



**Water & Sewerage  
Department**

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 20, 2019



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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE TO THE BOARD



- Lead compliance water sample testing this summer has been certified by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) as 10 parts per billion (ppb), which is below the action level of 15 ppb.
  - An FAQ and other information is available at [www.detroitmi.gov/leadsafe](http://www.detroitmi.gov/leadsafe).
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler visited Detroit in October, which included dedicated time with City of Detroit officials.
  - Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) leadership, the City's Chief Public Health Officer Denise Fair, and the Director of the Office of Sustainability Joel Howrani Heeres participated in a private in-person meeting with Administrator Wheeler.
  - Then, DWSD took Administrator Wheeler on a tour of two sites: A lead service line replacement on Coyle Street and the Green Stormwater Infrastructure practices at Stoepel Park No. 1.
  - DWSD appreciates Mr. Howrani Heeres for arranging the meeting.
- The Customer Assurance Specialist Assurance Team (CAST) participated in the DTE Customer Assistance Day at Eastern Market on December 6 to assist residents.
  - Nearly 700 residents attended the event.
  - Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency was also in attendance to provide WRAP pre-enrollment onsite.
  - DWSD staff provided payment assistance and account status in order to enroll in WRAP.
  - DWSD appreciates the DTE partnership – this our eighth event together.





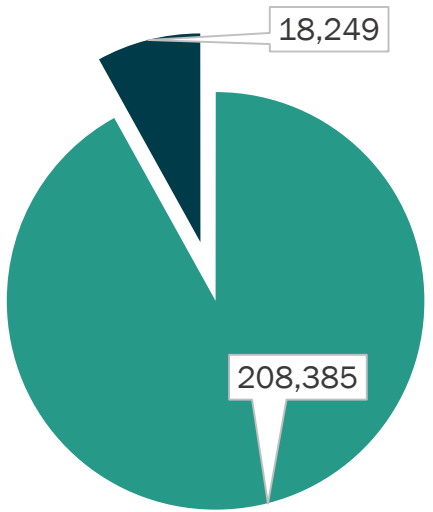
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# Customer Care

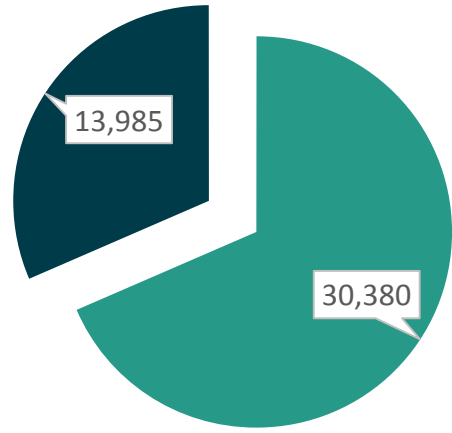
# CUSTOMER CARE: Number of Active Accounts



### Active Residential Accounts



### Active Non-Residential Accounts



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

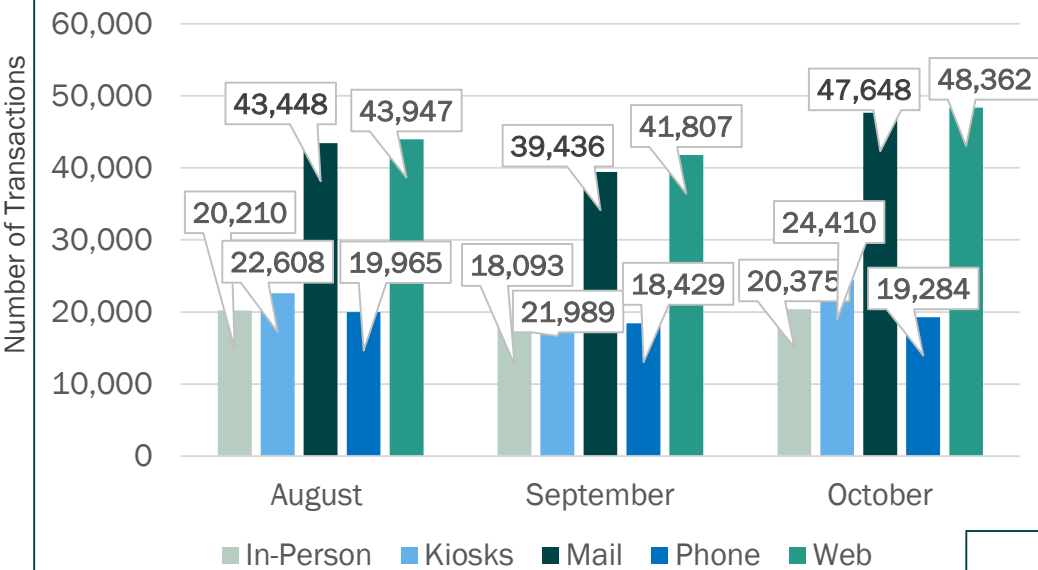
■ Water/Sewerage/Drainage ■ Drainage Only (no water service)

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

# CUSTOMER CARE: Transactions

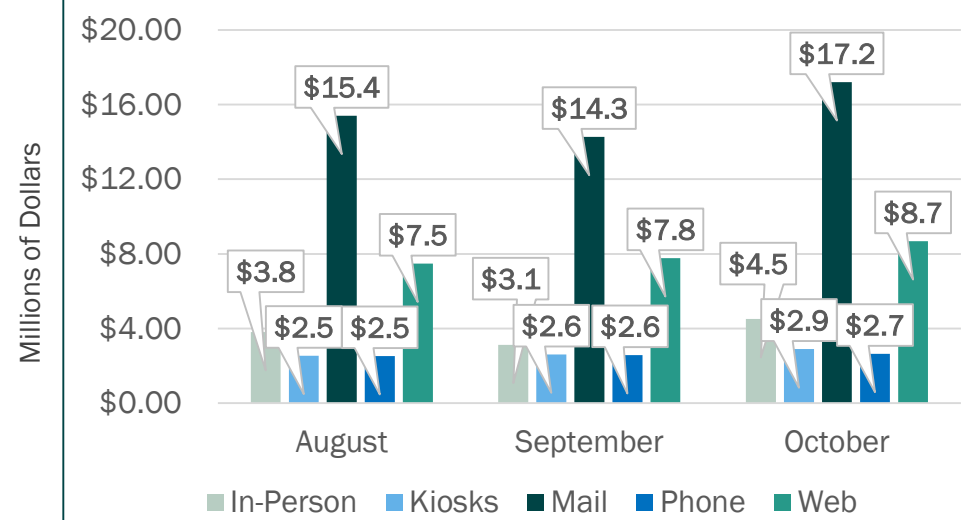


### Payment Transactions by Platform Type



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

### Revenue Collected by Platform Type

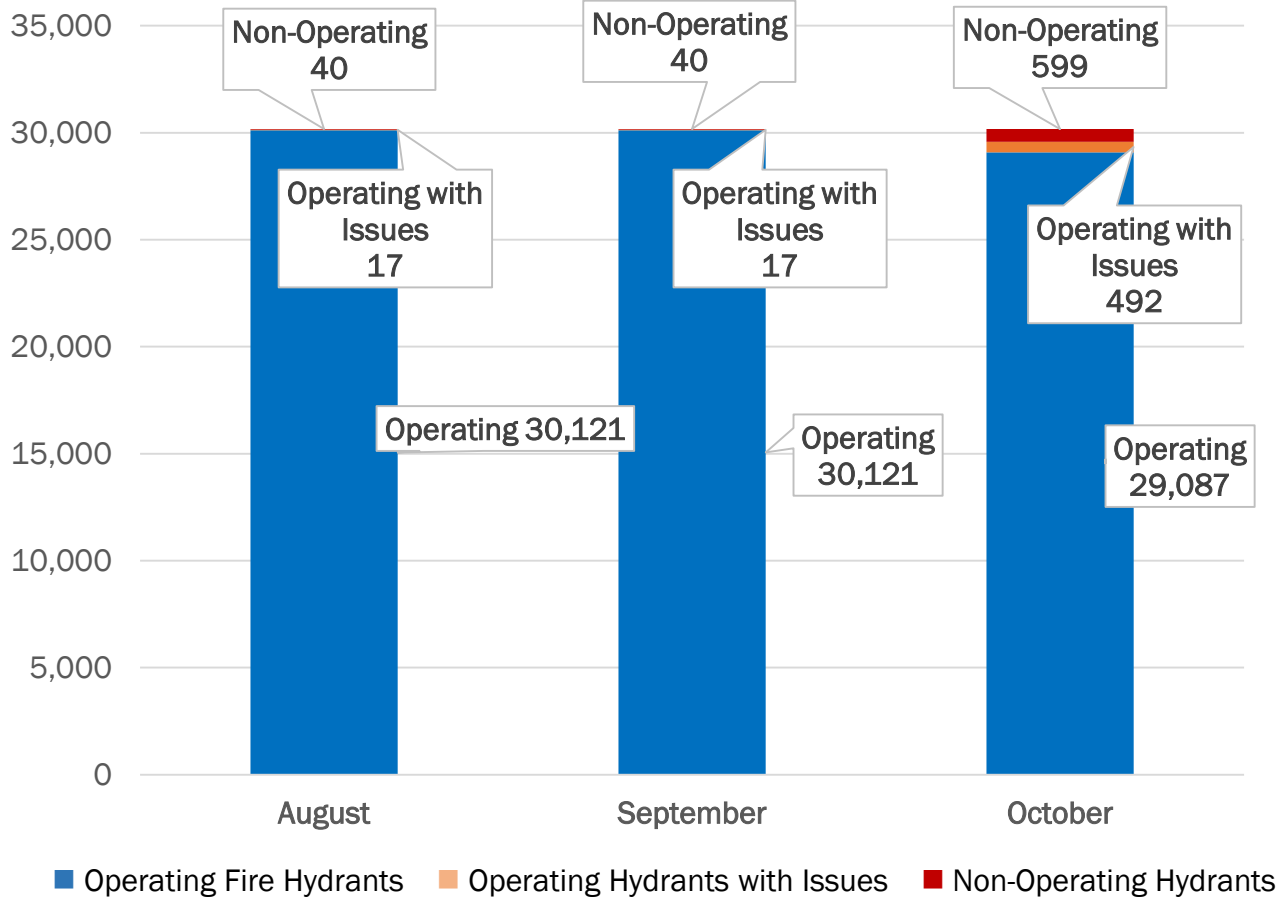




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# Field Services

# FIELD SERVICES: Fire Hydrant Maintenance

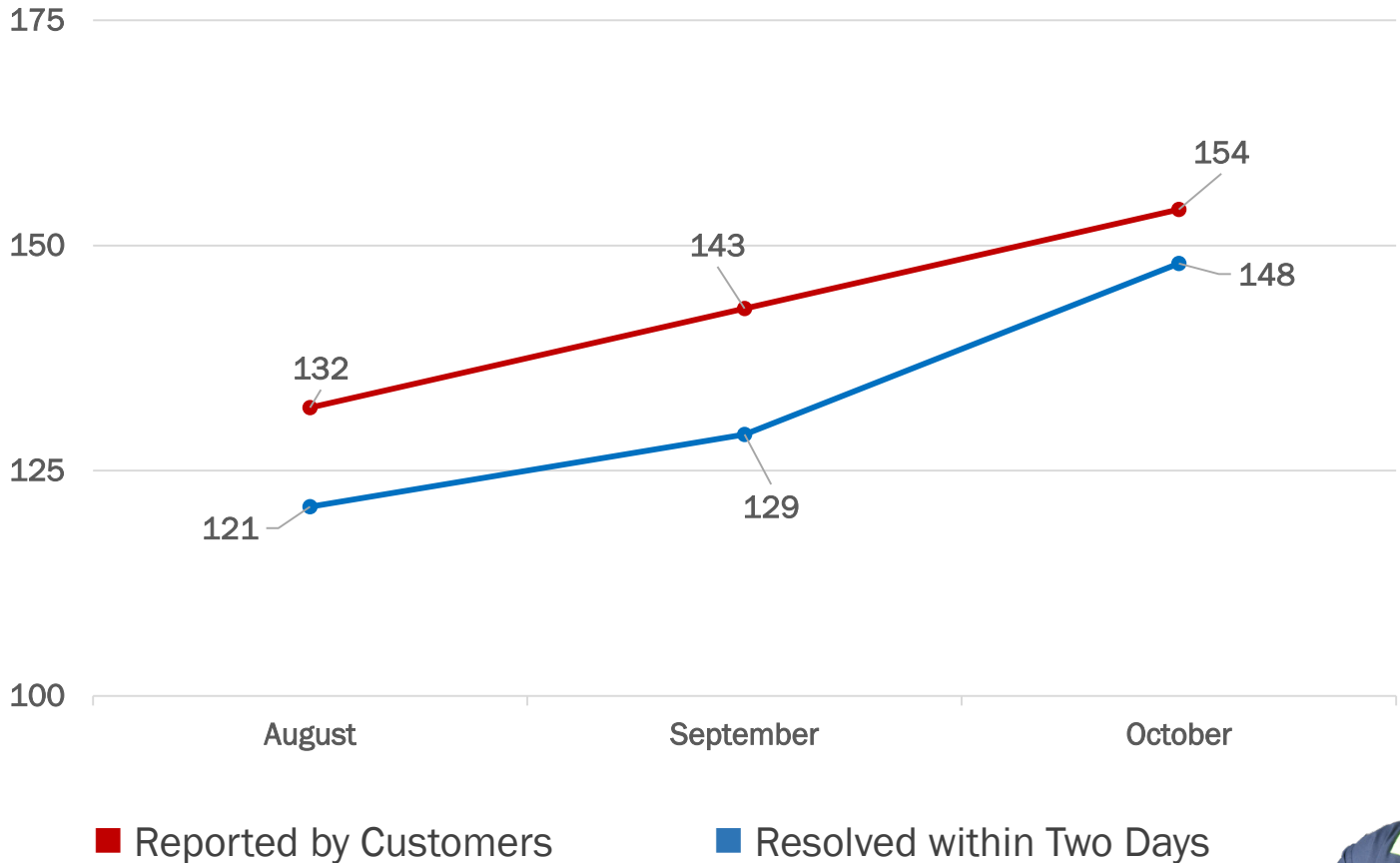


Firefighters are in the process of conducting the hydrant inspections, which they often do during the fall months. The data transfers to DWSD in order to create work orders, when necessary, to repair or replace hydrants.

\*Due to a data update, there is a change in the three categories in October versus previous months which is shown here.

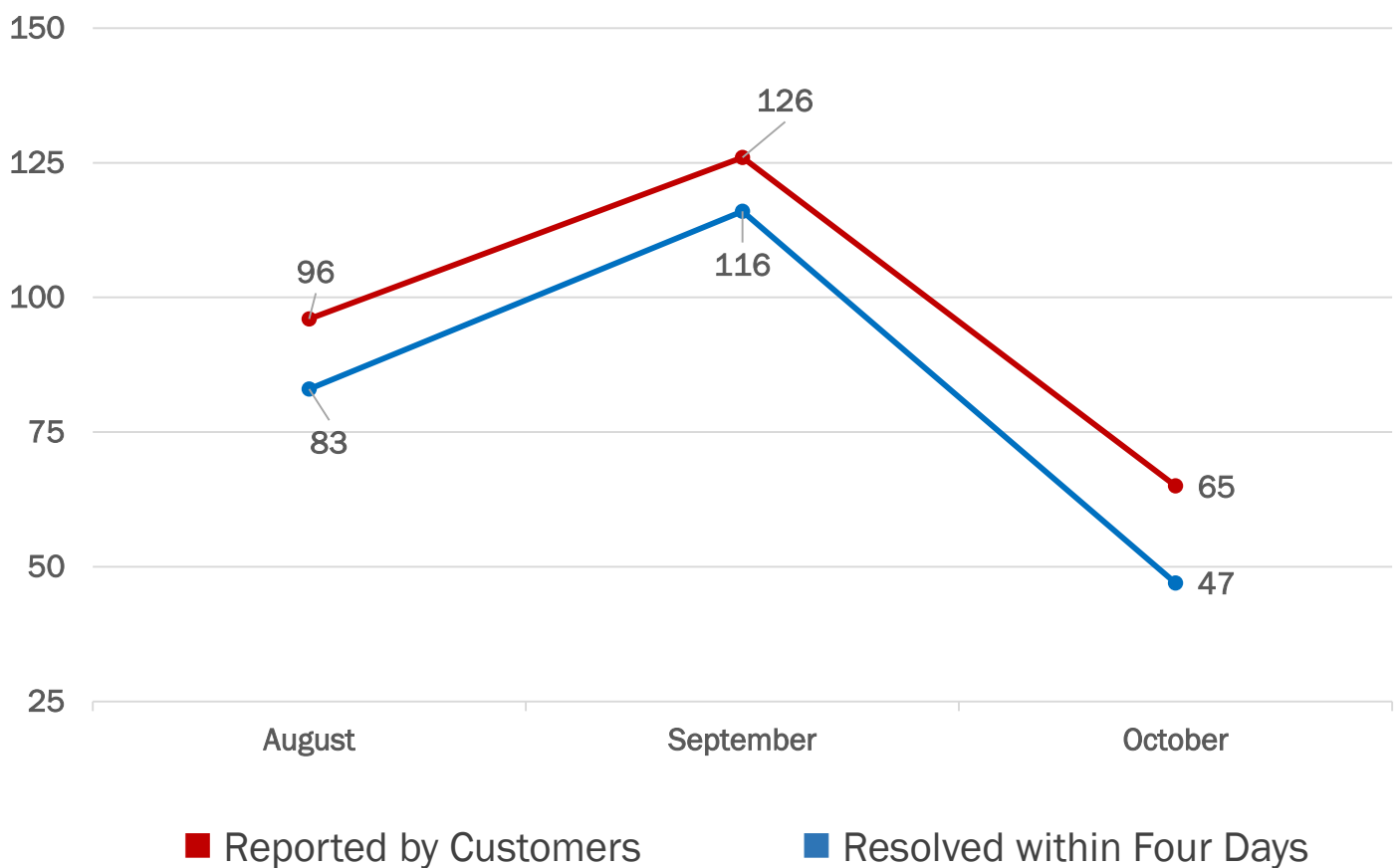


# FIELD SERVICES: Running Water



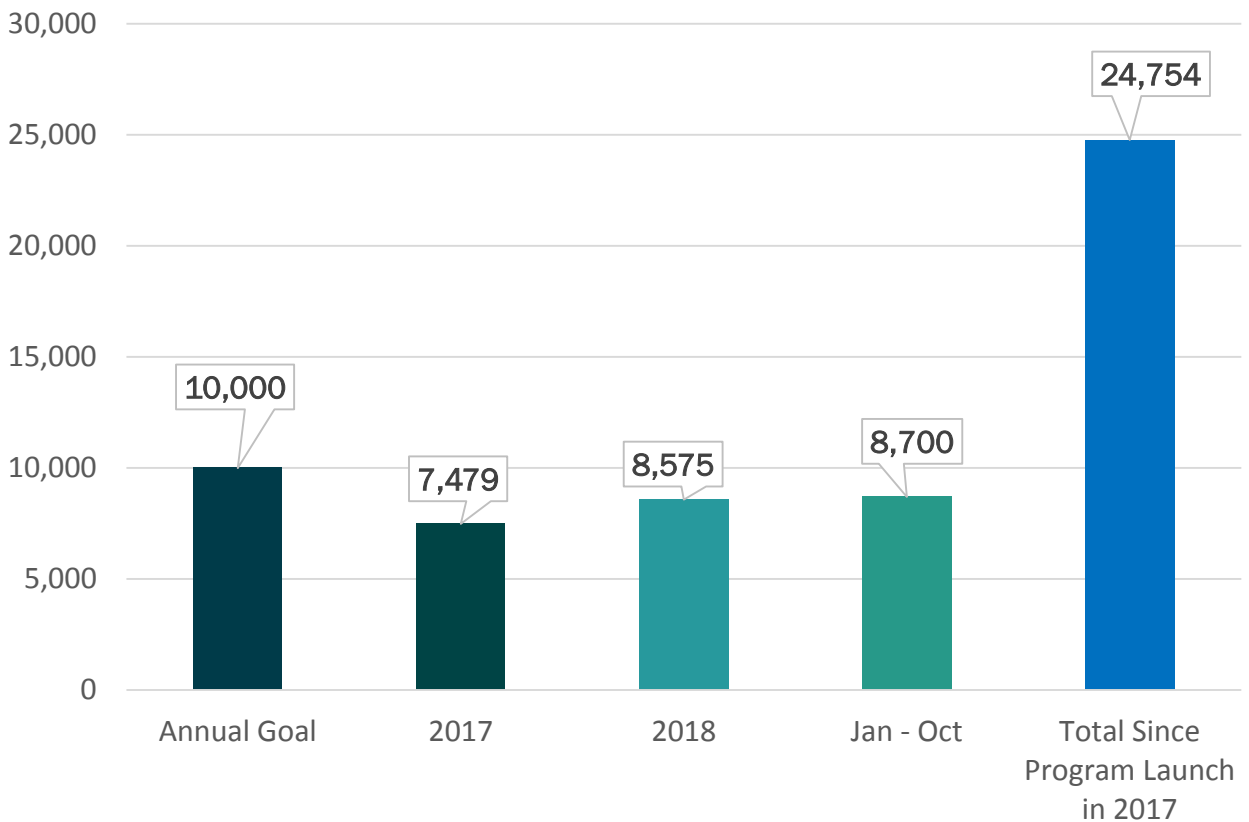
The running water reports remain on track versus the same period last year.

# 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



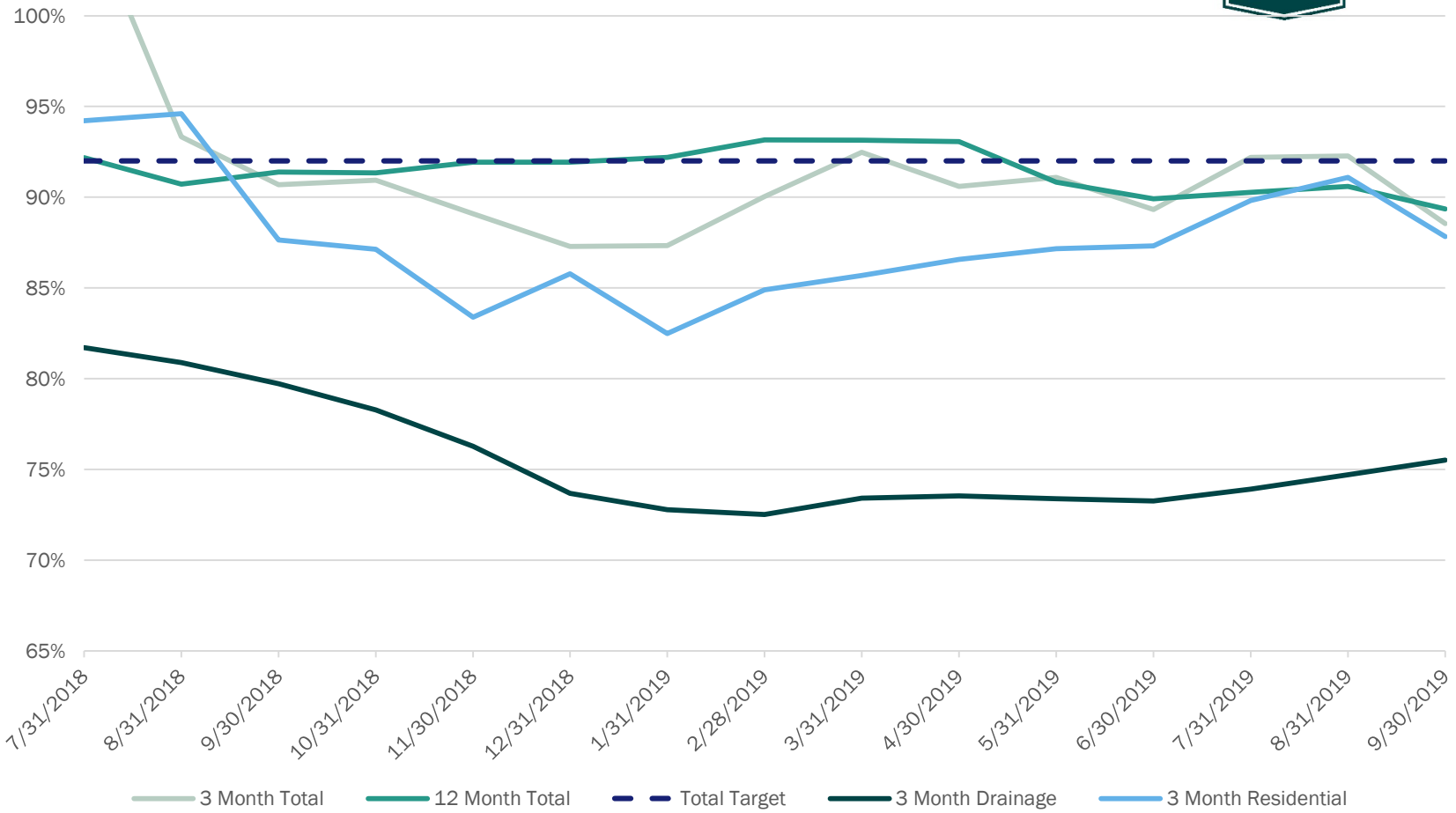
Since the catch basin inspection and cleaning program launched in 2017, crews have touched 24,754 of the estimated 90,000 catch basins. The goal is 30,000 in three years and DWSD is close to reaching that objective.



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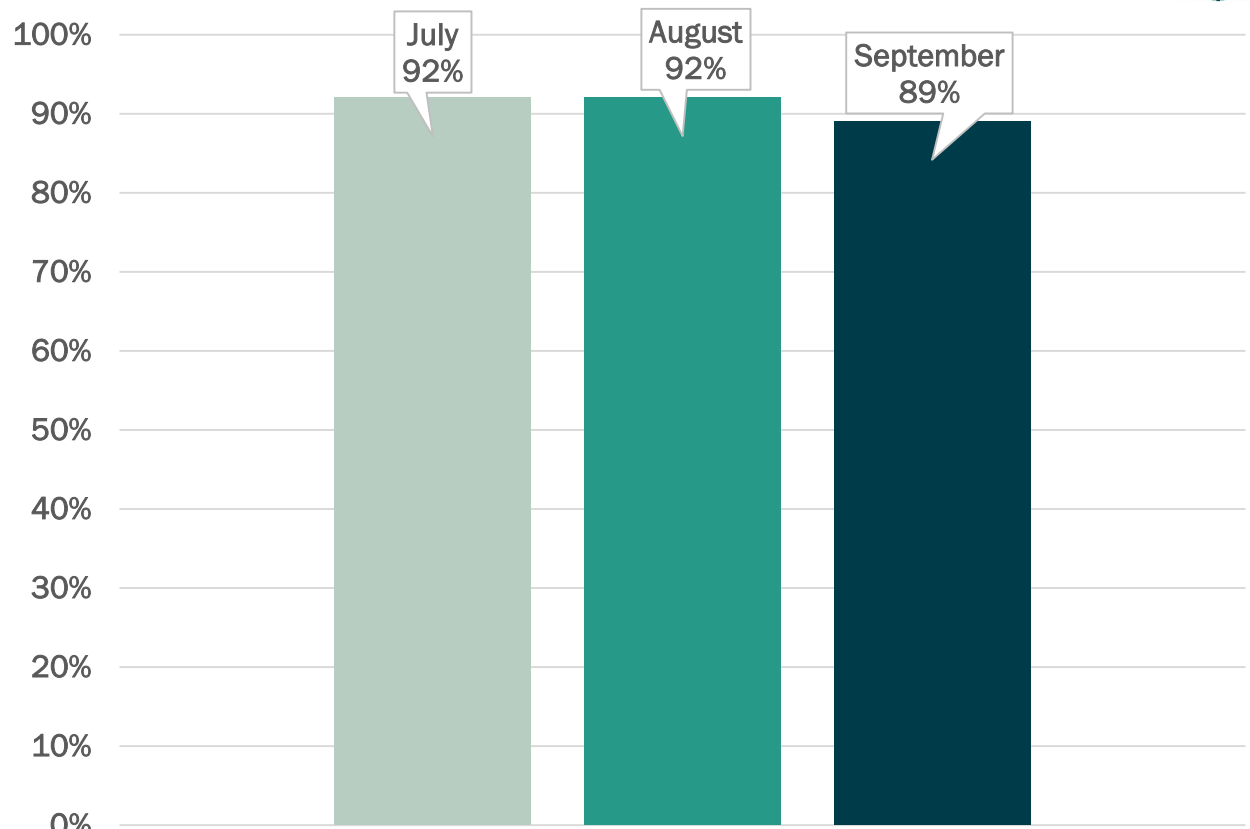
# Finance

# 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



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.

# FINANCE: Cash Balance



**\$80,085,467**  
Water cash balance as of  
September 30, 2019

**\$146,440,273**  
Sewer cash balance as of  
September 30, 2019

The operating cash days-on-hand as of September 30, 2019 is 151 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.*



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# Legal Services



# LEGAL: Claims, Hearings and Cases



**21**  
Cases handled by in-house staff

**10**  
Cases handled by outside counsel

**0**  
Lawsuits dismissed

**8**  
Lawsuits dismissed in FY2020

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.

**12**  
Dispute hearings

**3**  
Number of cases DWSD prevailed

**\$32,343**  
Amount in dispute

**\$10,272**  
Credited to customers based on hearing outcomes

**\$22,071**  
Owed to DWSD after hearings

**9**  
Property damage claims

**\$194,093**  
Amount in property damage claims

**\$15,794**  
Amount of total claims recommended to be paid

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



**382**  
[95 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

**\$3,039,299**  
Total since July 1, 2019

**\$694,672**  
Back billed

**\$2,173,279**  
Future owed in 12 months

**\$171,348**  
Water loss

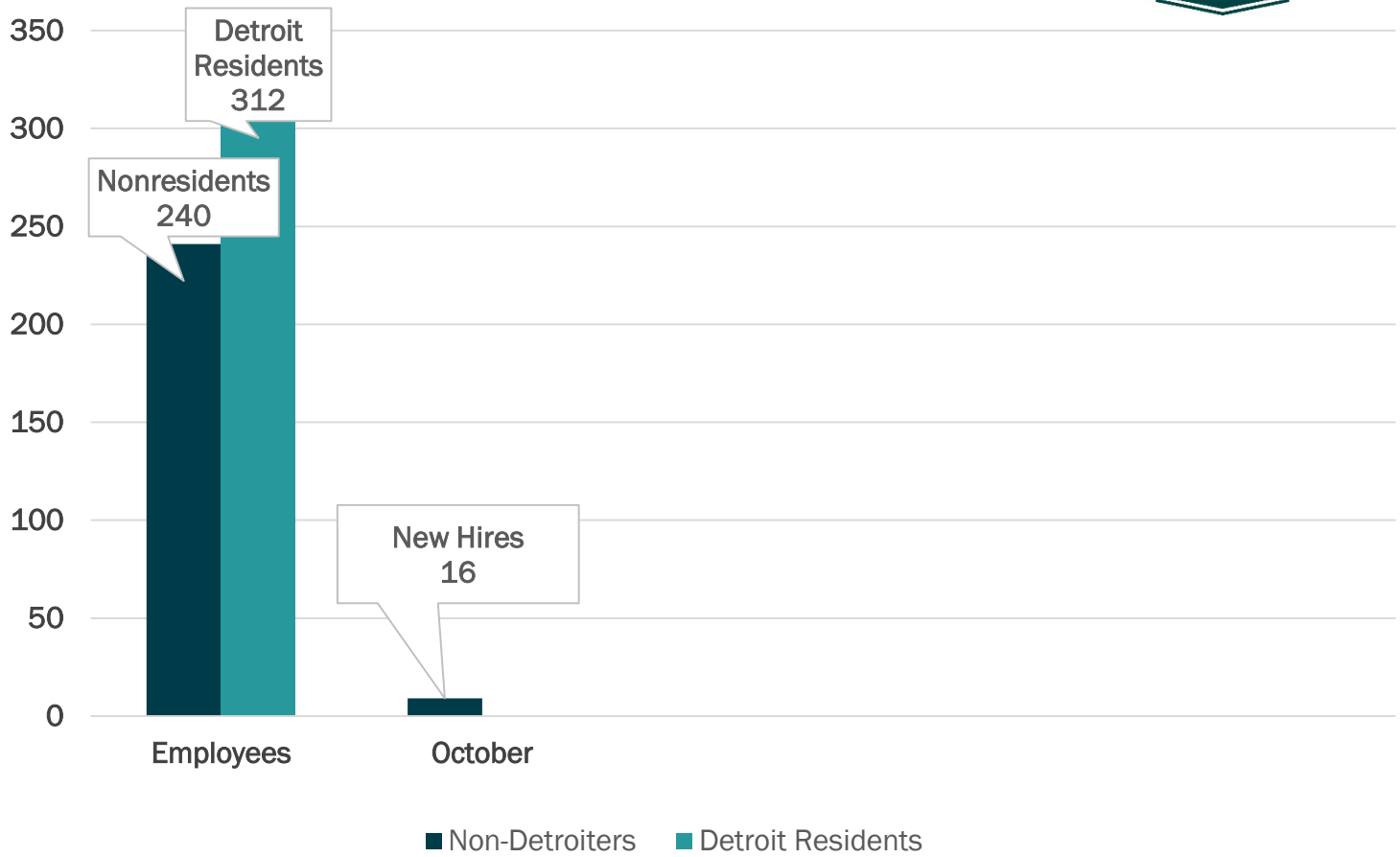
The DWSD Revenue Recovery Unit, in collaboration with customer service/billing, has identified more than \$12 million in services owed by primarily commercial customers since its creation in August 2017. They uncovered severe delinquencies, non-working meters, unauthorized use of fire hydrants, tampering 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

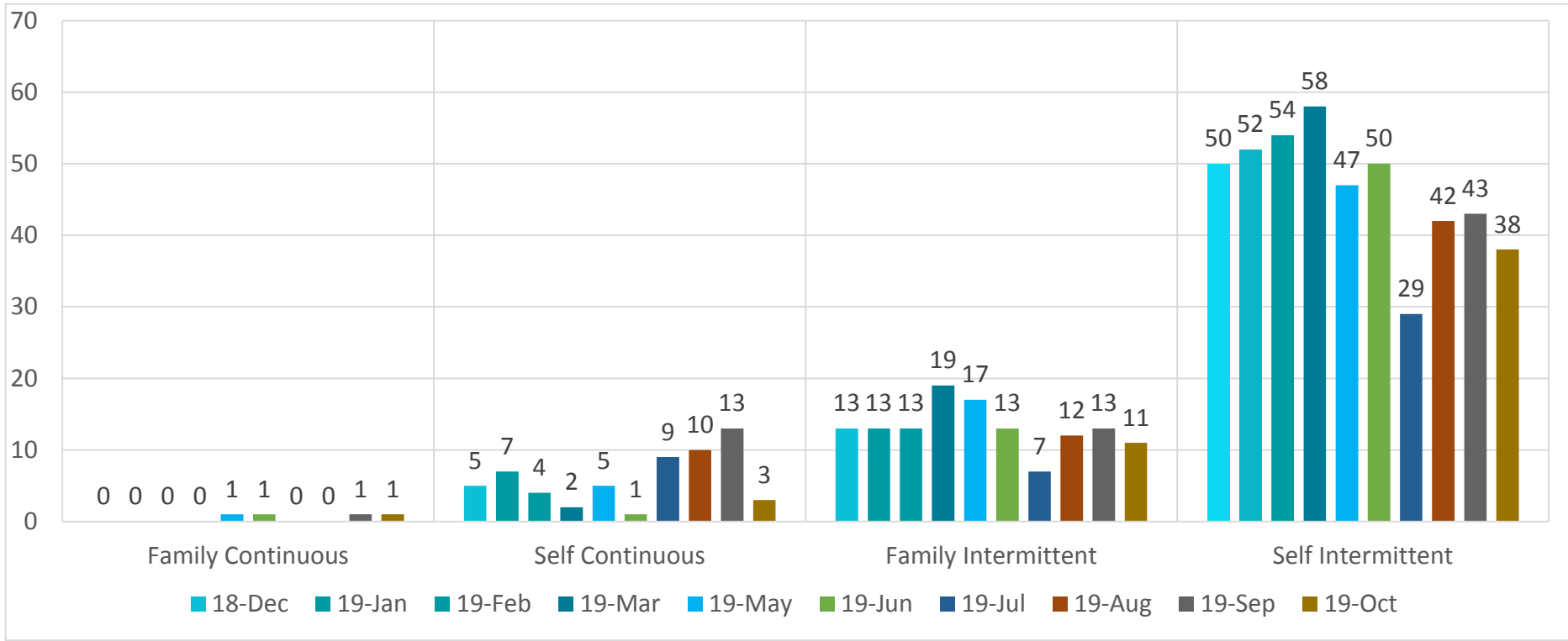
# HUMAN RESOURCES: Detroit Residents and Hiring



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





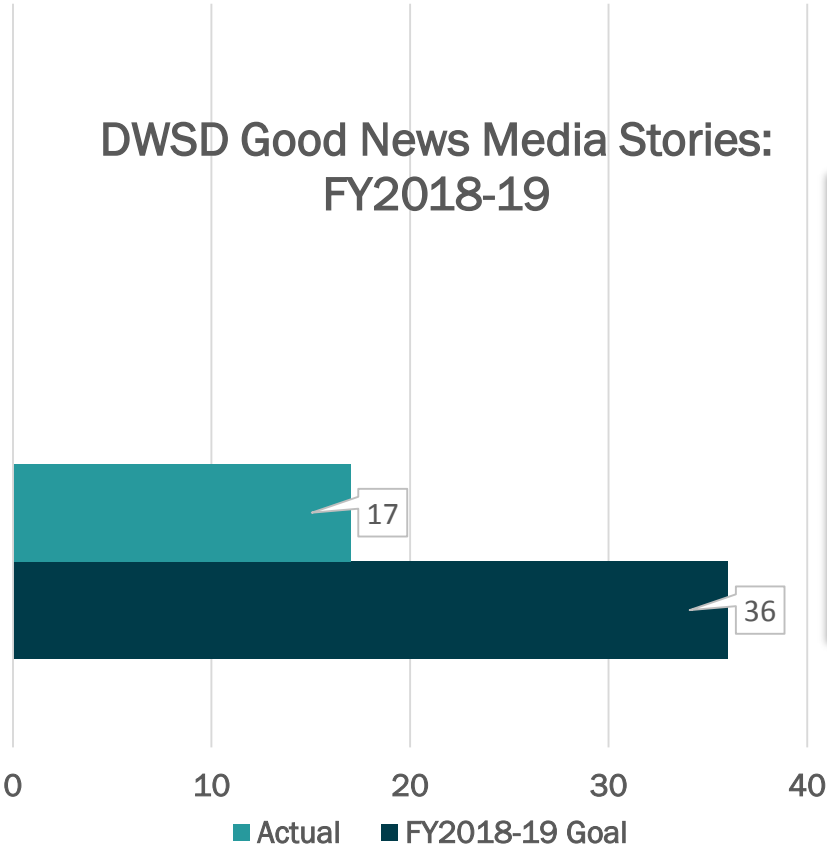
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# Public Affairs

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Good News



## DWSD Good News Media Stories: FY2018-19



This month, the team garnered 2 positive news stories. One about the EPA Administer visit to Detroit. The other was a story about DWSD partnering with other community partners and participating at the Taxpayer Assistance Day.

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

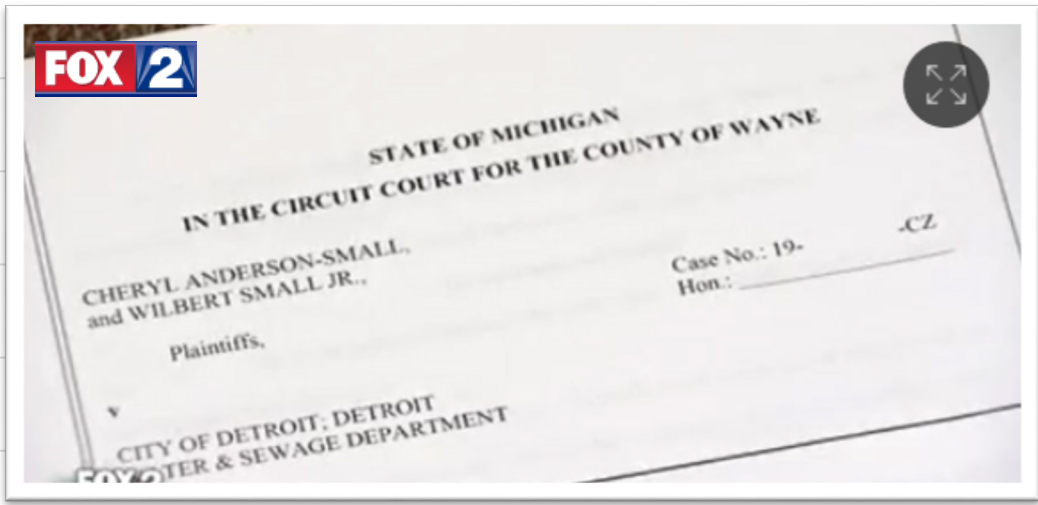
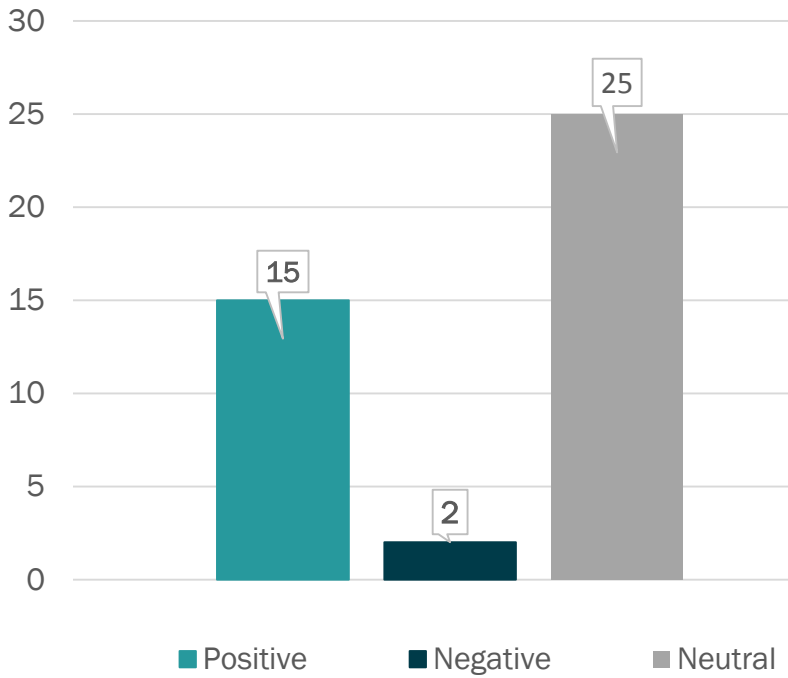




# PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Positive vs. Negative News Stories



DWSD News Coverage: October 1 – October 31, 2019



In October, the DWSD Public Affairs team saw a total of 42 media stories. The majority of the neutral stories were about the lead and copper water sampling results from other communities. The positive stories highlighted the EPA Administer Andrew Wheeler’s visit to Detroit. DWSD had the opportunity to have a discussion with Administer Wheeler as well as visit a lead service line replacement site and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) project. The negative story was of a Detroit couple suing DWSD over a building leak. Of the stories, 5 were broadcast, 26 were print/online and 11 were radio.



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

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Social Media Activity



**44**  
New Facebook Followers

**7,890**  
Total Followers on Facebook

**7,769**  
Engagement on Facebook



**17**  
New Twitter Followers

**1,627**  
Total Followers on Twitter

**185**  
Engagement on Twitter



**30**  
New Instagram Followers

**1,308**  
Total Followers on Instagram

**30**  
Engagement on Instagram



The DWSD Public Affairs team gained **91** new followers on social media in October 2019, bringing the total number of followers to **10,825**. In addition to the metrics above, Facebook saw a total of 604,008 impressions and 3,931 link clicks for the month. The top performing post on Facebook was on October 8 when DWSD Deputy Director Palencia Mobley discussed DWSD’s sustainability efforts, with 241 reactions, 19 comments and 49 shares. The top performing post on Twitter was on October 24 about “Halloween in the D” and the top performing post on Instagram was the EPA Administrator’s visit on October 22.



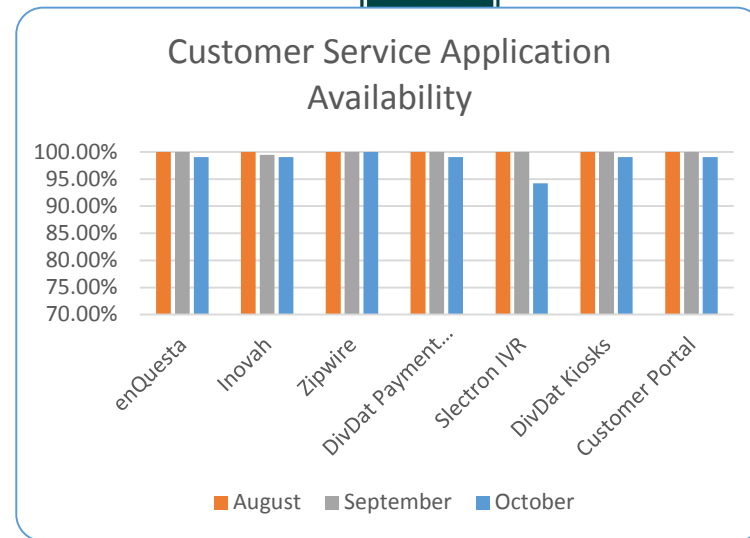
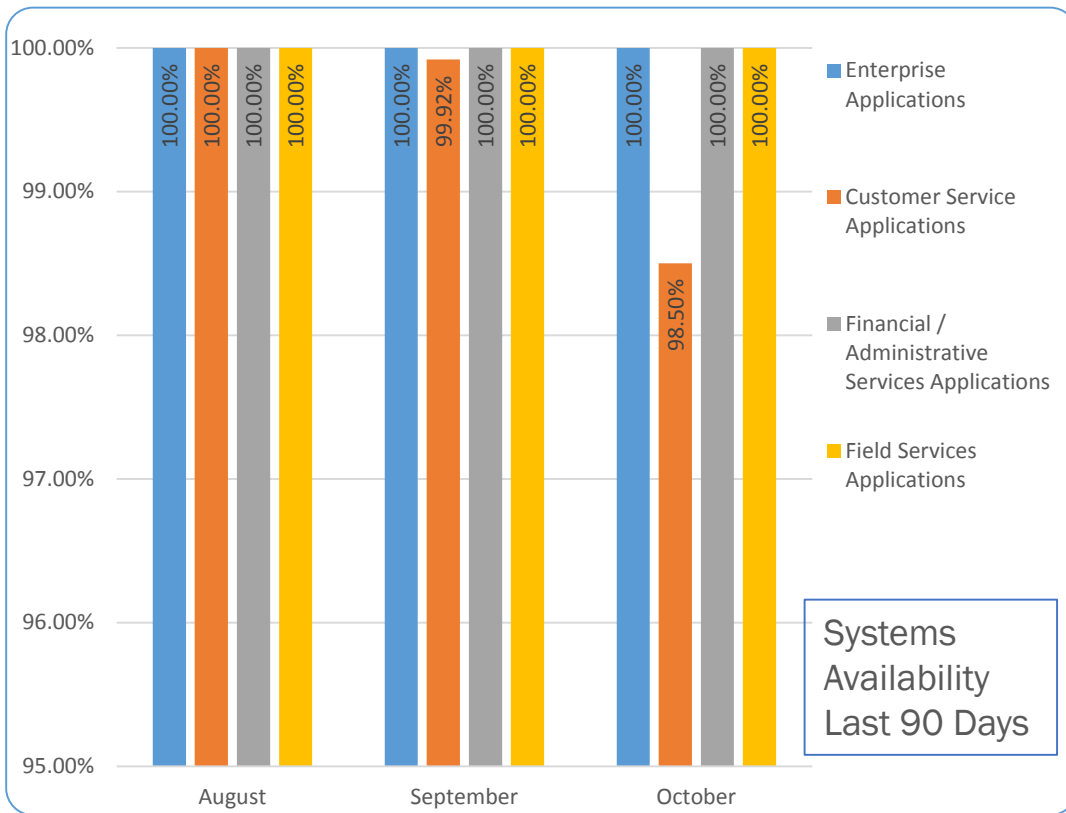
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# Information Technology

# Technology: Application Availability



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# 99.48%

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.