



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Platinum awards cement MWRD's sterling reputation for clean water



The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (left) was honored with a Platinum Peak Performance award for 23 consecutive years of 100 percent permit compliance, while the Lemont Water Reclamation Plant (right), was honored for 18 years.

The National Association for Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) has recognized the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) with seven awards for its record in meeting compliance for water treatment.

Included in the accolades were five Platinum Peak Performance Awards given annually by NACWA for facilities that meet 100 percent compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits over a consecutive five-year period. The five MWRD water reclamation plants (WRP) have been lauded for this honor for multiple years, while two additional plants were recognized with gold awards for avoiding permit violations for an entire calendar year.

The Calumet WRP received the platinum award for 23 years of 100 percent compliance; followed by the Lemont WRP for 18 years; James C. Kirie WRP in Des Plaines for 10 years; Terrence J. O'Brien in Skokie for nine years; and Hanover Park WRP for seven years. The Egan WRP in Schaumburg and Stickney WRP in Cicero also earned the gold award.

"These awards acknowledge that we are fully committed to improving our region's water quality and that all seven of our water reclamation plants are treating water properly, while meeting the demand that enters our system," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "This is also a testament to residents and businesses owners

within the District that are cautious about what enters the sewers, so as not to overwhelm the system."

Receiving a NACWA award is impressive because it shows how these facilities are prepared to meet the demands of wet weather, unexpected industrial loads or any kind of process that is difficult to control. A major part of this is maintaining equipment and operating under all weather conditions when water treatment facilities are taxed to capacity.

The Calumet WRP is the oldest of the seven WRP facilities, treating water from a 300 square mile area in Chicago and the south suburbs. The plant provides both primary and secondary treatment, which removes more than 90 percent of the contaminants. The Lemont WRP is the smallest of the seven WRPs and began operations in 1961.

All treatment facilities eligible for the NACWA awards must be publicly owned by a current NACWA member agency and be in operation for at least one month or more during a calendar year. Treatment facilities must provide, at minimum, secondary treatment, or advanced primary treatment with a 301(h) waiver.

The MWRD will be recognized with other recipients at a ceremony on July 14 at NACWA's Utility Leadership Conference and 45th Annual Meeting in Providence, R.I.

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

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