



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

February 11, 2020

Reminder: MWRD's voluntary flood-prone property acquisition program can provide relief for homeowners; Local governments should apply for support by Feb. 14

Property owners faced with the unenviable challenge of selling a home that repeatedly floods now may have a way out through a program offered by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD).

The MWRD is accepting applications from local governmental entities, including municipalities and townships, for assistance in acquiring flood prone properties through Friday, Feb. 14. To be eligible, structures must be located within a FEMA designated hazard area subject to inundation by the one percent annual chance flood or an MWRD Detailed Watershed Plan (DWP) 100-year inundation area.

There are two avenues of participation in the MWRD's program:

- Local Sponsor Assistance-The MWRD's top priority is to facilitate the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's (IEMA) federally funded program by assisting Local Sponsor communities in providing their share of the cost for property acquisition.
- Local Government Application-This component of the program allows the MWRD to provide assistance on acquisition projects that have not received federal funding through IEMA.

In addition, the MWRD is also accepting applications for assistance in addressing local flooding through its Stormwater Partnership Program. Government entities, including municipalities, townships, county agencies, park districts, school districts and other local government organizations can apply for assistance through Feb. 14. Applications for both programs can be found at mwrdd.org/stormwater-management-1.



After repeated flooding incidents, homeowners and communities don't feel like they have a way out. A program offered by the MWRD can provide funding towards the purchase of these homes.

"We are happy to announce these calls for projects and flood-prone property acquisitions that will aid local communities dealing with flooding and drainage problems," said Commissioner Cam Davis. "These critical funds and MWRD expertise will protect homes and build resilient communities faced with absorbing intense and unpredictable rainfalls. If you have a potential project in mind, the MWRD wants to hear from you today."

Government entities applying for the flood prone property acquisition program must include a pre-application, a narrative description of the project, an approximate cost analysis and maps of the target area. A map with target parcels highlighted can be obtained at maps.cookcounty-il.gov/cookviewer/. FEMA FIRM map and DWP Inundation Maps are available at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home> and <https://gispub.mwrdd.org/swima/>.

In 2014, the State Legislature expanded the authorities of MWRD's stormwater management legislation (*continued*)

MWRD's voluntary flood-prone property acquisition program, *cont.*

to address local drainage and flooding problems and to acquire flood-prone property from owners on a voluntary basis. Communities are encouraged to consider acquisition of flood-prone properties in instances where other measures are not feasible to address structures affected by overbank flooding along area rivers and streams. As a result of previous calls for voluntary flood-prone property acquisitions, the MWRD has already entered into agreements with local municipal partners and the Cook County Land Bank Authority to acquire 90 properties. Upon acquisition, the structures are removed, and deed restrictions are placed on the acquired properties requiring them to remain as open spaces in perpetuity. The MWRD has partnered with flood-prone property acquisition programs in Des Plaines, Glenview, Northlake, Franklin Park and unincorporated Cook County near Riverside.

The project types under the MWRD's Stormwater Partnership Program include the installation of green and gray infrastructure, stormwater storage, upsizing critical storm sewers and culverts, pump stations and establishing drainage ways. Projects must be within the MWRD's corporate boundaries and be intended to address structure flooding, not nuisance flooding, such as rear-yard or minor street ponding issues. Projects must be designed to

manage stormwater through conveyance and/or storage improvements. Elements of green infrastructure may be used but should not be the primary source of stormwater abatement, as projects that are primarily green infrastructure related can be submitted separately for consideration through the MWRD's Green Infrastructure Program. A call for green infrastructure project applications is anticipated later this year.

The MWRD will prioritize the submitted projects based on its current budgetary allocation for the programs as well as other factors, including the project's intended stormwater benefits towards protecting structures from flooding. For more information, including program guidelines, partnership responsibilities, and eligibility requirements, please visit mwrld.org and select Stormwater Management under Services.

"There have been amazing projects constructed with this funding in the past that have helped thousands of people, so we strongly encourage local governments to take advantage of this opportunity to make strategic investments in infrastructure projects across our county," said MWRD Commissioner Kimberly Du Buclet.

###

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrld.org) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.