



For immediate release
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New MWRD video highlights agency efforts to recover resources

Wastewater treatment is no longer simply about preventing pollution. Over the evolution of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) 127-year history of water management, the agency has undergone major transformation: from protecting the waterways and Lake Michigan to improving the environment and now recovering valuable resources. To document many of the MWRD's latest initiatives in resource recovery, a new video was developed, "Recovering Resources, Transforming Water" and is posted online at www.mwrdd.org.

"These efforts will reduce greenhouse gases, promote a cleaner and more sustainable environment and provide a return on investment that will benefit taxpayers," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos in the video.

While the MWRD designs and operates treatment processes with an eye towards energy efficiency, the agency aspires to become energy neutral by 2023. This accomplishment will provide a return on investment that will benefit taxpayers and the environment. These exciting innovations in renewable energy and energy savings provide another illustrious chapter in the MWRD's history in which no small plans are made. By exploring and embracing technology, the MWRD is taking



In the photo (L-R): Lab Tech I Maricela Sabido and Assistant Director of Engineering Tom Kunetz demonstrate the algae process for nutrient removal.

control of its energy future and moving towards its next technological adventure as the utility of the future.

Some of these recovered resources highlighted in the video include:

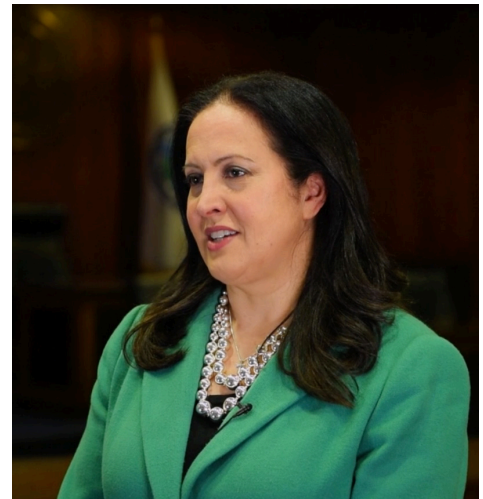
- Developing ways to reuse water produced at plants; this water can be reused by the industrial sector, which is paying higher prices to use valuable fresh water from Lake Michigan.
- Pursuing the sale of biosolids through a premium compost product to the marketplace.
- Recovering phosphorus in a slow release fertilizer for environmentally friendly reuse.
- Developing an algae process for nutrient removal and harvest that can be utilized in the manufacture of a variety of products, such as biofuels and bioplastics, which can also reduce the reliance on petroleum. *(continued)*

New MWRD video highlights agency efforts *(continued)*



Mwende Lefler, P.E.
Senior Civil Engineer

Senior Civil Engineer Mwende Lefler, P.E., explains the Ostara phosphorus recovery process.



MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos explains in the video about the work the MWRD is engaged in to recover resources and transform water.

- Implementing food to energy and doubling gas production and maximizing use of digester capacity.
- Marketing electrical capacity at the Lockport Powerhouse to maximize return on investment.
- Optimizing aeration processes and reducing energy consumption by 25 percent as a result.
- Introducing solar thermal and sewer thermal systems to heat water at MWRD treatment plants and provide savings.

The video can be viewed on www.mwrld.org or on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/LHhJ--BNffw>.

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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.