



Neighborhood Newsletter

Spring 2023

Hi Neighbor!

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) staff is keeping the water flowing at the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (CWRP), 400 E. 130th St., Chicago. We have worked to ensure the community's wastewater is transformed into clean water and our area waterways are protected. We take pride in our work to safeguard public health, manage stormwater, improve our water environment, and enrich our planet through sustainable and innovative operations. We work to give our neighbors the peace of mind that the task will be accomplished around the clock for nearly 1 million people served by the CWRP.



Odor Reporting

Reducing odors from the wastewater treatment process is one of our top priorities. Our staff routinely monitors for odors at 24 locations at the CWRP, and findings are summarized and published at mwrdd.org. But we also need to hear from you. If you notice an odor in the community, please immediately report on our Incident Reporting system on our website or by downloading our app on iTunes. You may also report other issues such as waterway blockages or suspicious dumping into sewers or waterways. You can also call us at (800) 332-3867 to report these types of issues.



Open House set for May 20

On Saturday, May 20 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., our staff will host an open house with tours at our CWRP. The public will have the opportunity to visit the facility without reservations to learn how we are recovering resources and transforming water. In 2022, we celebrated the CWRP's 100th birthday, along with our construction of the Cal-Sag Channel. Despite its age, the CWRP remains durable, cutting-edge and committed to protecting the water environment for the South Side of Chicago and 48 surrounding suburbs.

Jobs at the MWRD

Did you know that we have more than 1,800 employees and over 200 job classifications? Explore career opportunities and sign up to receive future examination notifications at <https://mwrdd.org/careers>.

Environmental justice for all!

"If we want a safe environment for our children and grandchildren, we must clean up our act, no matter how hard a task it might be," said our neighbor and mother of the environmental justice movement, Hazel M. Johnson. We are proud to spread her legacy in our work to clean up our water environment and protect all communities equitably, including our neighbors at the Altgeld Gardens. In meeting the goals set *(continued)*

forth in our Strategic Plan, our Board of Commissioners recently adopted a new environmental justice policy. The policy will integrate environmental justice considerations into all MWRD programs, policies and activities wherever possible. The policy, along with our new environmental justice section staff, will promote diversity, equity and inclusion in our work.

Calumet Partnership Council

In 2022, we created a Community Partnership Council (CPC) for the CWRP, representing the communities that are served by our CWRP. The goal of the Calumet CPC is to serve as a conduit between the CWRP and its neighboring community; to position the MWRD as a critical community asset; and to ensure that the MWRD is a responsive neighbor and inclusive partner. We look forward to having productive conversations that will ultimately have a positive impact on our work.



Stormwater Management/Thornton Composite Reservoir

In our role as the regional authority for stormwater management in Cook County, we are out working in the communities we serve, and we have many projects in the Calumet region in progress. These include flood control projects, stream restorations and detention basin projects.

Part of our flood mitigation efforts for the CWRP area comes via the Thornton Composite Reservoir. Since 2015, the reservoir has captured more than 53 billion gallons of combined sewage. Without this system in place, that is 53 billion gallons of polluted water that threatens to flood our basements and streets. The reservoir is part of the MWRD's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP), or "Deep Tunnel" as it is known. When storms subside, the water from the reservoir flows to the CWRP to be treated and cleaned and released back into the Little Calumet River.

Our "Green Neighbor Guide" features tools and ideas that can help you get started on stormwater management projects that you can install on your property, such as rain barrels, rain gardens and permeable pavement. To access the publication, please visit https://mwrdd.org/sites/default/files/documents/Green_Neighbor_Guide_230412.pdf (mwrdd.org) or call (312) 751-6633.

You may also minimize flooding and basement backups by reducing your water use before and during storms. Another way to help is by installing a rain barrel. Our rain barrel program promotes water conservation and green infrastructure to capture rainwater from roofs and save it for later use to water lawns, plants and gardens and wash cars and tools.

The MWRD staff and commissioners are working to make our community a better place to live. If you have any questions, please call (312) 751-6633 or email public.affairs@mwrdd.org. You may also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.

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