TIPS BEFORE YOU BUY A DETROIT HOME

City of **DETROIT**
Water & Sewerage Department

Before you buy your home in Detroit, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is providing these important tips. Please read carefully to be fully aware of how water bills are handled during a property sale.

When buying a home in Detroit:

1 Request a final closing bill from utilities, including the water/sewerage/drainage account with DWSD. If you have a Title Company, they can handle this task. Otherwise, the buyer needs to request final bills from utilities. For DWSD, make the request through csportal.detroitmi.gov or 313-267-8000.

2 Have the seller establish an escrow account with funds deposited in order to help resolve existing utility bills and tax payments. This funded account pays off utility and tax bills in order for the new owner to start fresh with no outstanding balances. If an escrow is not possible, wait until the final real estate closing utility bills are provided to you before closing on the purchase of the property.

3 When you contact the utility, ask these questions:

➤ Is the meter installed and working properly?

➤ Is there a lead service line?
You can also check by using the instructions at detroitmi.gov/lslr.

➤ Is there an estimated bill at the property?
Once the meter and/or transmitting device (MIU) is installed, the account may need to be adjusted to reflect actual water usage.

4 Once you take occupancy of your new home, contact DWSD to establish an account at csportal.detroitmi.gov or 313-267-8000.

When a water bill is not resolved during the closing process, any outstanding balance then becomes the responsibility of the new owner.

The Michigan Water Liens Act 178 of 1939 states a municipality or water utility has a lien for the cost of services rendered to the property effective immediately upon the distribution of the water or provision of the sewage system service. In Detroit, DWSD transfers delinquent balances to the new property owner if DWSD does not receive payment of the full lien amount at the time of real estate closing.