

Legislation Text

File #: 180029, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and honoring the Philadelphia Water Department crews and customer service staff for their unprecedented response to water main breaks and emergencies during the freezing cold weather in the Winter of 2017-18.

WHEREAS, Beginning around Christmas Day, the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) saw a significant increase in customer service calls. In January 2017, there was a total of 117 water main breaks for the month. In just the first 15 days of January 2018, there have been 176 water main breaks. To date, the Department still has 170 leak investigations outstanding; and

WHEREAS, The PWD call center is overwhelmed with calls coming into their system, with wait times averaging over two hours. To deal with this heightened number of requests, PWD for the first time has temporarily instituted a policy of taking customer service requests via the Department's social media accounts; and

WHEREAS, For water main breaks, once a crew arrives on the block to begin making repairs, it takes approximately 8-10 hours to make those repairs for service to be restored to customers. PWD prioritizes locations where the water has been turned off first, then assesses locations where they have allowed the water to run in order to maintain water service to the customers on that block. After the Department inspects each location, they determine whether the water main break is causing any property damage. If property damage is being caused, PWD turns the water main off to minimize the damage to personal property; and

WHEREAS, PWD has also been expedient in inspecting for breaks on customer service lines at an occupied home or service lines and internal pipes at abandoned homes that are causing property damage to a neighboring home; and

WHEREAS, Through January 15, 2018, PWD crews have repaired 212 water main breaks, 146 services shut offs at vacant properties that were causing flooding, 335 Notices of Defect served on customer service lines, 440 leak investigations and 1,087 calls for leaks reported; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes and honors the Philadelphia Water Department crews and customer service staff for their unprecedented response to water main breaks and emergencies during the freezing cold weather in the Winter of 2017-18.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be given to Water Commissioner Debra McCarty as further evidence of the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.