



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD looks at restoring Collateral Channel

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) held a productive public meeting on Dec. 11 with community residents and representatives of the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO) and the Ixchel organization at the MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant (WRP). The MWRD introduced a plan to pursue a pilot project to pump water and sediments from the Collateral Channel near 31st Street and Albany Avenue and convey it to the Stickney WRP for treatment.

“We received many insightful questions and held a dynamic conversation about how we can continue to serve as responsive neighbors working to protect our water environment,” said MWRD Chairman of Finance Frank Avila. “Our facility is designed to clean water by breaking down contaminants into components that are safe for our environment. The meeting was positive, and it was good to see residents interested in their communities.”

The meeting provided the MWRD an opportunity to garner feedback from residents about its plan to clean up the Collateral Channel. The sediment will be pumped straight from a hose to an MWRD interceptor and travel directly to the WRP eliminating the possibility of exposure of the material to the community. The goal is to conduct the pilot project before the end of December. The pilot will determine if the channel can be cleaned using the proposed method. The operation will be closely monitored to ensure that there are no adverse impacts and all assumptions are correct.

This approach has the potential to eliminate legacy environmental issues in the channel and allow the community opportunities to use the channel as an amenity. The contaminants identified within the sediment are commonly found in surface water runoff from urban streets. These materials can be easily and effectively treated at the Stickney WRP.

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