

2024 Calendar

ROOTED IN NATURE: A YEARLONG
CELEBRATION OF NATIVE PLANTS



**Metropolitan Water
Reclamation District
of Greater Chicago**

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT OF GREATER CHICAGO

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, independent government agency responsible for protecting the region's water environment. The MWRD accomplishes this by protecting area waterways and the source of drinking water (Lake Michigan), providing stormwater management for residents and businesses across Cook County and transforming and reclaiming wastewater in its service area, which encompasses 93.3 percent of the land area of Cook County. As an innovative utility of the future, the MWRD strives to develop groundbreaking technologies to recover and reuse valuable resources that improve water quality and protect the planet.

Established by the Illinois General Assembly in 1889 as the Sanitary District of Chicago, the MWRD's name, roles, jurisdiction and authority have changed over more than 130 years. The enabling act in 1889 was in direct response to a long-standing problem with contamination of the water supply and nuisance conditions of the rivers. The MWRD reversed the flow of the Chicago and Calumet River Systems to stop the discharge of sewage to Lake Michigan and instead discharge it to the Des Plaines River, where it could be diluted as it flowed into the Illinois River and eventually the Mississippi River. Prior to the MWRD's construction of a 61.3-mile system of canals and waterway improvements, the Chicago and Calumet River Systems were tributaries to Lake Michigan. These river systems are now tributaries to the Illinois River system. The MWRD constructed seven modern water reclamation plants over the 20th century, releasing clean water into the environment.

From 1955 through 1988, the MWRD was called the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago. In order to provide a more accurate perception of the MWRD's current functions and responsibilities, the name was changed effective Jan. 1, 1989, to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Mission and Responsibilities

The mission of the MWRD is to protect the health and safety of the public in its service area, protect the quality of the water supply source, improve the quality

of water in watercourses in its service area, protect businesses and homes from flood damages, and manage water as a vital resource for its service area. The MWRD collects wastewater from municipalities in its service area, conveys it to water reclamation plants, provides full secondary treatment, and provides tertiary treatment when appropriate. The MWRD is also responsible for stormwater management for all of Cook County. The MWRD does not treat and transport drinking water to homes and businesses; for information regarding drinking water in your neighborhood, contact your local municipality.

Services

The MWRD's seven modern water reclamation plants provide excellent treatment for residential and industrial wastewater, meeting permitted discharge limits virtually at all times. The treatment process is protected by a pretreatment program to guard against hazardous substances and toxic chemicals.

Water reclamation plants are strictly regulated pursuant to federal and state requirements. The MWRD routinely monitors industries and nonresidential sources to assure that wastes are disposed of in an environmentally responsible and lawful manner.

Treated water, along with runoff from rainfall, enters local canals, rivers, and streams that serve as headwaters of the Illinois River system. Stormwater in the separate sewered area is controlled to reduce flood damages by a number of stormwater detention reservoirs. In the combined sewer area, the MWRD's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) has significantly reduced basement backup and overflows to local waterways.

Flow within the MWRD's waterway system and the Lake Michigan discretionary diversion flow are controlled by three inlet structures on Lake Michigan: the Wilmette Pumping Station, the Chicago River Controlling Works, and the O'Brien Lock and Dam. The single outlet control structure is the Lockport Lock and Powerhouse.

While exercising no direct control over water collection systems owned and maintained by cities, villages, sewer districts, and utilities, the MWRD does

control municipal sewer construction by permits outside the City of Chicago. The MWRD also owns a network of intercepting sewers to convey wastewater from the local collection systems to the water reclamation plants.

Facilities

The MWRD is located primarily within the boundaries of Cook County, Illinois. The MWRD serves 5.19 million residents in an area of 882.1 square miles, which includes the City of Chicago and 128 surrounding suburban communities.

The MWRD's 560 miles of intercepting sewers and force mains range in size from 6 inches to 27 feet in diameter, and are fed by approximately 10,000 local sewer system connections.

TARP is one of the country's largest public works projects for pollution and flood control. Four tunnel systems total 110 miles of tunnels, 8 to 33 feet in diameter and 150 to 300 feet underground. The tunnels are designed to empty into three large reservoirs to provide storage for the polluted water captured by TARP.

The MWRD owns and operates one of the world's largest water reclamation plants, in addition to six other plants and 23 pumping stations. The MWRD treats an average of 1.3 billion gallons of water each day, but has the capacity to treat well over 2 billion gallons in a day.

The MWRD controls 76.1 miles of navigable waterways, which are part of the inland waterway system connecting the Great Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico. It also owns and operates 34 stormwater detention reservoirs to provide regional stormwater flood damage reduction.

In 2024, the MWRD will conclude the third year of a five-year Strategic Plan. This important roadmap outlines the MWRD's mission, vision, and goals toward operational strengths, financial sustainability and resiliency while addressing climate change and regional water resource protection with special focus on engagement, collaboration, innovation, equity, diversity and environmental justice.

GOVERNANCE



The MWRD is governed by a nine-member Board of Commissioners. Commissioners are elected at large and serve on a salaried basis. Three Commissioners are elected every two years for six-year terms. Biannually, the Board elects from its membership a President, Vice President, and Chairman of the Committee on Finance.

Kari K. Steele	President	(312) 751-5694	Kari.Steele@mwrdd.org
Patricia Theresa Flynn	Vice President	(312) 751-5655	Patricia.Flynn@mwrdd.org
Marcelino Garcia	Chairman of Finance	(312) 751-5661	Marcelino.Garcia@mwrdd.org
Precious Brady-Davis	Commissioner	(312) 751-5620	Precious.BradyDavis@mwrdd.org
Yumeka Brown	Commissioner	(312) 751-5645	Yumeka.Brown@mwrdd.org
Cameron Davis	Commissioner	(312) 751-5470	Cameron.Davis@mwrdd.org
Daniel Pogorzelski	Commissioner	(312) 751-5685	Daniel.Pogorzelski@mwrdd.org
Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda	Commissioner	(312) 751-5465	Eira.Sepulveda@mwrdd.org
Mariyana T. Spyropoulos	Commissioner	(312) 751-5650	Mariyana.Spyropoulos@mwrdd.org



Scan the QR code to learn more about the Board of Commissioners or visit mwrdd.org


WATER RECLAMATION PLANTS



- 1 Calumet Water Reclamation Plant
- 2 Egan Water Reclamation Plant
- 3 Hanover Park Water Reclamation Plant
- 4 Kirie Water Reclamation Plant
- 5 Lemont Water Reclamation Plant
- 6 O'Brien Water Reclamation Plant
- 7 Stickney Water Reclamation Plant



JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<p>1939 MWRD installs locks at lakefront intakes. <i>New Year's Day</i></p>	<p>1900 Chicago River reversed; Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal completed.</p>			<p>MWRD Board Meeting</p>	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				<p>2018 McCook Reservoir first fill.</p>		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	<p><i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i></p>			<p>MWRD Board Meeting</p>		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Go Easy on the Salt

Too much road salt can harm our environment.

Learn how you can help at mwrld.org or scan the QR code.


▲ Common boneset thrives in native plant gardens that the MWRD helped establish to absorb more stormwater at La Villita Park in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. This perennial plant resists flooded environments and its flowers attract bees, wasps, butterflies and other pollinators.

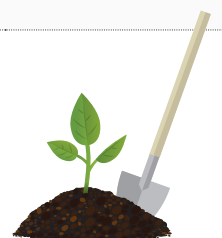


Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH • AMERICAN HEART MONTH

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
		<p>The Green Neighbor Guide has step-by-step instructions for installing green infrastructure on your property. Download it today in the QR code!</p>		MWRD Board Meeting	Groundhog Day	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
						Chinese New Year
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day	MWRD Board Meeting		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK						
1971 Fulton County Prairie Plan begins.	Presidents' Day					
25	26	27	28	29		




▲ Fleabane is a common native plant that is easy to grow and provides numerous small flowers in late summer through early fall. The pollen of the flowerheads attracts different insects including pollinators. Fleabanes can be found throughout the MWRD's native prairie landscaping enhancing facility grounds and collecting stormwater.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Casimir Pulaski Day			MWRD Board Meeting	International Women's Day	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Daylight Saving Time Begins Ramadan Begins at Sundown	18	19	20	21	22	23
17						
St. Patrick's Day				MWRD Board Meeting	World Water Day	2016 UV disinfection begins at O'Brien WRP.
24 Palm Sunday	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31 Easter Holi				Good Friday	


▲ A busy bee explores beardtongue flowers in the rain gardens along Pacific Ave. in Franklin Park, where the MWRD contributed to rain gardens that alleviate flooding in the community. Besides absorbing water, the beardtongue flowers attract pollinators and curious hummingbirds.



Photo by Justin Brown/MWRD

EARTH MONTH

APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	MWRD Board Meeting	13
14	15	Ramadan Ends Eid ul-Fitr Begins	Eid ul-Fitr Ends	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	MWRD Board Meeting	27
28	29	30				
	Earth Day Passover Begins at Sundown		Administrative Professionals Day		Arbor Day	



Restore the Canopy, Plant a Tree.

Help replenish the Cook County canopy and prevent flooding.
Visit mwrdd.org to learn how or scan the QR code.



▲ Blue vervain and yellow coneflowers bloom at the Buffalo Creek Reservoir which the MWRD expanded to protect downstream communities from flooding in Buffalo Grove and improve public recreation amenities in the Lake County Forest Preserve District.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH • NATIONAL BIKE MONTH

MAY




SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<p>Capture and reuse rainwater. Cook County residents can order rain barrels from the MWRD. To order, visit mwrdd.org or scan the QR code.</p>		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	MWRD Board Meeting	11
Cinco De Mayo Orthodox Easter	12	13	14	15	16	17
1980 Kirie WRP commences operations. Mother's Day	19	20	21	22	23	24
				1963 Hanover Park WRP completed. MWRD Board Meeting	National Bike to Work Day	Armed Forces Day
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Memorial Day		 1889 Sanitary District of Chicago established.			

▲ Honeybees enjoy numerous swamp milkweed flowers in Franklin Park rain gardens. This green infrastructure project funded by the MWRD features native plantings of broad-leaved purple coneflower, little bluestem, brown-eyed Susan and the common milkweed across 10,800 square feet of improvements at five locations on Pacific Avenue.



LGBTQ+ PRIDE MONTH • NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

JUNE


SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<p>Conserve water. Reduce your water use before, during and after rainstorms. Sign up for overflow action alerts by scanning the QR code. Learn why this is important at mwrdd.org</p>					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>1930 West Side plant (Stickney) commences operations.</p>				<p>MWRD Board Meeting</p>		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
					<p>Flag Day</p>	<p>1989 Nicholas J. Melas Centennial Fountain comes online to commemorate MWRD's 100th Anniversary.</p>
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<p>Father's Day Eid al-Adha Begins</p>	<p>Eid al-Adha Ends</p>		<p>Juneteenth</p>	<p>MWRD Board Meeting</p>		
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

▲ Native pickerelweed grows on the banks of Lake Katherine in Palos Heights. This perennial plant can grow in shallow water and provide protection to fish and other aquatic wildlife while also attracting pollinators to its flowers. Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanic Gardens is one of the many parks and natural areas on MWRD property.



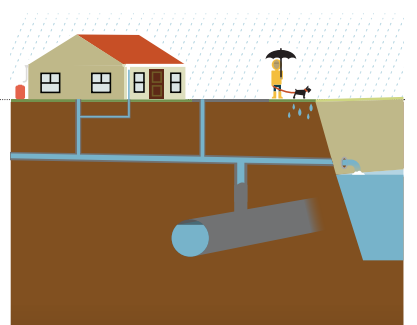
Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
				Independence Day		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				MWRD Board Meeting		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
			2015 Disinfection facility at Calumet WRP completed.			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
				National Intern Day		
28	29	30	31			

Understanding Your Sewers

Help prevent or reduce the chance of sewer backups in your home.
 Visit mwrld.org or scan the QR code.

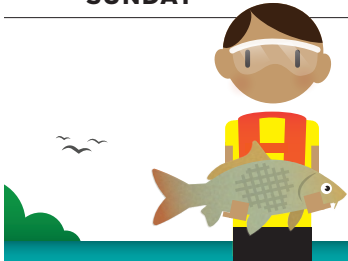



▲ A black swallowtail butterfly stops at a purple coneflower in the native prairie landscaping at the MWRD's Egan Water Reclamation Plant in Schaumburg. The MWRD has converted more than 50 acres at various facility grounds into native prairies to absorb stormwater, improve water quality, attract pollinators and provide wildlife habitat.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<p>Let's Learn! Visit mwrdd.org or scan the QR code for educational resources and to request a speaker.</p> 			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
				MWRD Board Meeting		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	<p>1922 Cal-Sag Channel becomes operational.</p>	<p>1907 Chicago River Main Channel and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal extension completed.</p> <p>Lockport Powerhouse and Lock goes online.</p>				

▲ Brown-eyed Susans, which are native to eastern and central areas of North America, attract butterflies and dragonflies and are planted throughout many MWRD locations and green infrastructure projects that the MWRD funds and constructs.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 15 • NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2015 Thornton TARP Reservoir completed.	1892 Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal construction begins. Labor Day			MWRD Board Meeting		1938 Chicago River Controlling Works opens.	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
			1922 Calumet WRP completed. Patriot Day	1907 North Shore Channel construction begins.			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
			1969 Sewage and Waste Control Ordinance adopted.	MWRD Board Meeting			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30					<p>Where Does IT Go? Watch the animation and download the book at mwrld.org or scan the QR code.</p>	

29

30

Where Does IT Go?
Watch the animation and download the book at mwrld.org or scan the QR code.



▲ The colorful and strong-scented solidago, also known as goldenrod, is native to North America. Its flowers attract a variety of insects for pollen and the whole plant can grow to as tall as 6 feet to support the MWRD's stormwater management initiatives.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

OCTOBER


SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
		Stormwater Management Learn how the MWRD works with local governments to solve stormwater challenges in Cook County. Visit mwrdd.org or scan the QR code.		1928 North Side Sewage Treatment Works (later renamed O'Brien) WRP completed. MWRD Board Meeting		WEFTEC WEFTEC.ORG
6	7	8	Rosh Hashanah Begins		Rosh Hashanah Ends	
			9	10	11	12
					Yom Kippur Begins	Yom Kippur Ends
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Indigenous Peoples' Day Columbus Day	National Hispanic Heritage Month Ends		Imagine a Day Without Water MWRD Board Meeting		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		1955 ASCE names Chicago Sewage Disposal System one of seven engineering wonders of U.S.				1972 Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) adopted.
27	28	29	30	31	 	
				1990 Majewski Reservoir construction begins. Diwali Halloween		

▲ A praying mantis waits for a meal on an aster, which is a flowery native plant that can soak up stormwater and provide a variety of colors for your garden in the fall. Its flowers attract a variety of bees to collect pollen, medium-sized butterflies and skippers.



Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD

NOVEMBER



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
		<p>Go behind the scenes. Take a live virtual or in-person tour or watch it on demand. Visit mwrld.org or scan the QR code.</p> 				
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Daylight Saving Time Ends		Election Day		MWRD Board Meeting	National STEM/STEAM Day	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Veterans Day					1961 Lemont WRP commences operations.
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
				MWRD Board Meeting		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		1907 Lockport Powerhouse delivers first electric current to Chicago. 2015 Thornton TARP Reservoir first fill.		Thanksgiving Day	1910 First water flows into North Shore Channel.	

▲ Canada ryegrass can help native plants and rain gardens by improving soil health and increasing water retention and infiltration. These perennial plants are beneficial as food for wildlife or for protection for some species including the nesting grassland birds.



Photo by Dan Wehdt/MWRD

DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		MWRD Board Meeting (Annual Meeting)	2017 Stage I of McCook Reservoir unveiled.	MWRD Board Meeting		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	1975 Egan WRP completed.			MWRD Board Meeting		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		Christmas Eve	Christmas Day Chanukkah Begins	Kwanzaa Begins		
29	30	31			<p>The Environment is our Office. Explore our online employment center at mwrdd.org to learn about working at the MWRD, or scan the QR code. Join the Team!</p> 	
		New Year's Eve				

▲ A female red-winged blackbird visits a prairie within the stormwater detention areas of Heritage Park in Wheeling, where the MWRD helped provide much-needed compensatory floodwater storage upstream of the Des Plaines River to protect communities from flooding and improve grounds for the Wheeling Park District.

Overflow Action Day alerts remind you to reduce water use before, during and after rainstorms.

WATCH FOR THIS BADGE



THEN TAKE ACTION!

Delay showers and baths

Wait to run the dishwasher or washing machine

Flush less frequently



To sign up to receive email or text alerts, scan this QR code or visit mwrld.org

REPORT AN ISSUE

Help protect our waterways and sewer system.

You can report:

- Waterway blockages
- Suspicious dumping
- Odors



Use the trilingual MWRD Citizen Incident Reporting (CIR) form by scanning the QR code.

KEEP DRUGS OUT OF OUR WATER SYSTEMS.

Never flush medications down the toilet or a drain. Instead, use one of our safe collection sites. Collection boxes are located near the main gate at three water reclamation plants (WRP) and in the lobby of the Main Office Building in Chicago.

Main Office Building

100 E. Erie St., Chicago
Open Monday - Friday
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

O'Brien WRP

3500 Howard St., Skokie
Open seven days a week
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Calumet WRP

400 E. 130th St., Chicago
Open seven days a week
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Stickney WRP

6001 W. Pershing Rd., Cicero
Open seven days a week
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information and a listing of medication collection sites located throughout Cook County, scan the QR code.



COVER: A monarch enjoys the late summer black-eyed Susan flowers in the native prairies at Rutherford Sayre Park in the Galewood neighborhood of Chicago, part of a green infrastructure installation funded by the MWRD. The MWRD has invested in over 100 green infrastructure projects throughout Cook County. (Photo by Dan Wendt/MWRD)

For additional copies of this calendar, call the Office of Public Affairs at 312-751-6633 or email public.affairs@mwrld.org

[f](#) [X](#) [@](#) [v](#) [in](#) mwrld.org