



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

**Allison Fore**

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer  
312.751.6632  
allison.fore@mwrdd.org  
100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

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**Media Contact:** Molly Poppe  
City of Chicago  
Department of Streets and Sanitation  
312-744-2878  
molly.poppe@cityofchicago.org

## City of Chicago to provide wood chips to Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago for reuse in Chicago communities

Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation to Deliver 150,000 Yards of Wood Chips to Be Used in the MWRD's Biosolids Composting Program

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and the City of Chicago for the recycling of tree debris to be used as a bulking agent to compost biosolids generated by wastewater processing. Wood chips created from Chicago tree debris will be mixed with the biosolids and then composted into an organic material for use as a substitute for fertilizer, compost and soil amendment. This material will be used for maintaining or establishing turf grass in parks, athletic fields and public access areas throughout Cook County.

"This partnership with MWRD allows the City to recycle the tree debris created by the regular operations of the Bureau of Forestry for the benefit of our neighborhoods," said Mayor Emanuel. "This innovative and sustainable approach for recycling wood chips is one of the many steps the City is taking to ensure Chicago's trees have a lasting impact on our communities and continue improving our environment."

As part of regular Forestry operations of tree trimming and tree removal, the Department of Streets and Sanitation Bureau of Forestry produces a large and continuous supply of wood chips. These wood chips will be supplied to the MWRD's biosolids program at the Calumet Solids Management Area regularly with the first delivery constituting 100 yards of wood chips. The City will provide the MWRD with approximately

150,000 yards of wood chips over the next three years. This Agreement allows the City to efficiently and effectively recycle wood chips for reuse in Chicago and the surrounding areas.

"The MWRD is working toward a zero waste Chicago," said MWRD President Kathleen Therese Meany. "This is the type of partnership that will make zero waste a reality. We look forward to expanding our opportunities to work with the City in improving our environment."

Earlier this month, Mayor Emanuel, the Chicago Park District and Chicago Sculpture International announced the Chicago Tree Project, which will commission local artists to turn dead or dying trees that are infested with Emerald Ash Borer or other bugs and diseases into living public art. The Chicago Tree Project uses art as vehicle for community engagement throughout Chicago parks and creates unique opportunities for citizens to celebrate the beauty of nature.

Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrdd.org](http://www.mwrdd.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose unit of local government responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Biosolids are an environmentally-friendly alternative to chemical fertilizer and can be used in landscaping, for establishing and maintaining turf at parks and athletic fields, and for growing agricultural crops. The MWRD produces 165,000 tons of biosolids for reuse annually.

**Our Water Environment: Take it personally**

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