



**Water & Sewerage  
Department**

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 18, 2019



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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE TO THE BOARD



- Fifty-eight (58) percent of all customer billing transactions are through the use of technology.
  - The technology includes pay-by-phone (IVR), the Customer Care Web Portal ([www.detroitmi.gov/paymywaterbill](http://www.detroitmi.gov/paymywaterbill)), and DivDat kiosks.
  - More than 45,000 transactions are online through the portal.
  - The kiosk network now has more than 70 units located in and around Detroit, with close to 50 of the kiosks within the city of Detroit.
  
- The collaboration between the Detroit Fire Department (inspections) and DWSD (repairs) through the use of mobile technology and data sharing has resulted in far less than one percent of the fire hydrants in need of repair.
  - Firefighters inspect hydrants using a mobile collector app which synchs with DWSD to implement a work order.
  - The public can report fire hydrants in need of repair using the Improve Detroit mobile app.
  
- Since the launch of the program two years ago, 22,138 catch basins have been inspected and cleaned.
  - The three-year goal is 30,000.
  - Field Service Technicians verify the work and location on a Geographic Information System (GIS) map using a tablet device.
  
- The Revenue Recovery Unit has identified nearly \$12 million in past due bills, back bills and water loss since the investigators were hired in August 2017.





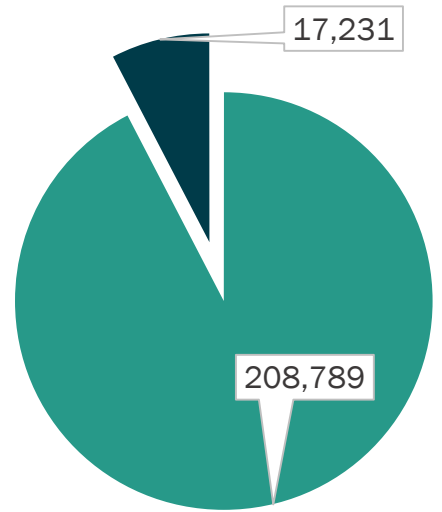
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# Customer Care

# CUSTOMER CARE: Number of Active Accounts

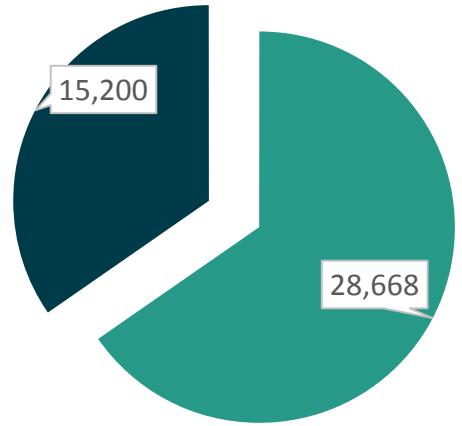


## Active Residential Accounts



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

## Active Non-Residential Accounts



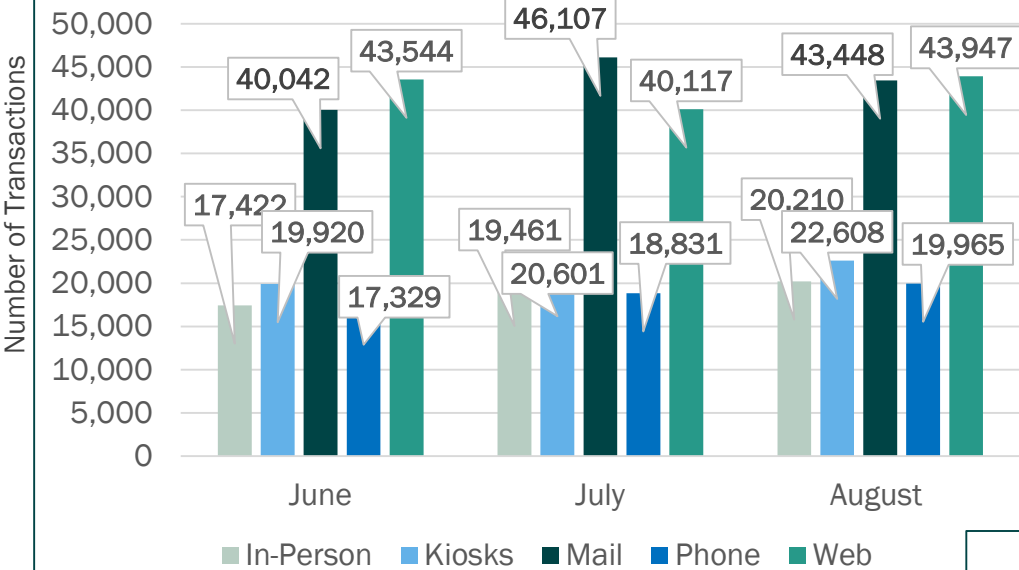
■ Water/Sewerage/Drainage ■ Drainage Only (no water service)

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

# CUSTOMER CARE: Transactions

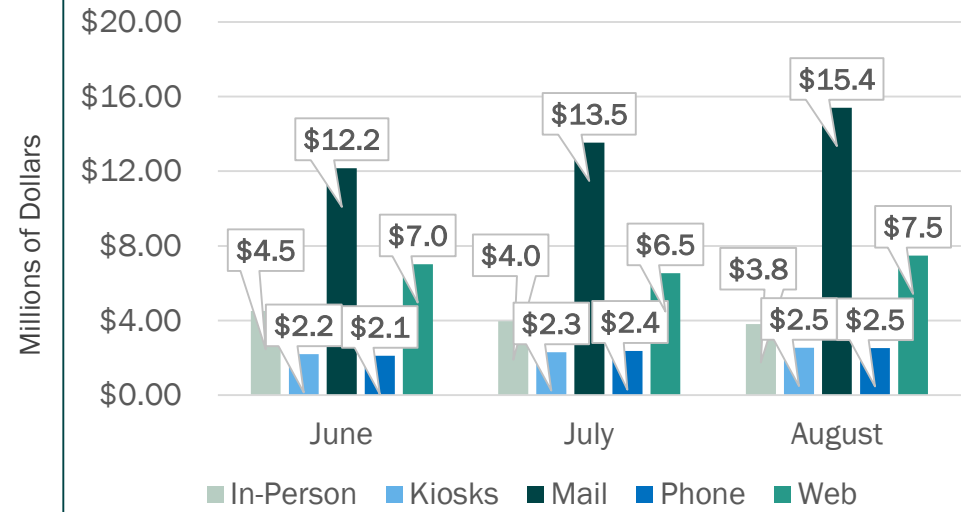


### Payment Transactions by Platform Type



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

### Revenue Collected by Platform Type

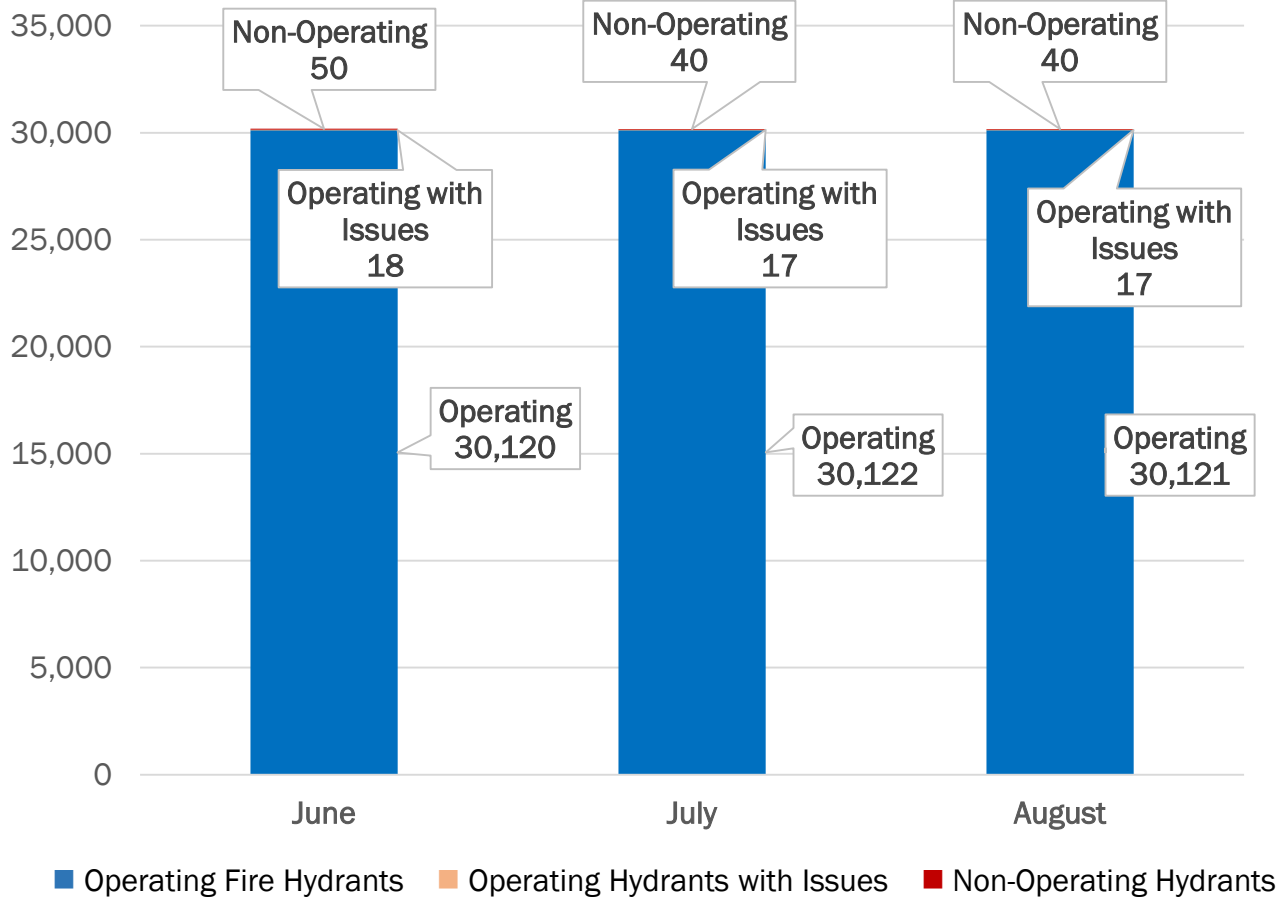




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# Field Services

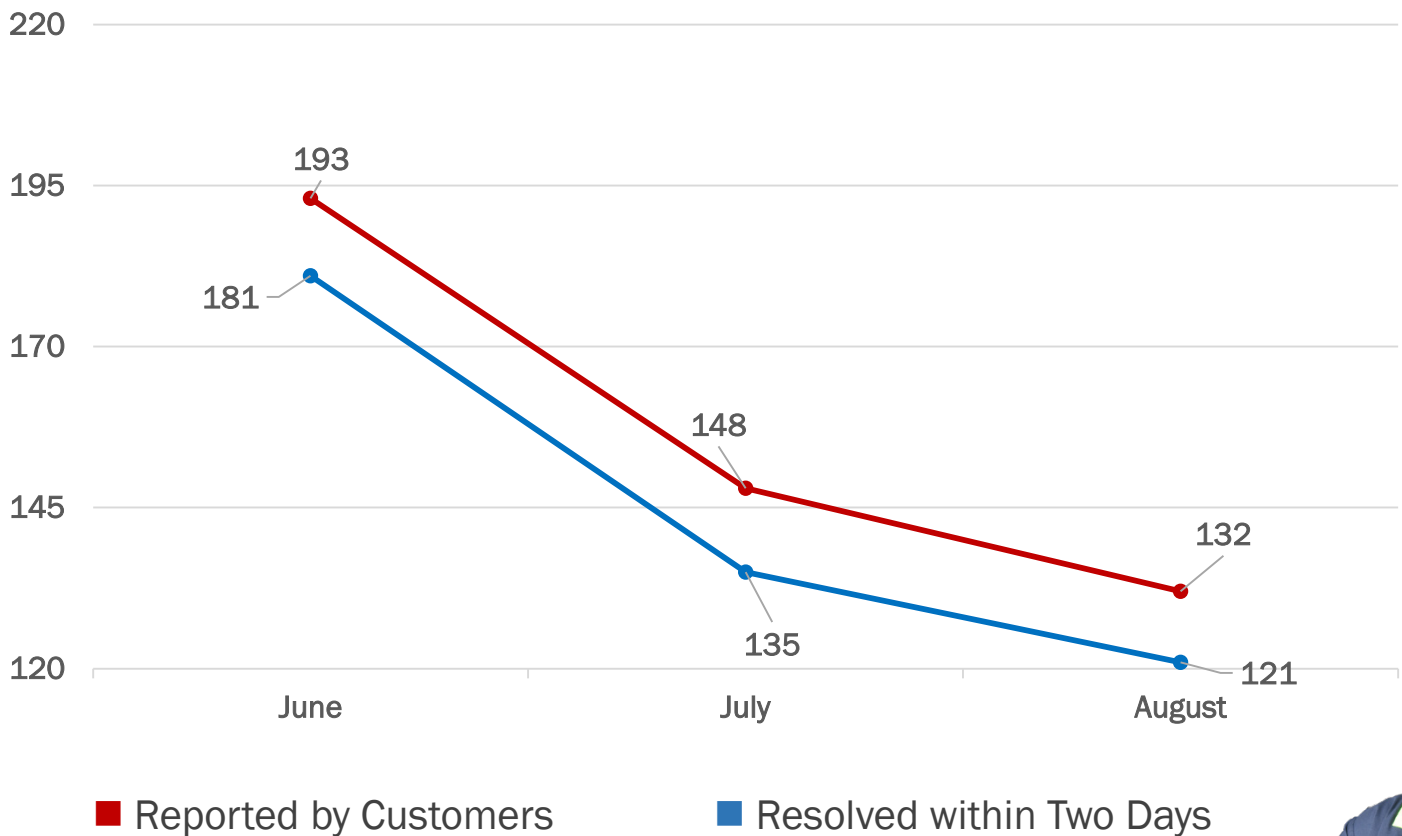
# FIELD SERVICES: Fire Hydrant Maintenance



As of August 31, **99.8%** of the fire hydrants are working.

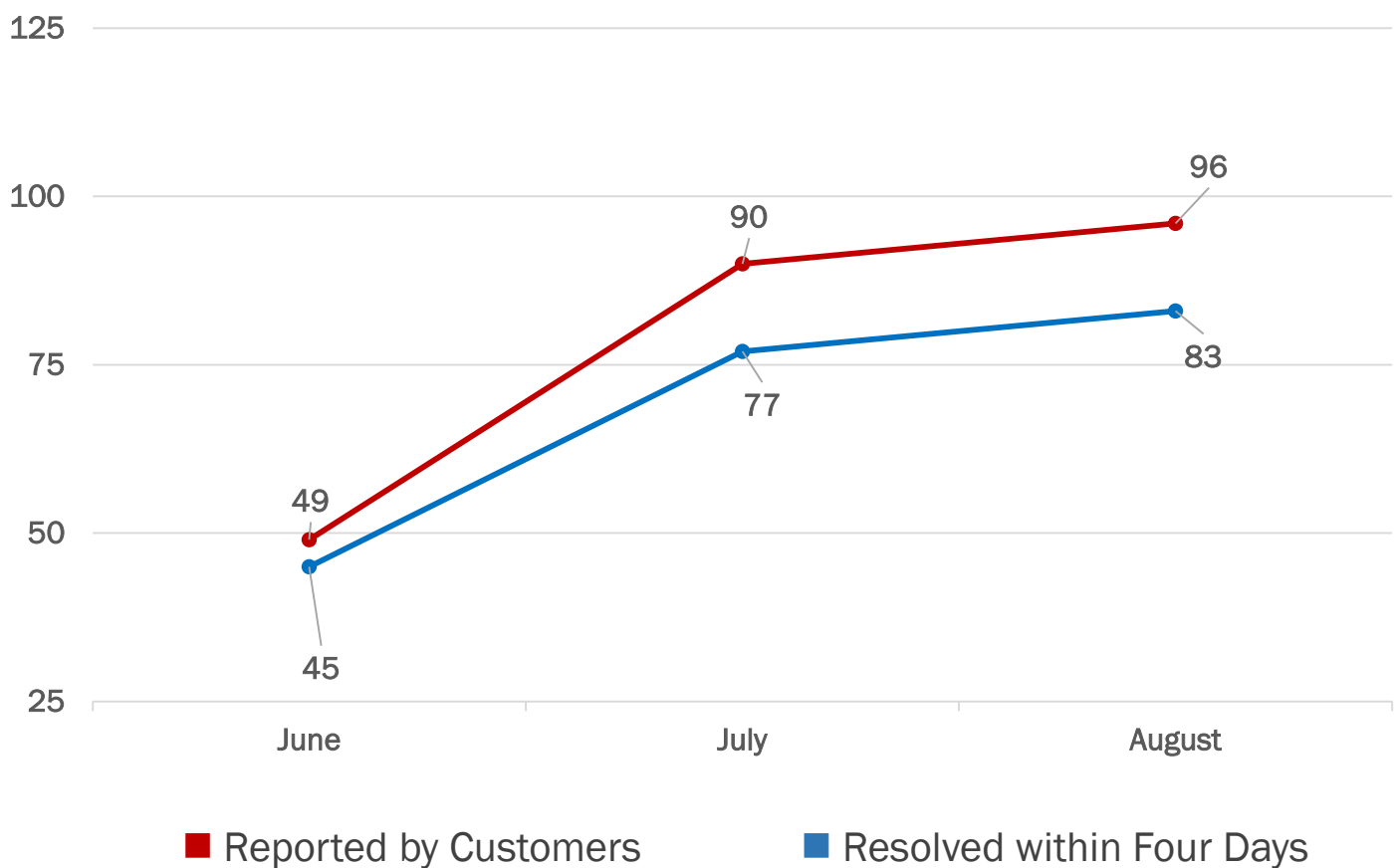


# FIELD SERVICES: Running Water



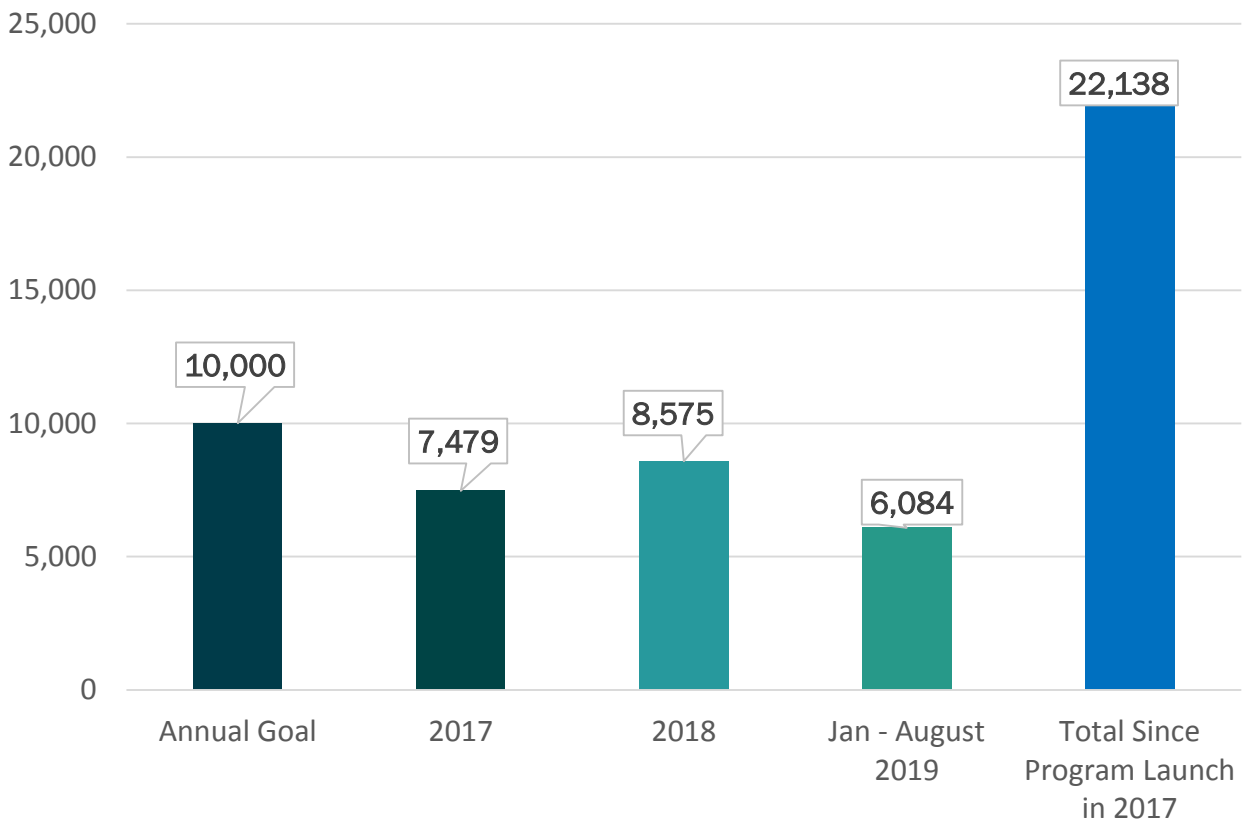
DWSD had a decrease in running water reports in August, after the outdoor temperatures declined from 90 degrees and higher in July to an average of 80 degrees.

# 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



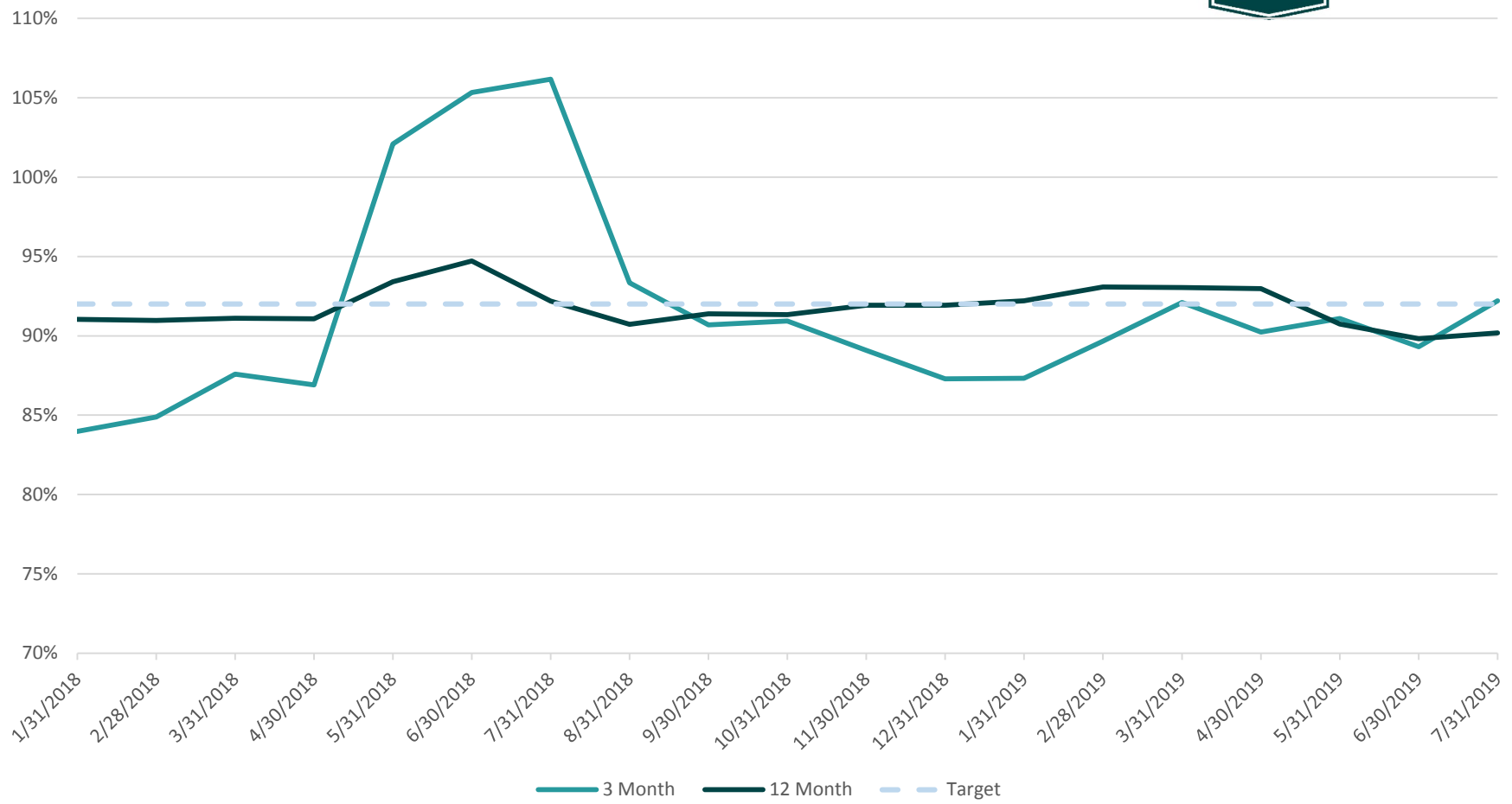
Since the catch basin inspection and cleaning program launched in 2017, crews have touched 22,138 of the estimated 90,000 catch basins. The goal is 30,000 in three years and DWSD is close to reaching that objective.



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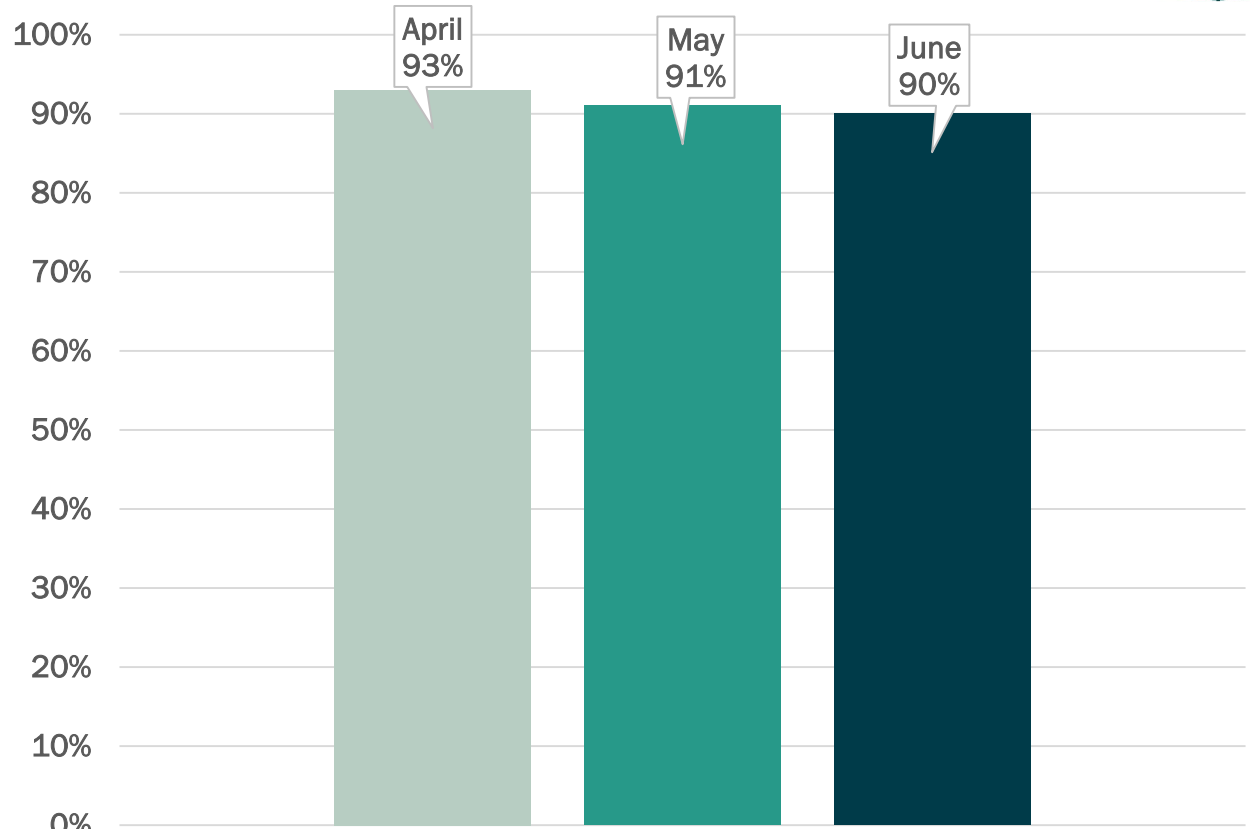
# Finance

# 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



12-Month Rolling Average 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.

# FINANCE: Cash Balance



**\$94,954,044**

Water cash balance as of  
June 30, 2019

**\$155,023,892**

Sewer cash balance as of  
June 30, 2019

As of June 30, 2019, DWSD had 161 days of cash on hand. The target is 120 days.



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# Legal Services



# LEGAL: Claims, Hearings and Cases



**0**  
Property damage claims

**10**  
Basement backup damage claims appeals

**\$0**  
Amount in property damage claims

**\$494,701**  
Basement backup damage claim appeals

**\$2,150**  
Total claims recommended to be paid

**18**  
Dispute hearings

**9**  
Number of cases DWSD prevailed

**\$14,468**  
Amount in dispute

**\$8,102**  
Credited to customers based on hearing outcomes

**\$6,366**  
Owed to DWSD after hearings

**18**  
Cases handled by in-house staff

**10**  
Cases handled by outside counsel

**2**  
Lawsuits dismissed

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



**215**  
[108 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

**\$2,508,679**  
Total since July 1, 2019

**\$602,669**  
Back billed

**\$1,806,630**  
Future owed in 12 months

**\$99,380**  
Water loss

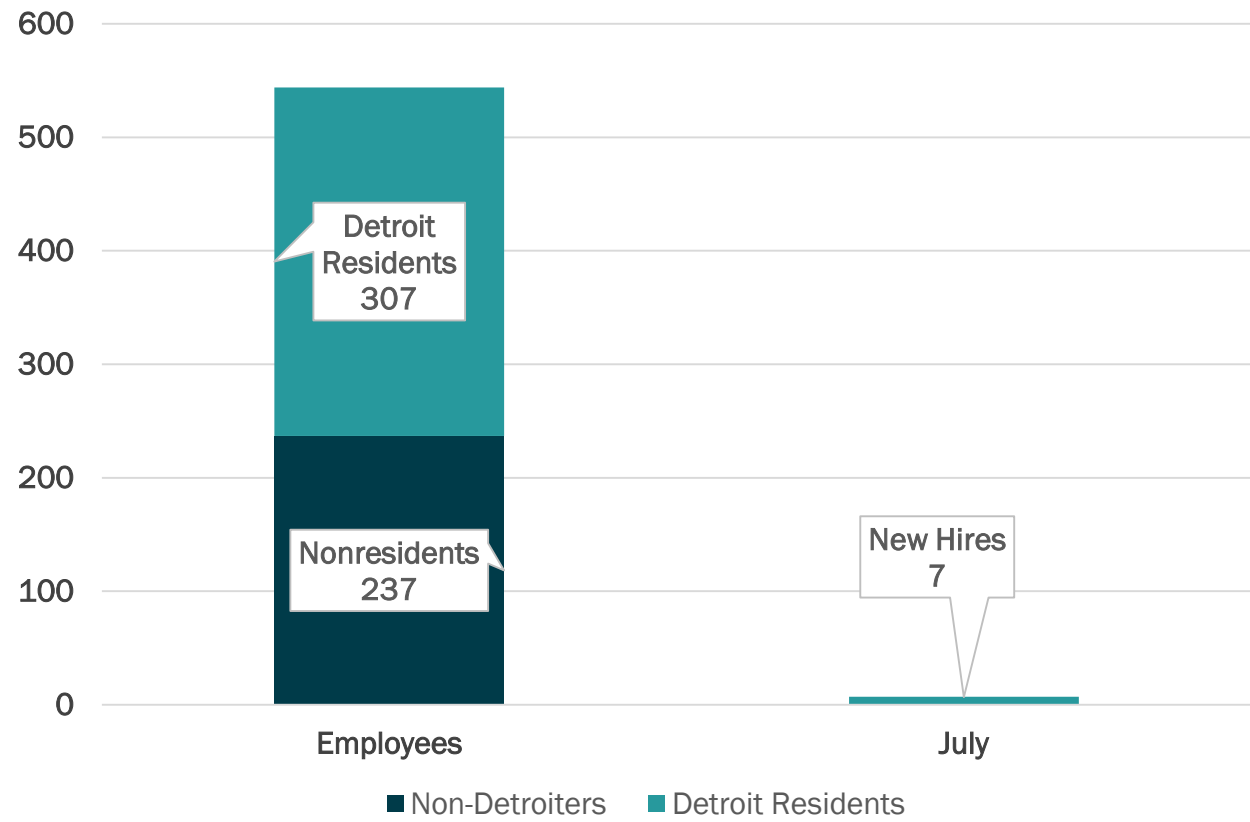
The DWSD Revenue Recovery Unit, in collaboration with customer service/billing, has identified nearly \$12 million in services owed by primarily commercial customers since its creation in August 2017. They uncovered severe delinquencies, non-working meters, unauthorized use of fire hydrants, tampering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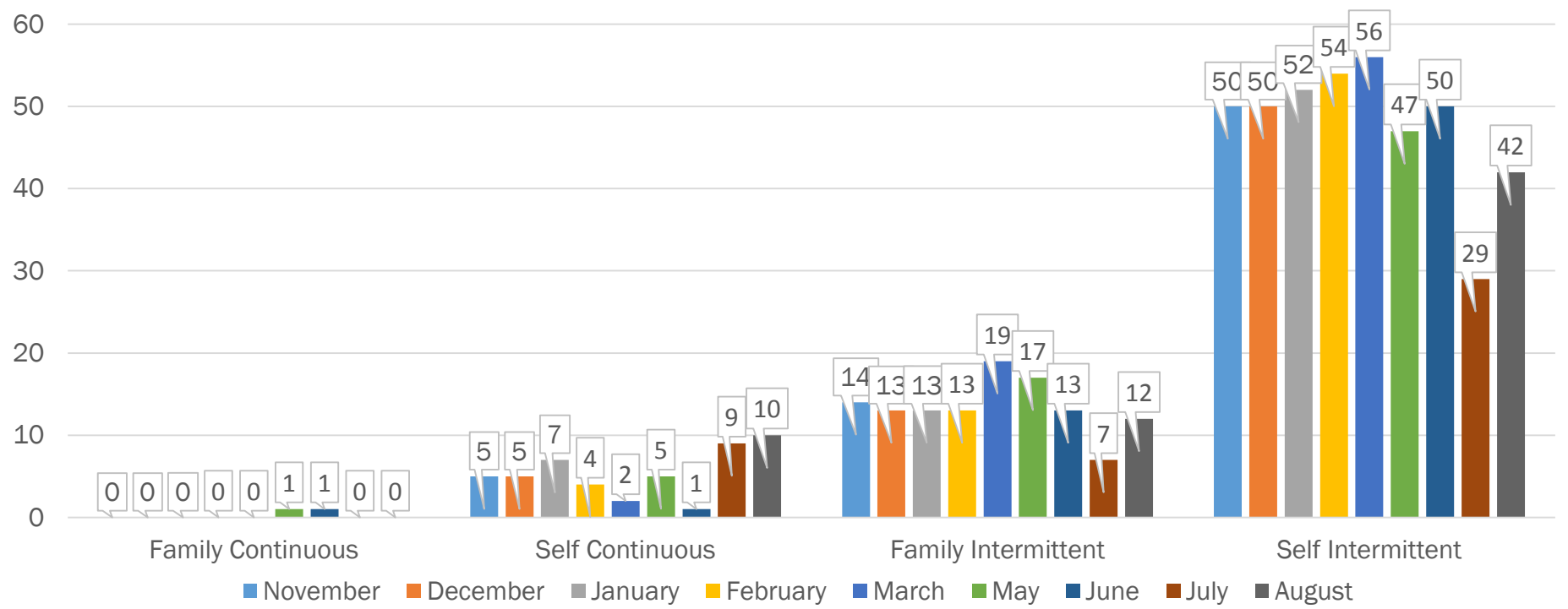
# Human Resources

# HUMAN RESOURCES: Detroit Residents and Hiring



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

# HUMAN RESOURCES: Family Medical Leave Act





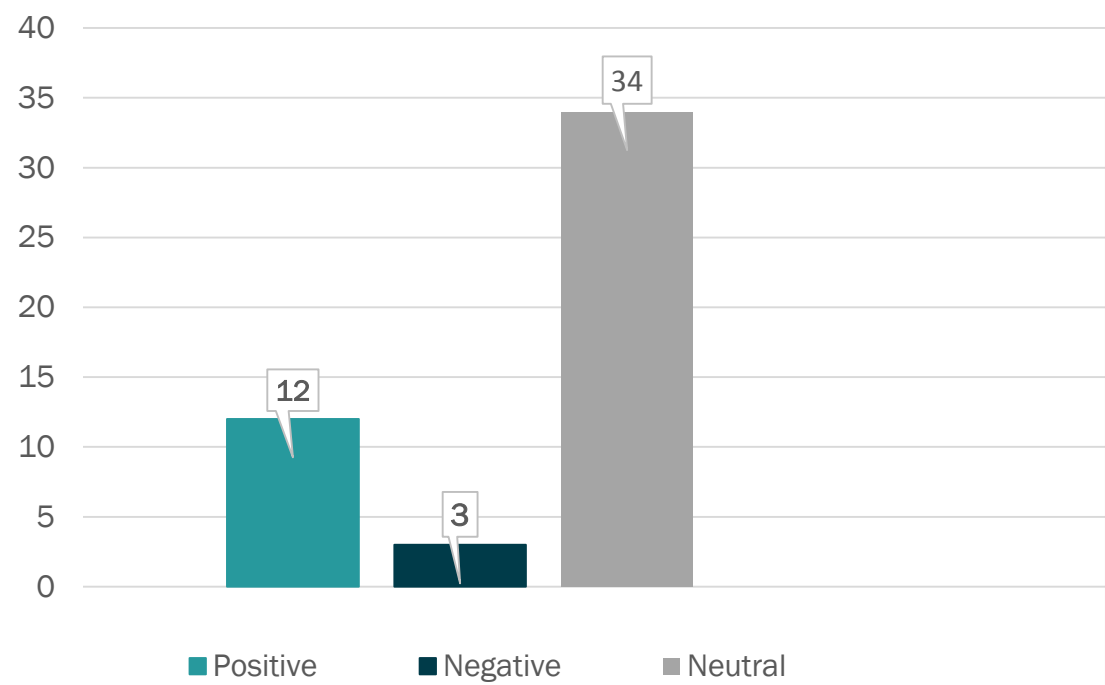
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# Public Affairs

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Positive vs. Negative News Stories



DWSD News Coverage: August 1 – August 31, 2019



**HELP ME HANK**

## Help Me Hank: Residents on Detroit's east side dodge dangerous sinkhole

By Hank Winchester - Reporter, Dane Sager Kelly - Web Producer

Posted: 5:24 PM, August 09, 2019  
Updated: 5:24 PM, August 09, 2019

f t e

In August, the DWSD Public Affairs team saw a total of **49** media stories. The majority of the neutral stories were about service interruptions. They were counted as neutral if the article or interview provided information on customer assistance programs and how customers may get help. The positive stories highlighted DWSD’s use of the DivDat kiosks for bill payments and an article about DWSD’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The negative articles were about service interruptions where no customer assistance information was provided and the sinkhole on the east side. Of the stories, 5 were broadcast, 23 were print/online and 21 were radio.

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





# PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Social Media Activity



**17**  
New Facebook Followers

**7,855**  
Total Followers on Facebook

**5,831**  
Engagement on Facebook



**19**  
New Twitter Followers

**1,600**  
Total Followers on Twitter

**318**  
Engagement on Twitter



**15**  
New Instagram Followers

**1,223**  
Total Followers on Instagram

**22**  
Engagement on Instagram



The DWSD Public Affairs team gained **51** new followers on social media in August 2019, bringing the total number of followers to **10,678**. In addition to the metrics above, Facebook saw a total of 320,293 impressions and 4,279 link clicks. The top performing post on Facebook was on August 13 when DWSD posted about items that should not be flushed, with 152 reactions, 71 comments and 114 shares. The top performing post on Twitter was on August 21 and was about the funds available through WRAP (Water Residential Assistance Program) and how to get assistance.



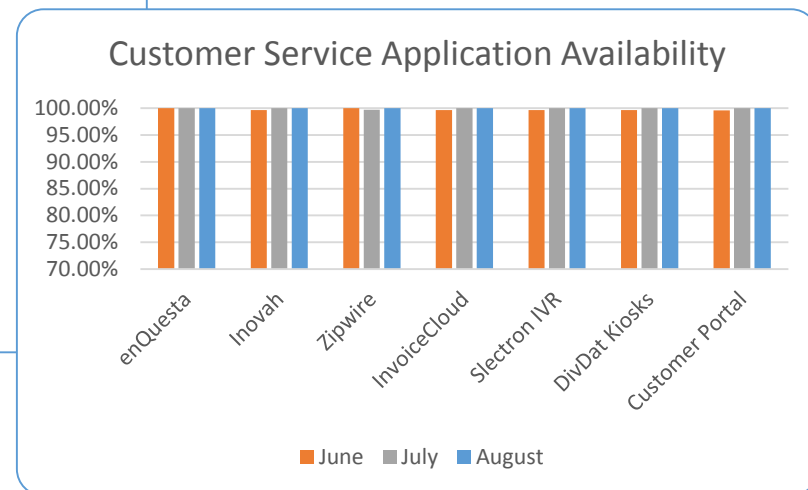
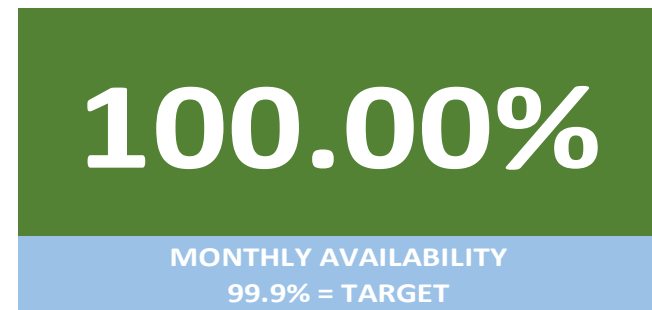
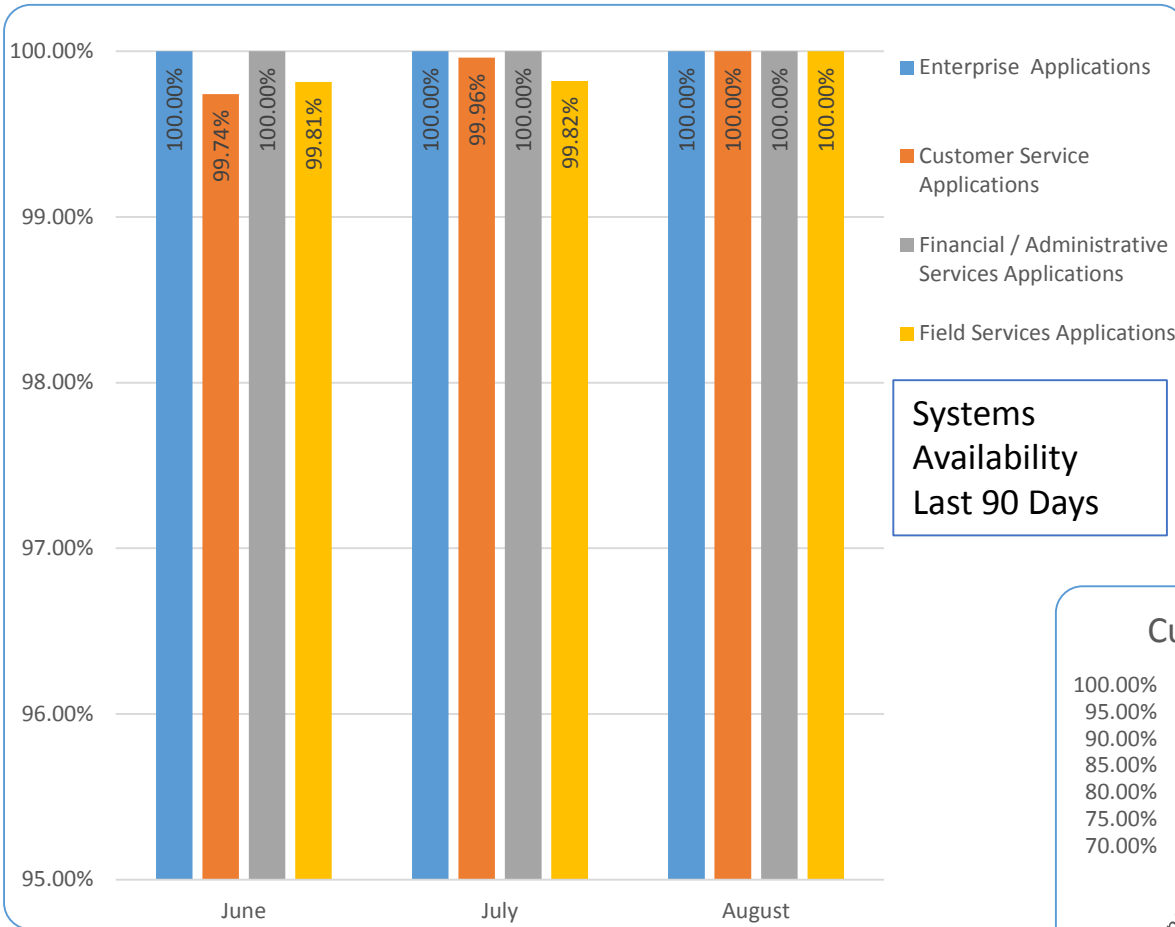
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# Information Technology

# Technology: Application Availability



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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.