



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Veteran-owned businesses to receive opportunities from MWRD



MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos and Vice President Barbara McGowan presented a resolution to Michael Saltijeral, a veteran, business owner and member of the Elite Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB) Network.



The MWRD Board of Commissioners honored veterans, including 36th Ward Ald. Gilbert Villegas and business owner Michael Saltijeral, with a resolution to announce its intentions to expand contract opportunities for all veteran-owned businesses.

Veterans Day marks an occasion to celebrate their service on Nov. 11, but these brave men and women continue to be honored every day at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD).

The MWRD Board of Commissioners announced in a resolution that they were directing staff to prepare a report for the Board's consideration that discusses the options available for creation of a viable veterans program that will increase the participation of military veterans in contracting with the MWRD.

"Every Veterans Day we take the time to remember the sacrifices that have been made by the brave men and women of our military. These sacrifices allow us the freedoms we enjoy every day," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "I am proud to promote this veteran's preference policy, and I am excited to have the ability to honor our heroes in uniform by providing them with business opportunities here at the District."

The commissioners also honored Michael Saltijeral, a veteran and business owner who is a member of the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB) Network. Saltijeral, who received high expeditionary and commendation medals for his duty with the U.S. Marine Corps in Panama and the first Persian Gulf War, was accompanied by 36th Ward Ald. Gilbert Villegas, also a U.S. Marine veteran who served in the Persian Gulf War.

"On behalf of Elite, my members and military entrepreneurs and all veterans, thank you for remembering us," said Saltijeral. "You are the heart and soul of Chicago and the heart and soul of America."

Saltijeral formed Industrial Fence, Inc., a fencing and miscellaneous metals fabricator and installer, general contractor and construction manager that specializes in fencing, guardrail, railing, access control and other miscellaneous metals. *(continued)*

## **Veteran-owned businesses to receive opportunities** *(continued)*

The MWRD has been a pioneer in recognizing economic contributions of minority-owned, women-owned and small business enterprises through the creation of an affirmative action program that is committed to ensuring competitive business opportunities for small, minority and women-owned business enterprises in the award and performance of MWRD contracts. The MWRD engages in outreach to businesses across all industries and business sectors to encourage interest by companies, including small business and veteran-owned firms.

We want to recognize the service and sacrifice of veterans to our country because we are committed to ensuring that veterans are provided employment and contracting opportunities with the MWRD to assist in their increased employment and success in business ventures,” said Vice President Barbara McGowan. “We hope to develop a program for using veteran-owned businesses to contribute to business innovation, economic growth and positive partnerships between government and industry.”

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### **Recovering Resources, Transforming Water**

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