

**Third Quarterly Report of the Independent Consumer Advocate (ICA)
For the Metropolitan District of Hartford County (MDC)**

July 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025

I. Introduction

This is the third report I am submitting as the ICA intended to summarize my activities in the third quarter of 2025. This quarter I continued to attend meetings of the Commission and various committees of the MDC. I have also been attending meetings of the Connecticut Water Planning Council and Watershed Protection Workgroup in order to stay informed regarding ongoing issues and concerns related to Connecticut's drinking water.

II. Policies

As stated in my first quarterly report I believe that clear written policies, ideally published on the MDC website, would be a great benefit to consumers in several areas. I am continuing to work with MDC on these policies as issues arise.

a. Leak Adjustment Policy

As I noted in my first and second quarterly reports, the MDC does not have a formal written leak adjustment policy. This quarter I took the initiative of drafting a policy which I have submitted to MDC for their consideration and review. MDC is reviewing my proposals and incorporating them into a draft of their own. I am hopeful that a policy will be forthcoming in the following quarter.

b. Authorization to Perform Work on Private Property Release of Claims

As I stated in my second quarterly report I had raised several concerns regarding the MDC's Authorization to Perform Work on Private Property Release of Claims, Form 37-R. I submitted numerous edits for consideration focused on reducing homeowner liability. This quarter MDC revised the Authorization form and incorporated many of these recommended changes, including clarification that the homeowners' waiver of claims against the District does not apply to negligent or willful actions of the District.

c. Shut Offs

I have received numerous communications from customers over the year expressing concern regarding MDC's policies for shut offs and reinstatement of water service. MDC does follow the statutory limits of C.G.S. 16-262c as well as several internal policies and procedures, however, this information is not readily available to customers. I intend to work together with MDC to try this quarter to reduce these standards to a written policy which can be made available to all customers.

III. Community Partnership Opportunities

a. Rebuilding Together Hartford

As I noted in my previous reports there are a number of homes where MDC has been unable to proceed with remediation work under the Sewer Backup Prevention program as a result of extenuating circumstances in the home. Last quarter I connected with Rebuilding Together Hartford and identified areas of overlap where their program might be able to provide assistance to certain Hartford customers to bring those homes within the qualifications for the Sewer Backup Prevention program.

This quarter I met with Rebuilding Together Hartford and MDC staff to discuss this new partnership. We were able to identify two properties in Hartford to collaborate on. I have since reached out to both homeowners and I am assisting them through the application process to qualify for funding from Rebuilding Together Hartford to address the extenuating circumstances with their homes that will then allow MDC to come back onto the property and complete their planned work.

b. Building for Health

This quarter I also participated in meetings for the Building for Health Partnership referral network organized by Connecticut Children's and grant funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Building for Health is an initiative that connects programs to keep Greater Hartford residents housed in safe, healthy, stable and high-quality homes while enhancing their overall well-being. I discussed this partnership with MDC who expressed an interest in joining. I am assisting MDC in applying to join the partnership with the goal of participating as a referring partner. This would allow the ICA to easily refer out vulnerable customers for additional services as needed and hopefully also bridge the gap in funding in certain circumstances where homes need additional work, outside of the scope of MDC services, in order for a homeowner to take advantage of the services MDC does provide.

IV. Individual Consumer Complaints

This quarter again saw more than 20 customer complaints/ inquiries to the ICA. These included property damages claims, questions regarding fines due from receivership, questions regarding the transfer of property, questions regarding bills generally, complaints regarding water shut offs and disappointment regarding the closure of Lake McDonough for recreational swimming. I continue to work with all customers to

assist them in getting answers to their questions and resolve outstanding issues to the extent possible.

V. Conclusion

I look forward to continuing this work as we enter the fourth quarter of the year. I will be closely following all budget discussions in the upcoming months and continuing to work on drafting policies, building community partnerships and assisting individual consumers with their concerns.

Sincerely,



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