



# Press Release

City of Detroit • Mike Duggan, Mayor

**FOR RELEASE:**

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## **DWSD responds to misinformation about water shut offs and suburban water rates**

In the past several days, there has been significant misinformation being circulated about the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) and its practices that the department would like to correct.

The DWSD is working closely with its customers in Detroit who are delinquent in their payments to prevent avoidable water shut offs. The department currently has more than 17,000 Detroit customers enrolled into a successful payment plan program that is designed to fit each customer's financial situation and ability to pay. Next month, the DWSD also plans to launch a new financial assistance program for the city's indigent population.

"Our goal is to have as few shut offs as possible," said DWSD Director Sue McCormick.

McCormick said she wants to make it clear that while there is a large number of delinquent water accounts in Detroit, those Detroit delinquencies do not affect suburban water bills.

"Unpaid Detroit water bills affect only Detroit customers," McCormick said. "No suburban customers pay any extra on their bills to make up for unpaid bills on Detroit addresses."

In fact, the average revenue requirement across the coverage region was just over four percent. Last week, the City Council approved an 8.7 percent revenue increase for Detroit. A big part of the reason for the larger increase in Detroit rates was to pay for uncollected Detroit bills from the year before.

McCormick also said that among those who do receive shut off notices, only a small fraction of them are actually cut off.

In May, for example, DWSD sent out 46,000 shut off notices. Of those, only 4,531 customers – less than 10 percent of the total – had their water service shut off for any period of time. Within 24 hours, 60 percent of the affected customers paid their accounts in full and had their service immediately restored. Forty percent of the remaining customers had their service restored within 48 hours.

“Many of the properties that we shut off are actually vacant structures, not occupied homes,” McCormick said.

Anyone needing assistance with your Detroit water bill, please call (313) 267-8000.

DWSD supplies high-quality drinking water to Detroit and 127 other communities in southeast Michigan. The Department provides wastewater services to Detroit and 76 other southeast Michigan communities.

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