

GTLO: City water works communication employee intimidation and bullying of members will not be tolerated

Posted on Wednesday, Aug 9, 2023

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MILWAUKEE, WI – The Get the Lead Out Coalition of Milwaukee (GTLO) delivered a letter of concern to Mayor Cavalier Johnson regarding the actions and behavior of a City of Milwaukee employee, Milwaukee Water Works' Marketing & Communications Officer Brian Rothgery.

This letter was prompted by Mr. Rothgery's ongoing disruptive behavior and his attempted intimidation of a GTLO member at a July 24, 2023, town hall meeting put on by the city to address public concerns about lead lateral removal.

Mr. Rothgery's most recent behavior was witnessed by Common Council president Perez and other city officials who maintain a positive and productive relationship with GTLO.

GTLO condemned the behavior of Mr. Rothgery in this letter and pointed to a pattern of aggressive, confrontational, bullying behavior by Mr. Rothgery toward GTLO and GTLO members throughout his tenure as a city employee.

In this letter we stated clearly to Mayor Johnson that Mr. Rothgery's conduct, both on and off the job, is detrimental to the reputation of the Milwaukee Water Works and harmful to its stated goals of rebuilding a relationship with the community based on mutual trust and transparency.

Mr. Rothgery demonstrated on multiple occasions that he is particularly hostile

toward GTLO and has verbally attacked and disparaged its members in public settings and privately to members of the media.

This letter asks Mayor Johnson to carefully consider Mr. Rothgery's continued role as a public relations employee for the Milwaukee Water Works.

In particular, the letter asks the mayor whether Mr. Rothgery's antagonistic conduct, bullying tactics, and attempts to intimidate and silence people he sees as his enemies is indicative of the city's commitment to community members' concerns about the removal of lead hazards from Milwaukee's environment.

We hope that this letter serves as notice to Mayor Johnson and the Milwaukee Water Works that GTLO will not be intimidated and will continue to engage in critical dialogue related to lead hazards in Milwaukee and the responsibility of the city to manage their abatement.