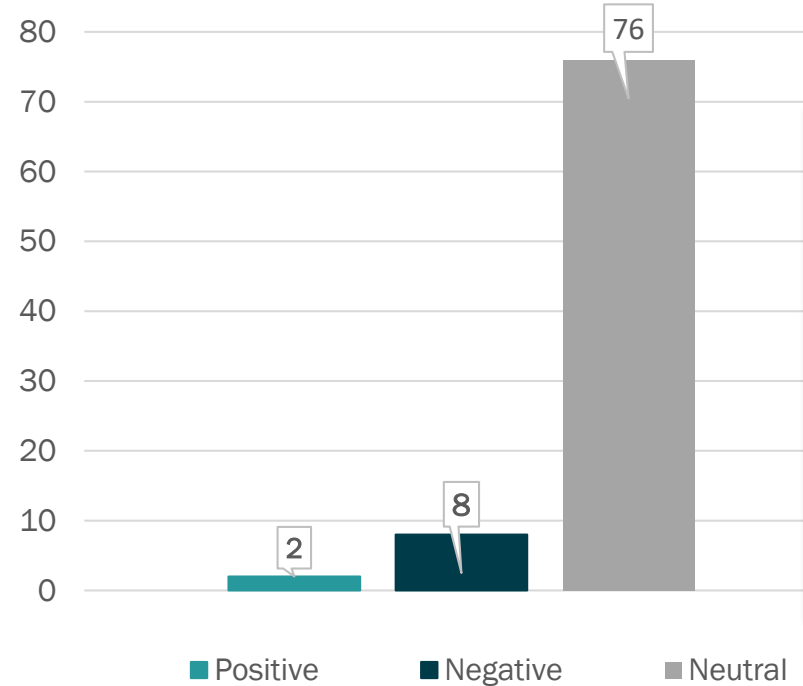
Tags: [Detroit](#), [Wayne County](#), [News](#), [Local](#), [Detroit Water And Sewerage Department](#), [Flooding](#), [DWSD](#), [Rain](#), [Potential Flooding](#), [Flooding Preparations](#)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Positive vs. Negative News Stories

DWSD News Coverage: April 1 – April 30, 2020



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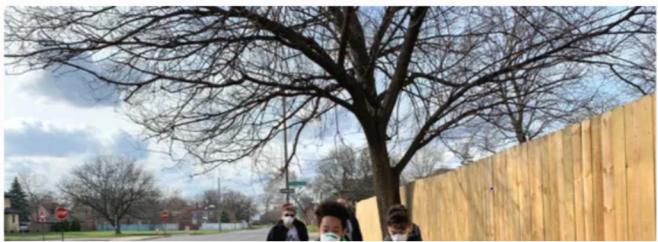


Detroit Free Press

Detroiters have always fought to survive. Coronavirus crisis is no different

jessica Care moore Published 8:00 a.m. ET April 24, 2020 | Updated 5:37 p.m. ET April 25, 2020

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In April, the DWSD Public Affairs team saw a total of 86 media stories. Majority of all the stories were about COVID-19 and DWSD’s Water Restart Plan. The negative stories focused on customers who were still without water service. Most of the stories provided the details of the plan and how customers could sign up. Of the stories, 5 were broadcast, 73 were print/online and 8 were radio.

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



PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Social Media Activity



130
New Facebook Followers

8,437
Total Followers on Facebook

28,850
Engagement on Facebook



13
New Twitter Followers

1,682
Total Followers on Twitter

547
Engagement on Twitter



31
New Instagram Followers

1,434
Total Followers on Instagram

62
Engagement on Instagram



The DWSD Public Affairs team gained **174** new followers on social media in April 2020, bringing the total number of followers to **11,553**. In addition to the metrics above, Facebook saw a total of 916K impressions and 3,314 link clicks for the month. The top performing posts on both Facebook (April 2) and Instagram (April 1), was a video with Deputy Director Palencia Mobley, P.E. showing how DWSD workers were still working hard during COVID-19 to restore water to Detroit residents. The Facebook post had 1,792 total engagement, 342 reactions and 20 comments. On Twitter the post on April 17 regarding the Tiger Dams in Jefferson Chalmers was top performing.

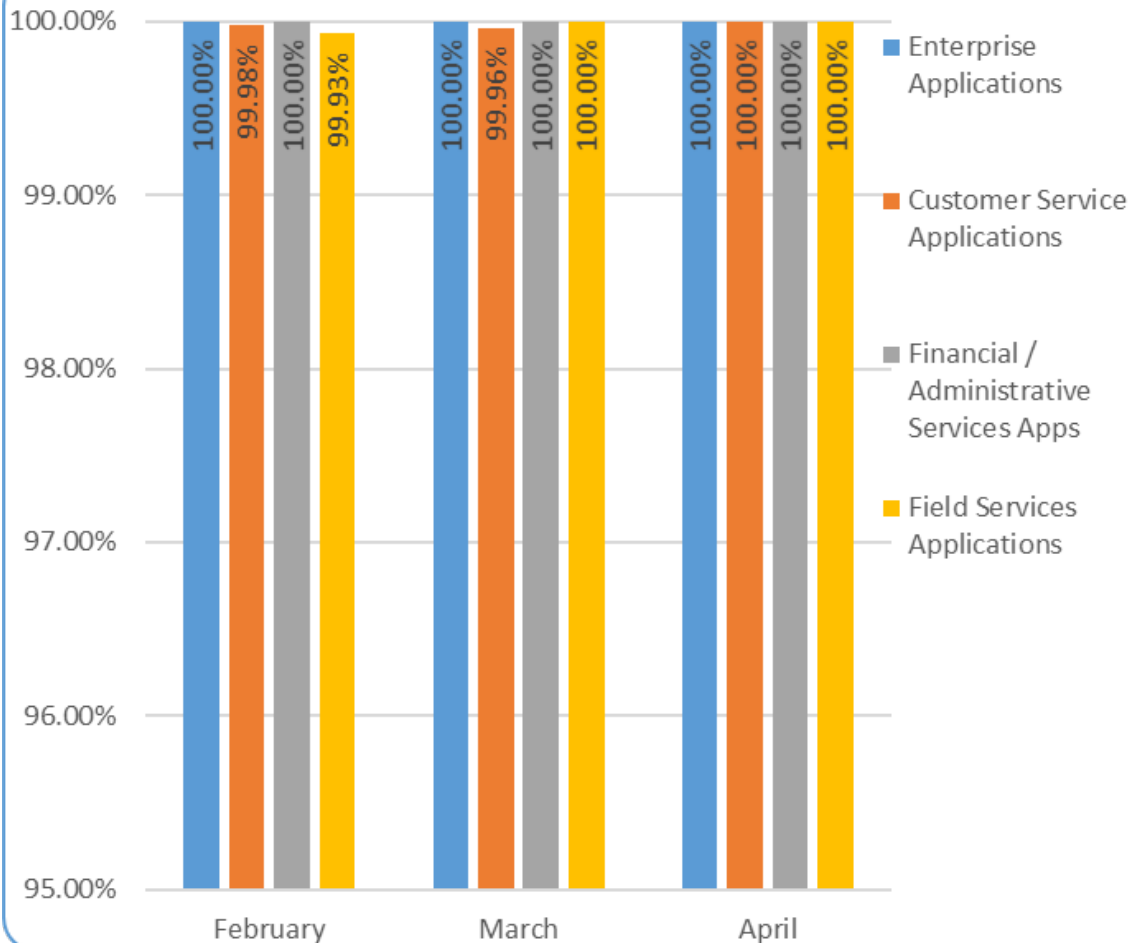


Information Technology

Technology: Application Availability

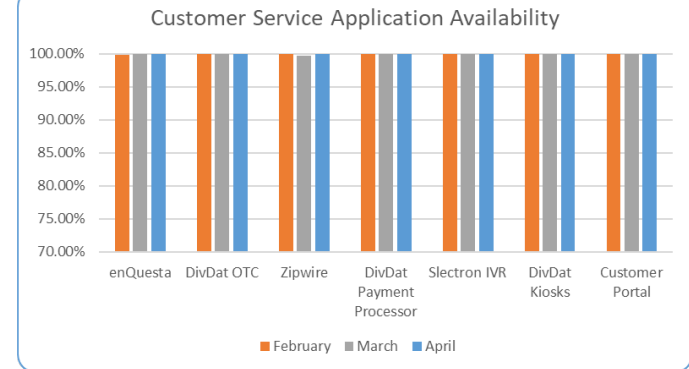


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Major IT Projects:

- enQuesta Upgrade
- GLWA IT Infrastructure Separation
- CIPMO Tech (CityWorks, enQuesta Link, eBuilder)



100.00%

MONTHLY AVAILABILITY
99.9% = TARGET

Service Desk Stats: Month of April

- 339 remote workers
- 321 new tickets opened
- 303 April tickets closed