

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT



DETROIT  
**Water & Sewerage  
Department**

**June 15, 2016**

## Customers Current on DWSD Bills

TBD (data will be aggregated)

## Active in Payment Plans

34,594 7.4% ↑

## Customers Shut-Off Eligible

11,862 51.2% ↓

## Customer AMR Meters

Repaired/Replaced TBD

## Collection Rate

April 30 – 73.8% 1.9% ↓

## Fire Hydrant Repairs

5,333 Repaired  
288 Backlogged 14.1% ↑

## Reports of Running Water

1,390 Reported  
98% Cases Closed 2.0% ↓

## Water Main Breaks

559 Reported  
91% Cases Closed 9.0% ↓

## Catch Basin Repairs

1,096 Reported  
77% Cases Closed 146.0% ↑

## Customer Dispute Resolutions

% of Cases Closed TBD

## Information Technology

App Availability 0.42% ↓

# Customers Staying Connected

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) recognizes that approximately 30 percent of customers encounter financial struggles. The Customer Care and Public Affairs staff has made strides this year to help residents stay connected by improving customer relations, launching assistance programs and educating Detroit residents on how to get help with their water and sewer bills.



The “Stay Connected” outreach effort publicly launched when DWSD held a press conference on April 27, followed by a Water Assistance Fair on Saturday, April 30. More than 1,400 customers came to the Eastside and Downtown locations. This was the last Saturday before shut-offs were scheduled to begin. DWSD also purchased print, radio and social media advertisements to inform customers of the fair and available options.

As a result of DWSD staff efforts, close to 5,000 residential customers who faced shut-off avoided a disconnection by entering a payment plan arrangement in May.


This report includes an update on the status of DWSD customers as of June 9, 2016.

# Attaching Names to Accounts

A significant step to improve DWSD’s business practices is to attach names to water and sewer accounts. Currently, DWSD has a parcel-based billing system whereby the account remains with the property. This causes several customer relations and billing issues. The least of which is pursuing the customer for past due balances after they vacated the property. Under the new system, the account will follow the resident rather than staying with the property.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Affordability recommended DWSD begin the process to attach names to the accounts. Attaching names to accounts is a standard utility practice used across the country.

On April 4, DWSD Customer Care staff began the process with a new policy (shown below) for establishing service. This includes residents who move into Detroit, residents who move to a new location within the city, and residents who are restoring their service.



## New Customer Care Policies

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Effective April 4, 2016

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is introducing **NEW** Customer Care policies for establishing **NEW** service.

New Identification Requirements	
Acceptable government-issued ID with social security number:	
• Driver’s License	• State-Issued ID
• Passport	• Military ID

New Verification Requirements	
• If your name is not registered on the account, Proof of Ownership or VALID lease is required to establish or re-establish water service at the property	
• Landlords can no longer establish service in a tenant’s name	

New Deposit Requirements	
Customers establishing new service may pay by the following methods:	
• Cash	• Money Order
• Cashier’s Check	• Credit/Debit Card

Additional Information	
• Detroit Water and Sewerage Website: <a href="http://www.detroitmi.gov/dwswd" style="color: blue;">www.detroitmi.gov/dwswd</a>	

Close to 5,000 customer accounts have names attached since the policy was launched.

Currently, the new policy does not impact the majority of DWSD customers who pay on time every month and have no intention of moving.



# Educating Detroiters on Catch Basins: Improve Detroit Video

DWSD collaborated with the Ohio State University to educate customers on catch basins by creating a mobile-friendly video. The City of Detroit has more than 95,000 catch basins. The community can take steps to help minimize street flooding. For instance, residents should sweep grass clippings and debris from the street and place in a refuse bag after mowing their lawns. Yard waste buildup can cause catch basins to clog.



The video also informs residents and businesses on which catch basins are the responsibility of DWSD. Storm drains on private property are the responsibility of the owner.

Residents may report blocked catch basins in the public right-of-way to DWSD through the Improve Detroit mobile app by taking a photo and using GPS on their mobile device to indicate the location, or by calling 313-267-7401.

The new catch basin video, produced by City of Detroit Media Services, is available through a variety of platforms, including the Improve Detroit app, the City website ([detroitmi.gov/dwsd](http://detroitmi.gov/dwsd)), City and DWSD social media accounts, and on Cable Channel 10/22.

# Director and Deputy Director Speak at US Water Alliance Summit



The US Water Alliance held the #OneWater16 Summit in Atlanta, Georgia on June 8-10. The Alliance is a trade association for water utilities and related businesses, foundations and non-profits which “advances policies and programs that build a sustainable water future for all.” Director Gary Brown and Deputy Director/Chief Engineer Palencia Mobley participated.



Director Brown spoke about water and affordability during a workshop. His presentation was on how DWSD is improving customer service to reduce service disconnections for delinquent accounts and alter the water shut-off narrative in Detroit by placing more residents into payment plan arrangements. He challenged the summit attendees to find a more generous assistance plan in America than the Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) which was launched on March 1.

Deputy Director Mobley participated in a green infrastructure workshop. DWSD and the City will place more emphasis on green infrastructure to reduce the amount of storm water in the combined sewer system. The City of Detroit is well positioned to be a national leader in this area.

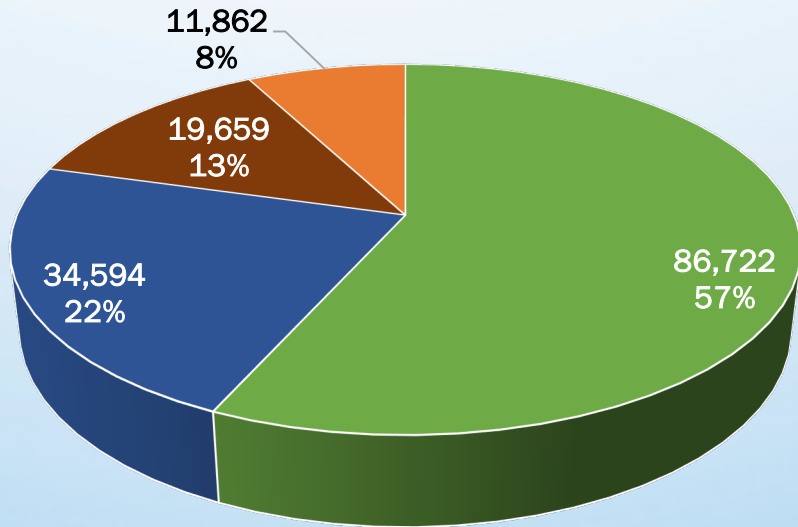
Water utility conferences, such as the US Water Alliance Summit, are beneficial to learning innovation from others and sharing DWSD success stories.



# Customer Care



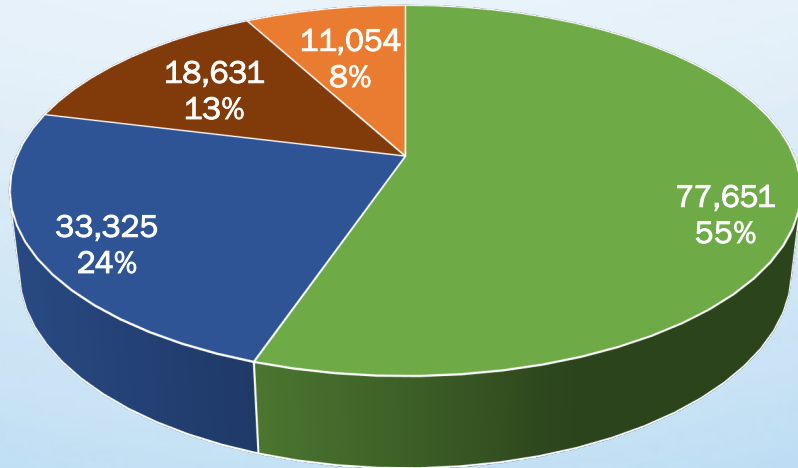
# Customer Care: Account Status (all customers)



- Current
- Active in Payment Plan
- Over 60 Days & Less Than \$150 Past Due
- Shut-Off Eligible



# Customer Care: Account Status (residential)



- Current
- Active in Payment Plan
- Over 60 Days & Less Than \$150 Past Due
- Shut-Off Eligible



# Customer Care: Current (residential)



# Customer Care: Payment Plan Arrangements (residential)





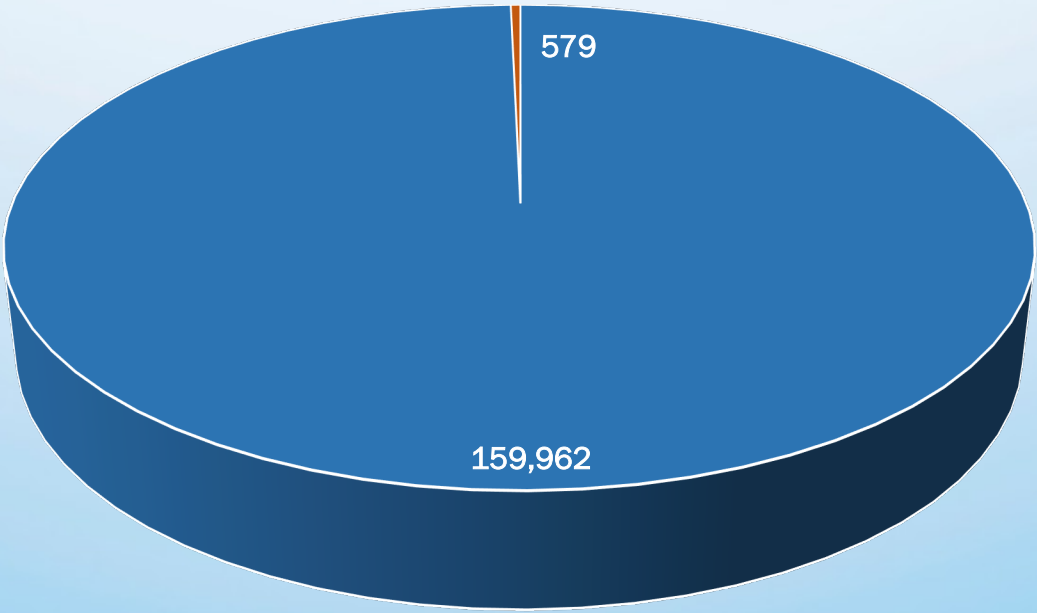
# Customer Care: On the Bubble (residential 60 days & \$150 past due)



# Customer Care: Shut-Off Eligible (residential)



# Customer Care: Meter Operations\* (residential)

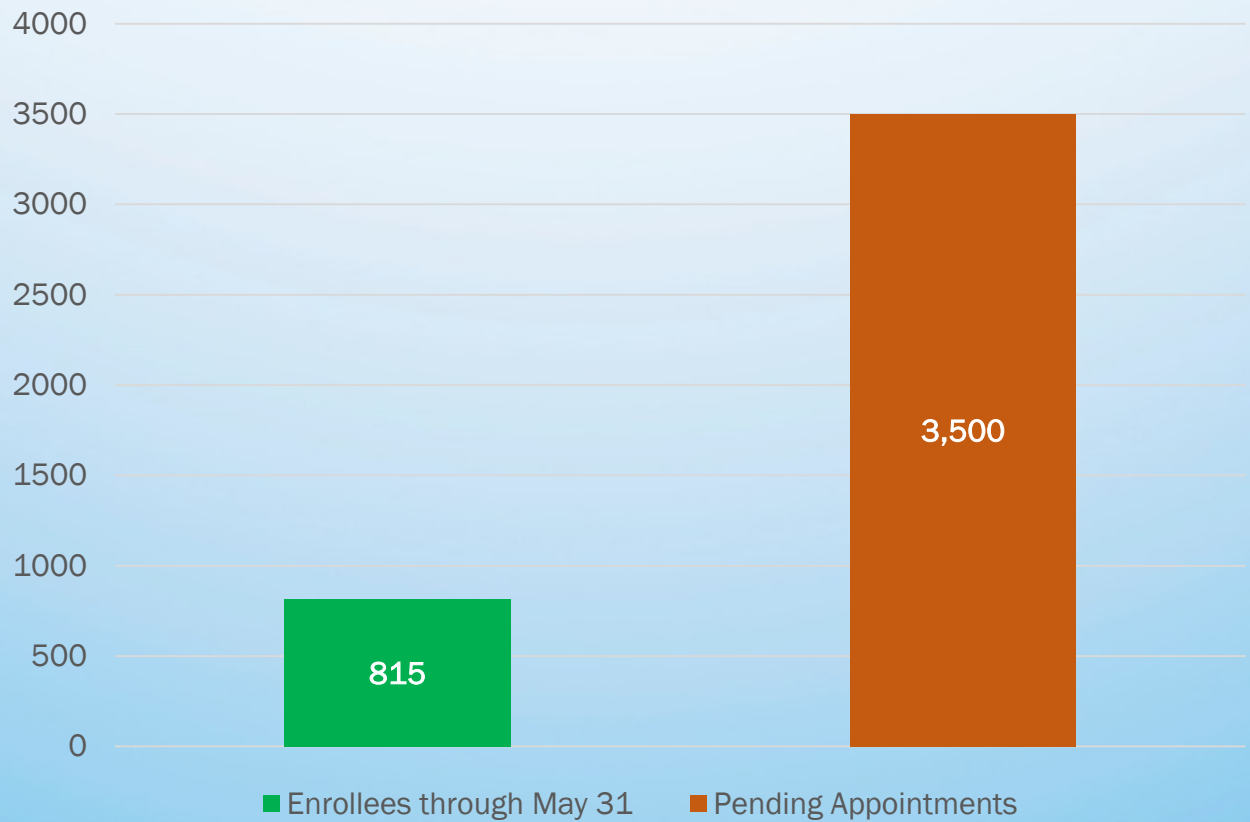


■ Residential with AMR Meter    ■ Residential with Non-AMR Meter

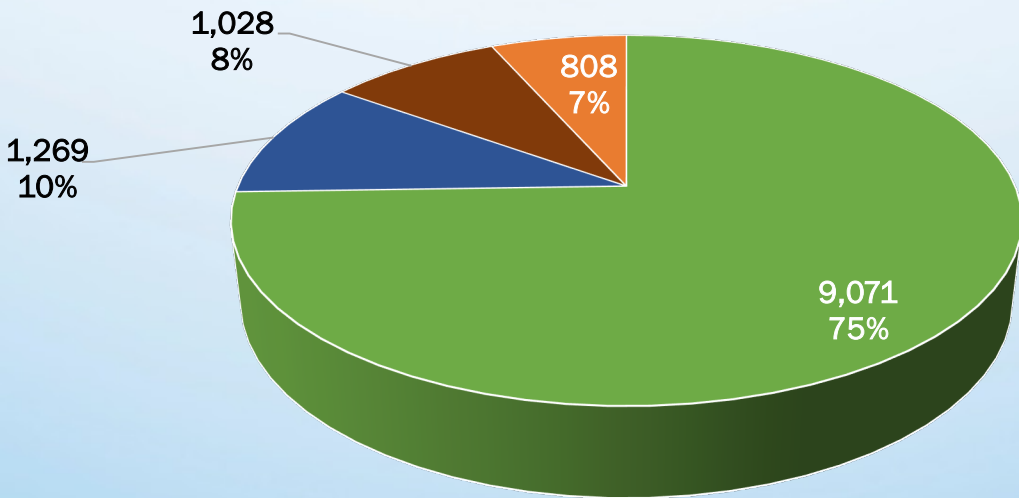


\*These figures are from the April 2016 report and will be updated in the July report. The number of AMR meters which are malfunctioning and the number which have been repaired will be included in future reports as well.

# Customer Care: WRAP



# Customer Care: Account Status\* (commercial)



- Current
- Active in Plan
- Over 60 Days & Less Than \$150 Past Due
- Shut-Off Eligible



# Customer Care: Current (commercial)



# Customer Care: Payment Plan Arrangements (commercial)



# Customer Care: On the Bubble (commercial 60 days & \$150 past due)

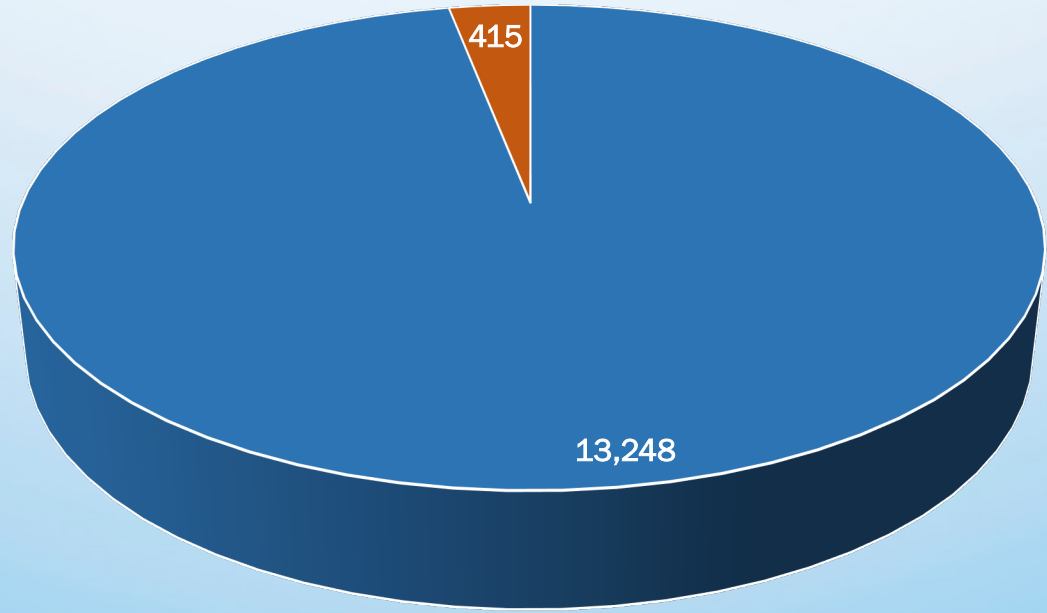




# Customer Care: Shut-Off Eligible (commercial)



# Customer Care: Meter Operations\* (commercial)



■ Commercial with AMR Meter    ■ Commercial with Non-AMR Meter

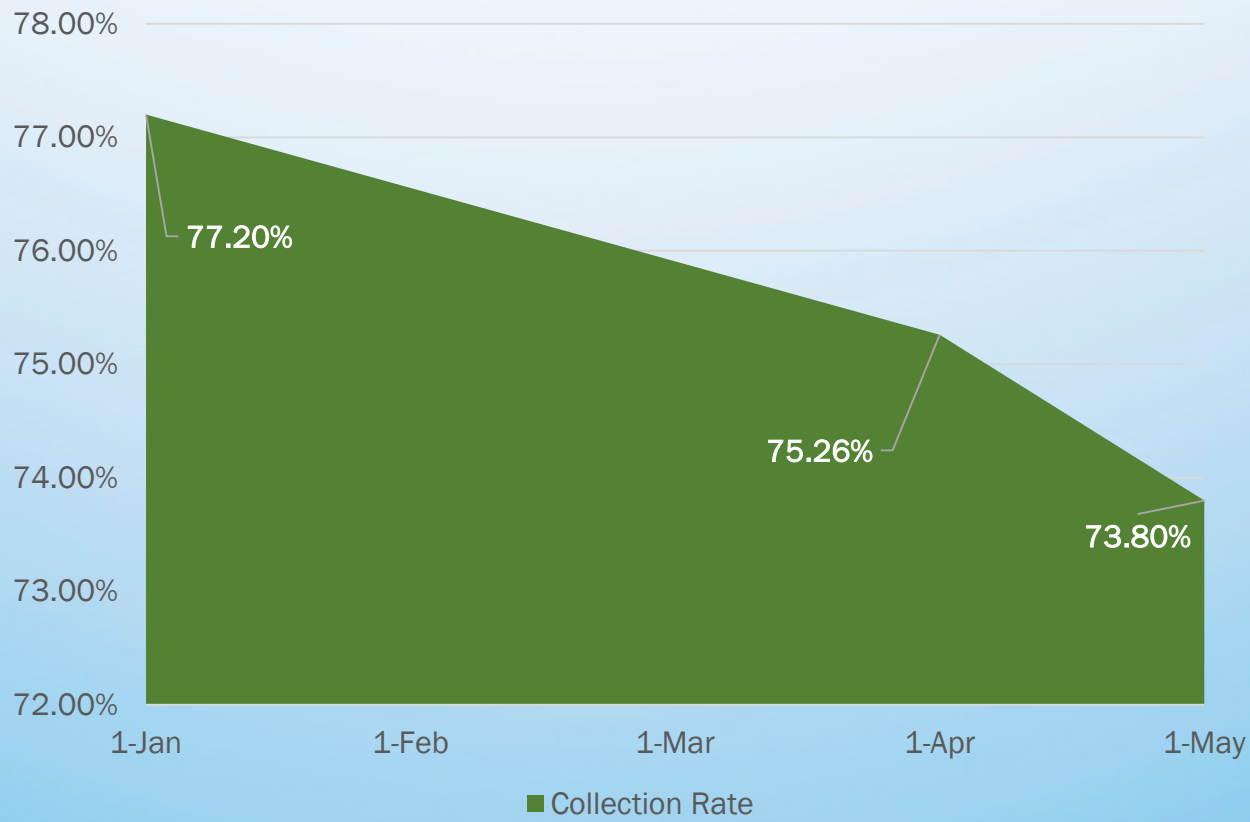
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# Finance



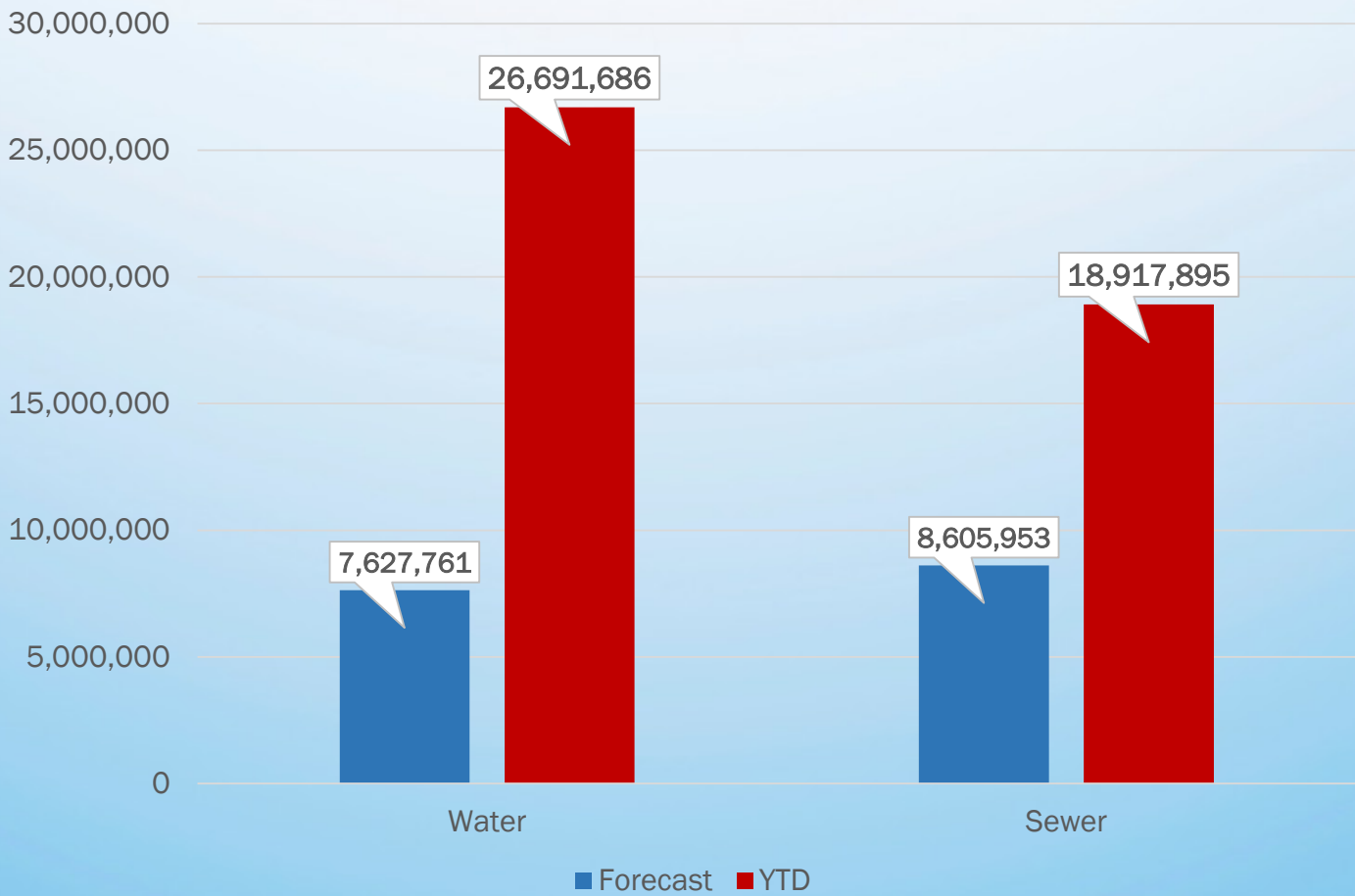
# Finance: Collection Rate\*



\*The long-term collection rate below the 90% target is likely temporary as it dips in non-shutoff months and the months immediately following. Customer Care has improved collections as indicated in the customer account data shown on previous pages.



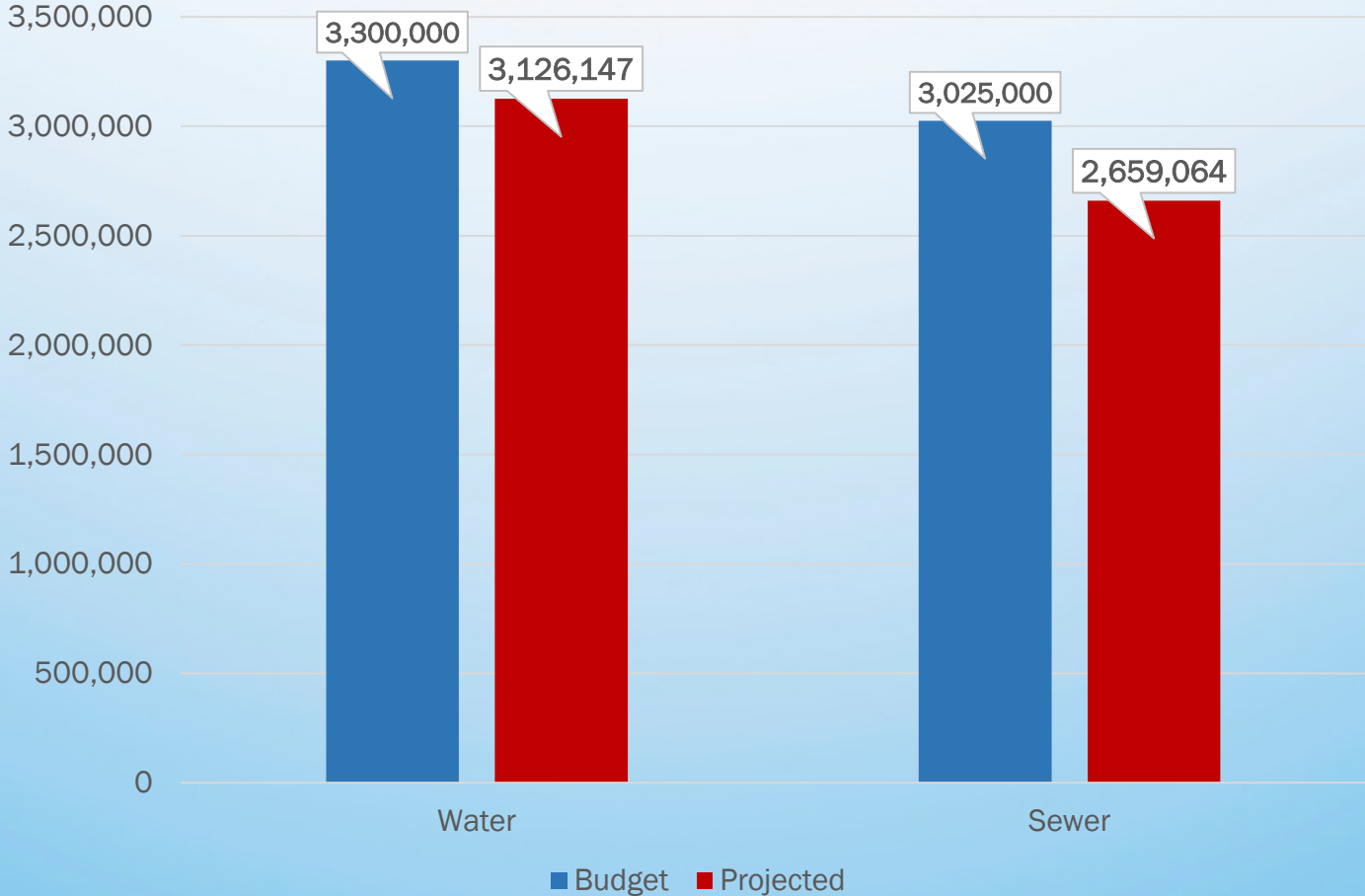
# Finance: Cash Flow Status\*



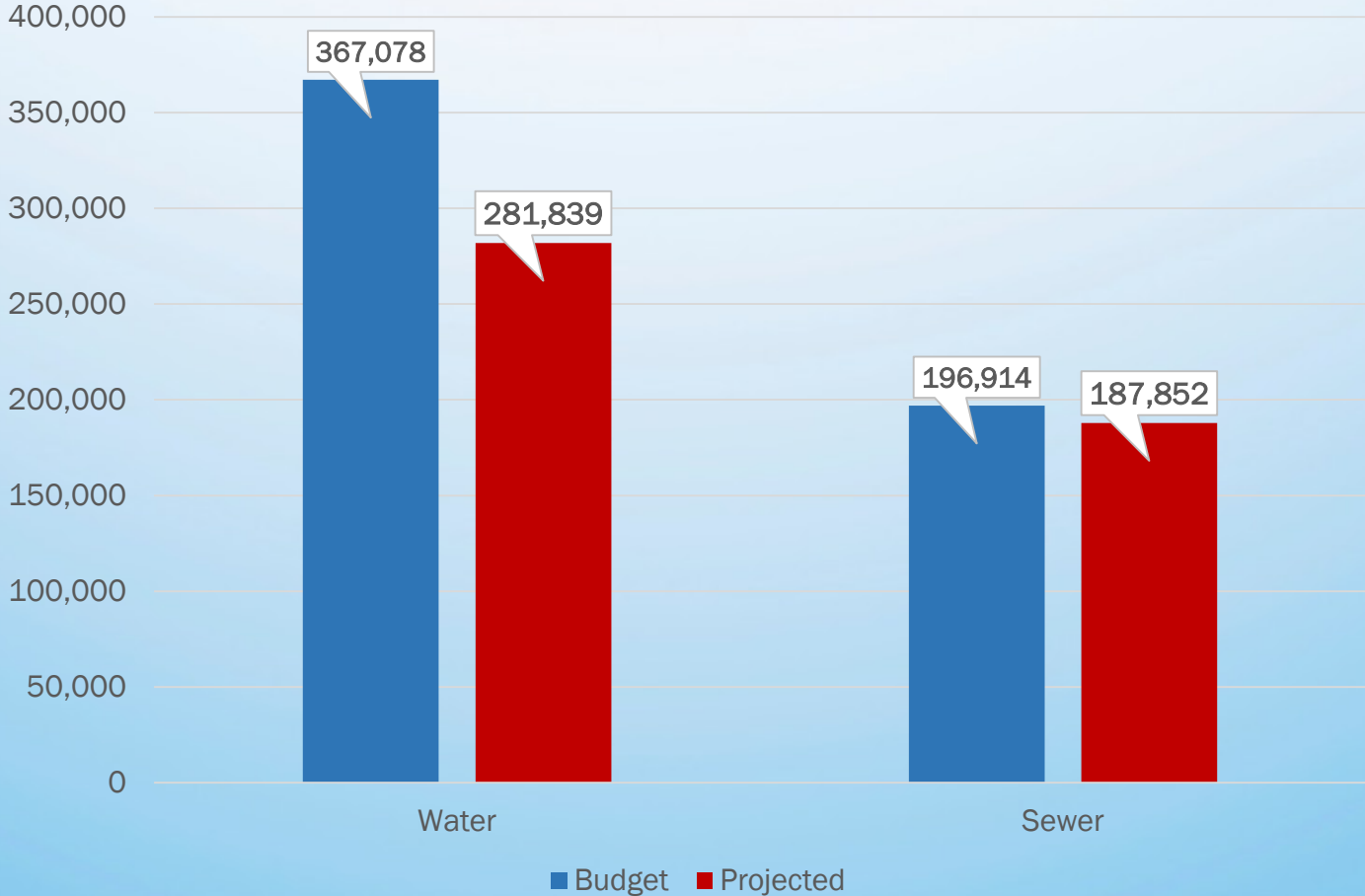
\*Cash flow statement is pro forma. DWSD lacks certain data to perform a full reconciliation. Unreconciled balance as of April 30, 2016 approximates \$4 million (actual cash approximates \$49 million versus \$45 million combined cash from cash flow statement).



# Finance: Commodity Volumes



# Finance: Equivalent Accounts

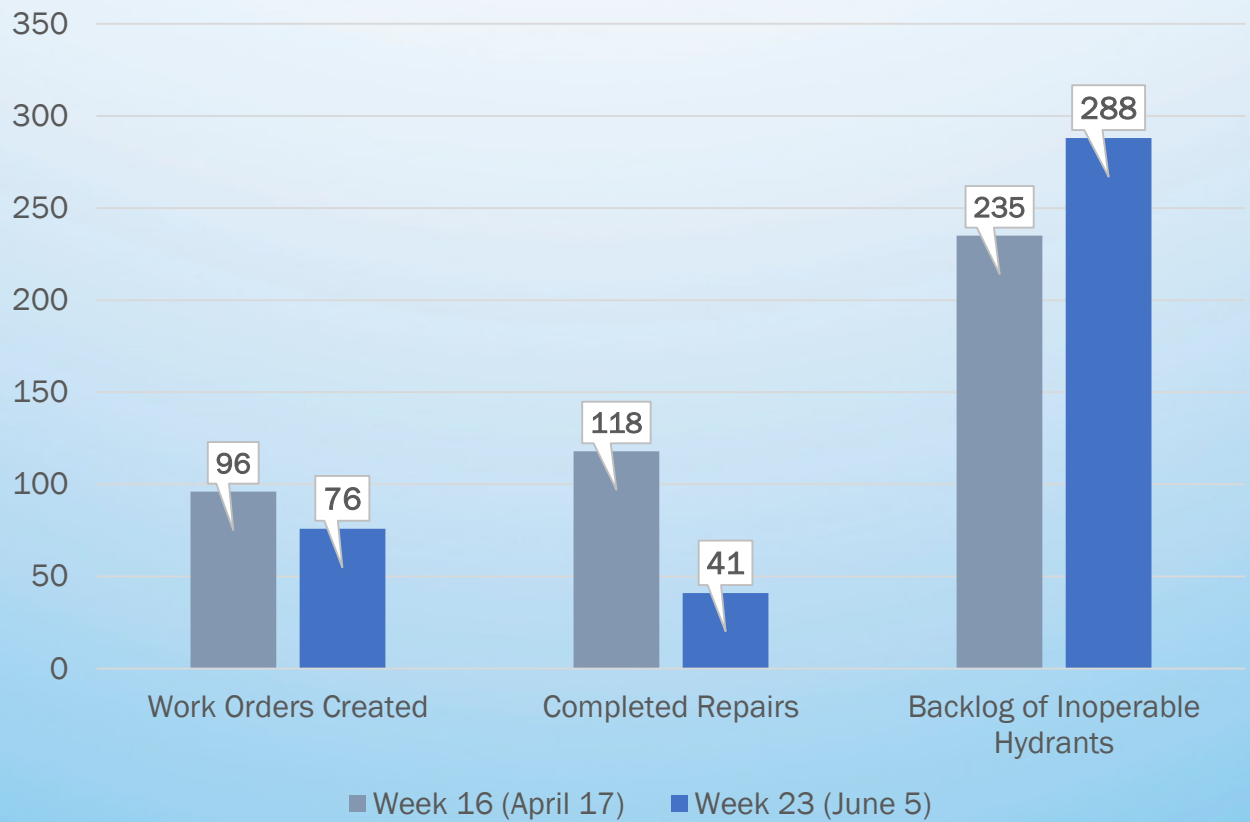


# Field Services





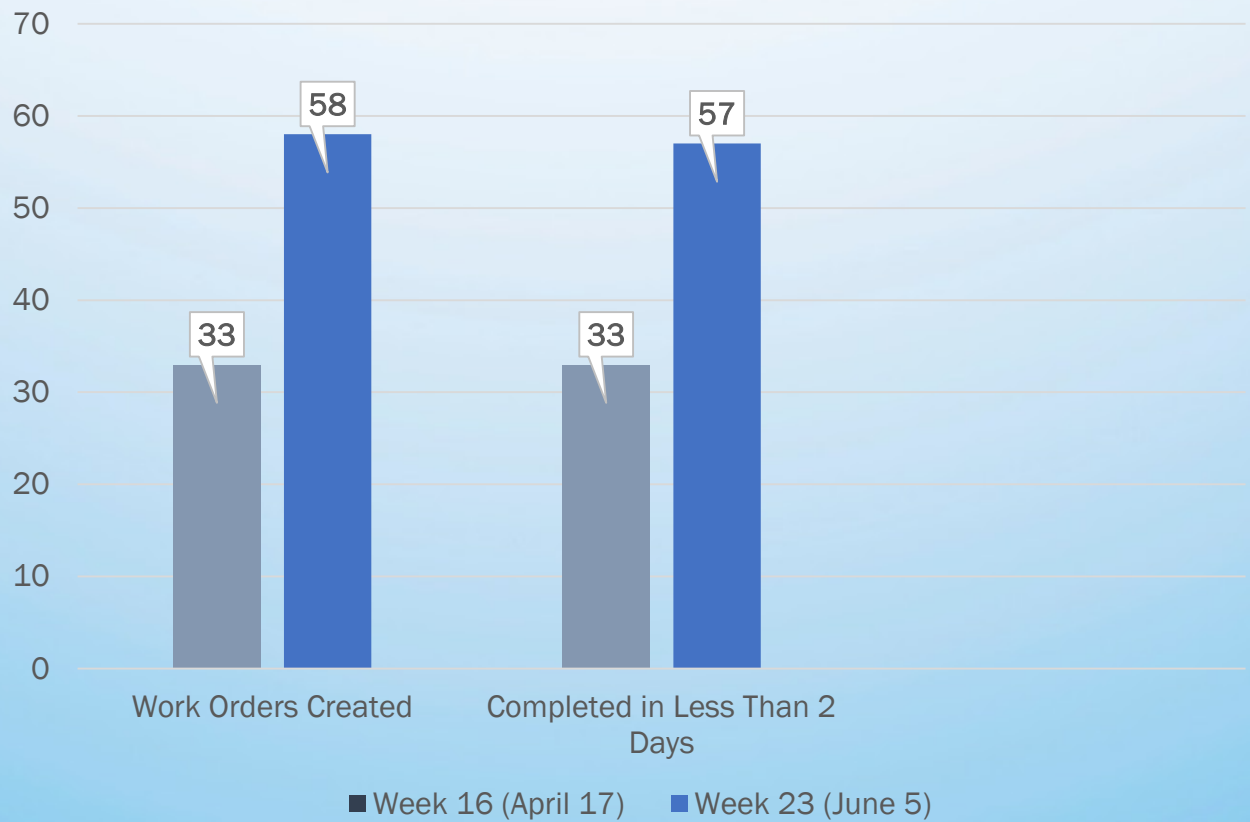
# Field Services: Fire Hydrant Repairs



# Field Services: Backlog of Inoperable Fire Hydrants



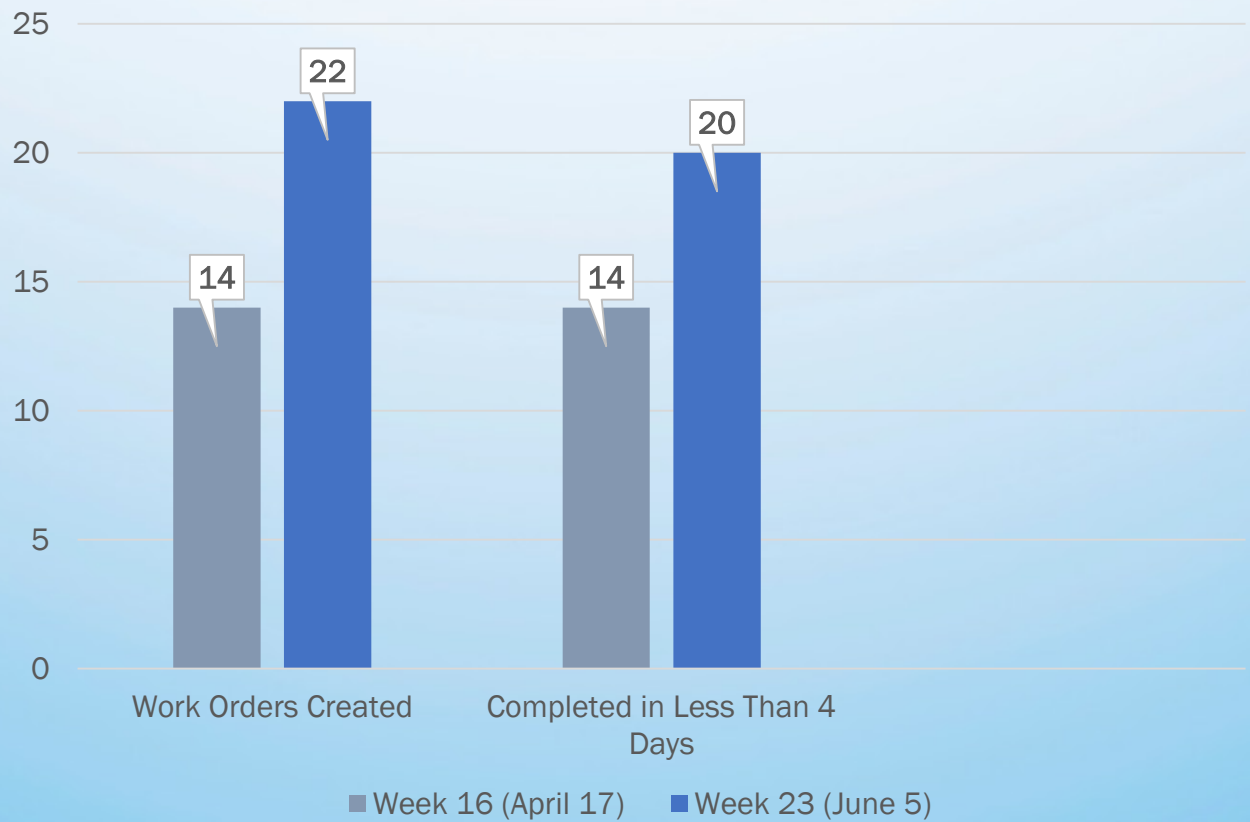
# Field Services: Reports of Running Water



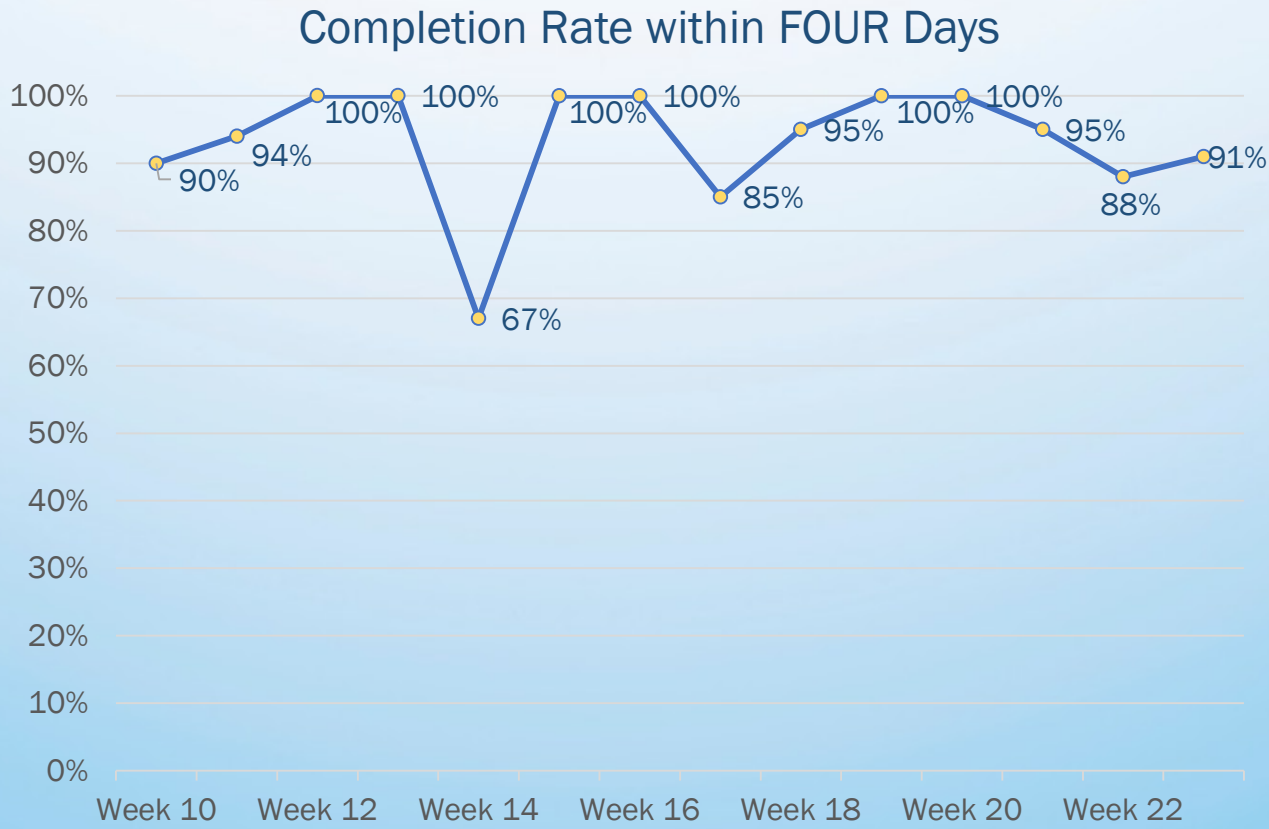
# Field Services: Reports of Running Water



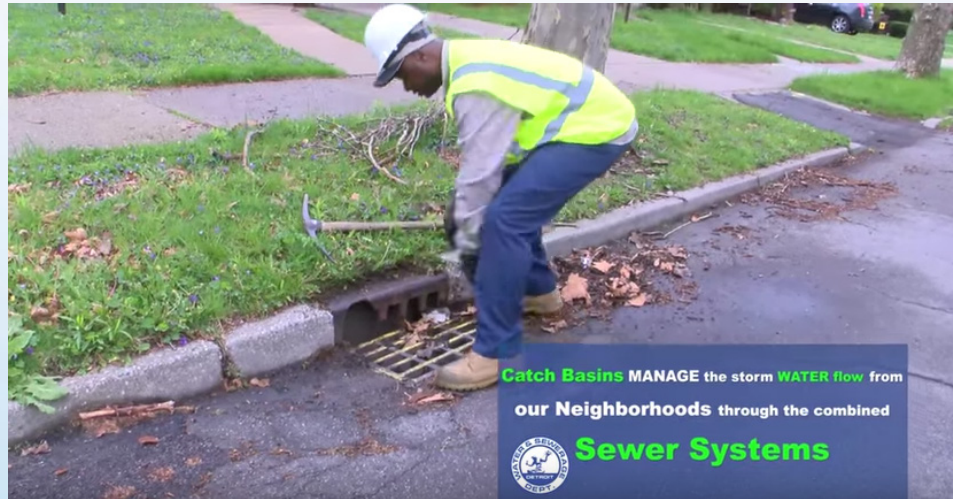
# Field Services: Water Main Repairs



# Field Services: Water Main Repairs



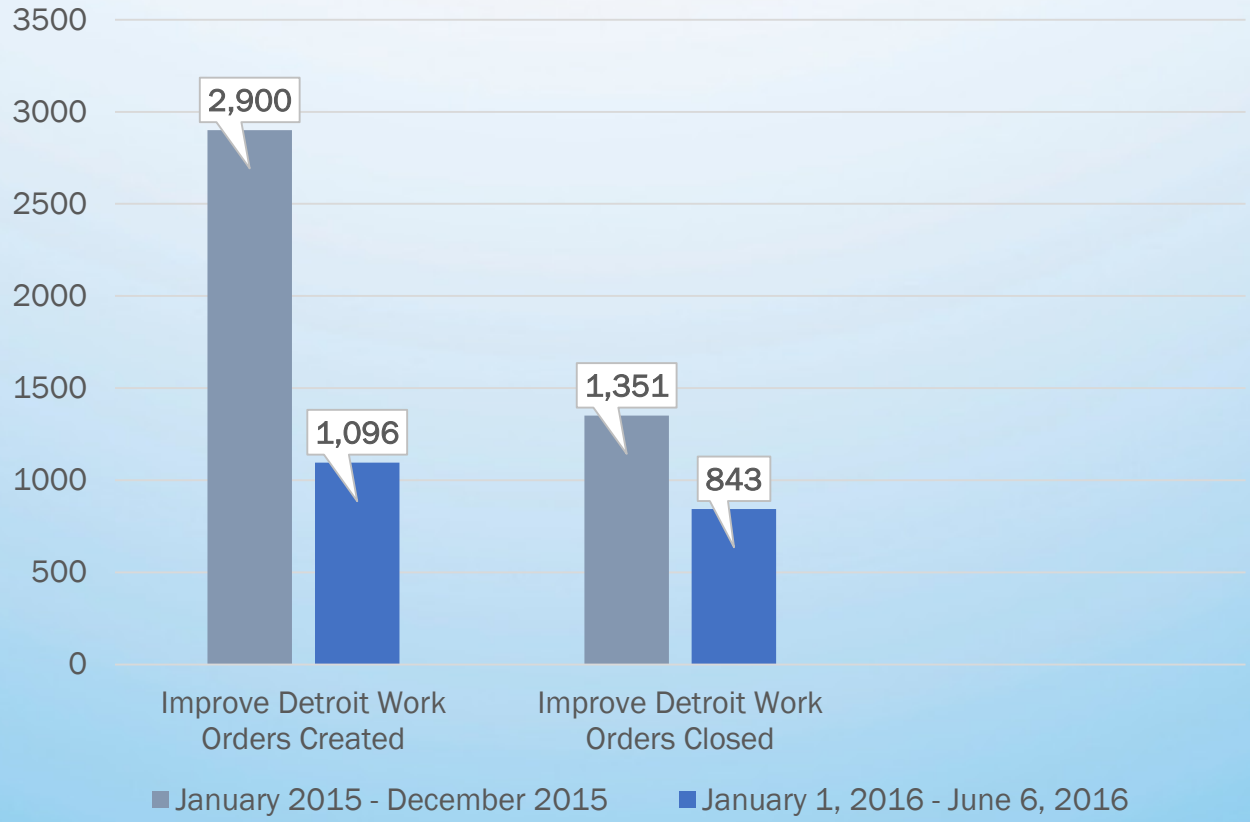
# Field Services: Catch Basins



- ❑ Close to 95,000 catch basins in the city
- ❑ Five trucks to clean catch basins – same trucks used to clean sewers
  - Priority 1: Water in basement complaint investigation; cleaning/repair
  - Priority 2: Clogged catch basin investigation; cleaning/repair



# Field Services: Catch Basins





# Field Services: Catch Basin Repair (Beginning)



# Field Services: Catch Basin Repair (During)



# Field Services: Catch Basin Repair (Completed)



# Legal Services



# Legal: Customer Dispute Resolutions

The DWSD legal team is going through reorganization – data will be shared in future reports.



# Information Technology



# IT: Software Application Availability for Customer Care, Field Services and Finance

