



Special Report

2026 Update on City Water Fountains

Rachael Heisler, Controller

Peter McDevitt, Deputy Controller

Inspections performed by:

Thomas L. Sculli, Director of Public Affairs

Michael Visnich, Materials Inspector

Robert Deangelo, Contract Division Manager

Kevin O'Connor, Assistant Contract Supervisor

Jacob Adelsheimer, Controller's Clerk

August 2026

Background

In the summer of 2024, public reporting and complaints from residents revealed that very few public water fountains had been activated by mid-July.¹ Subsequent statements from Department of Public Works (DPW) officials confirmed that the department had only one plumber on staff responsible for activating every water fountain in the City (in addition to other responsibilities).

In response, City Council passed **Bill 2024-0602**, introduced by Councilman Bobby Wilson, which authorizes the City to enter into agreements with licensed plumbers and plumbing firms to address DPW's shortage and to ensure the timely activation of public water fountains.²

In August 2024, the City Controller's Office released a report on the working status of public water fountains. To assess their status, inspectors from the Controller's Office visited and tested a sample of fountains across various geographic regions of the City. The 2024 report tested 20 fountains and found that 13 (65%) were activated and seven (35%) remained off.

In a July 2025 follow-up report, the inspectors repeated this methodology with 28 fountains (which included the same 20 tested in 2024, as well as eight new fountains). Of these, the inspectors found that 16 (57%) were activated and 12 (43%) were not – a decline from the prior year.

Given record-breaking heatwaves in recent years and over 200 fountains to activate each year, residents remain understandably concerned with the reliability of water access at City sites and facilities. We hope this report series continues to provide transparency to residents and accountability from public officials.

Findings

This report is the second follow-up to the initial report. The inspectors tested a total of 35 fountains during the month of August. Of those tested, 27 (77%) were activated and 8 (23%) were not, a notable increase from both prior years. Seven fountains not inspected in prior years were added to this year's list. They are designated with a (*) in the table below.

¹ Sheehan, Andy. "Pittsburgh is still relying on one plumber to turn on its public water fountains." KDKA, 06/25/2024, <https://www.cbsnews.com/pittsburgh/news/pittsburgh-public-water-fountains-update/>.

² Enactment #424 of 2024, <https://pittsburgh.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6727401&GUID=26FBA297-7AF7-4FDA-BB89-1CE66A9A3891&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=water+fountains&FullText=1>

City Water Fountains Tested by Controller's Office Inspectors in 2026					
Location	Neighborhood	Date Tested	On/Off	2025 Status	Inspector Notes
Moore Park	Brookline	08/03/2026	ON	ON	
Brookline Memorial Park & Recreation Center	Brookline	08/03/2026	OFF	OFF	
McKinley Park	Beltzhoover	08/03/2026	ON	ON	
Woods Run at Central Avenue	Marshall Shadeland	08/03/2026	ON	OFF	
Riverview Park Playground	Perry North	08/03/2026	ON	OFF	
Jack Stack Park	Brighton Heights	08/03/2026	ON	OFF	
Jack Stack Pool	Brighton Heights	08/03/2026	ON	ON	
Ormsby Playground	Southend	08/03/2026	ON	OFF	
Hershel Park	West End	08/03/2026	ON	ON	
Pauline Park	Beechview	08/03/2026	OFF	OFF	
Vannucci Field	Beechview	08/03/2026	OFF	OFF	
Vannucci Spray Park	Beechview	08/03/2026	OFF	OFF	
Bloomfield Pool & Recreation Center	Bloomfield	08/04/2026	ON	OFF	
Anderson Playground	Schenley Park	08/04/2026	ON	ON	Needs water pressure adjustment
Osceola Playground	Bloomfield	08/04/2026	ON	OFF	
Garland Park	East Liberty	08/04/2026	OFF	OFF	
Liberty Green Park	East Liberty	08/04/2026	OFF	ON	
Costa Court	Larimer	08/04/2026	OFF	OFF	
Mellon Park	East Liberty	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Highland Park Playground	Highland Park	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Stanton Avenue Courts	Highland Park	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Wightman Park	Squirrel Hill	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Natoli Park	Morningside	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Heth's Park	Highland Park	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
McBride Park	Lincoln Place	08/04/2026	ON	ON	

Leslie Park Playground	Lawrenceville	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Arsenal Park Playground	Lawrenceville	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Kennard Park	Hill District	08/04/2026	ON	ON	
Bud Hammer Playground *	Greenfield	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	
Bud Hammer Field *	Greenfield	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	Needs water pressure adjustment
Magee Field *	Greenfield	08/10/2026	OFF	n/a	Needs water pressure adjustment or replaced
Magee Pool *	Greenfield	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	
Schenley Park Swimming Pool *	Schenley Park	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	
Schenley Park Oval *	Schenley Park	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	Needs water pressure adjustment
Davis Park Playground *	Squirrel Hill	08/10/2026	ON	n/a	Clogged drain

Totals	
ON	27 (77.1%)
OFF	8 (22.8%)