



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Niles flood relief project named Public Works Project of the Year



Jeremie Lukowicz (right), president of the American Public Works Association Chicago Metro Chapter Suburban Branch, presented the Public Works Project of the Year award to Doug Abbey (from left) of Bolder Contractors, Niles Resident Engineer Tim O'Brien, Bolder Contractors President Bob Gwiasda, Hey & Associates Engineer Jeff Wickenkamp, Niles Public Services Director Mary Anderson, MWRD Senior Civil Engineer Holly Sauter and Niles Village Engineer Tom Powers.

A partnership between the Village of Niles and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to address flooding has led to a Public Works Project of the Year award.

The American Public Works Association (APWA) Chicago Metro Chapter Suburban Branch announced that the Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvements project was selected as a Public Works Project of the Year in the Environment category for projects ranging in size of \$5 million to \$25 million. The Village of Niles along with the MWRD were on hand to receive the award at a reception in Schaumburg last month.

"We are happy to receive this recognition from the Suburban Branch of the American Public Works Association's Chicago Chapter and we look forward to a more resilient future thanks to this award winning project," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "I would like to commend Mayor Przybylo, the Niles Board of Trustees, Chairman Joe LoVerde and the Niles Stormwater Commission, the IEPA, Cook County Forest



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago President Mariyana Spyropoulos and village of Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo stand before some of the giant storm sewer infrastructure that was installed to provide flood relief to Niles. They returned less than a year later to participate in a ceremonial mop toss celebrating the completion of the project.

Preserve District and our stormwater engineers at the MWRD for their collaboration on this project and their urgency in preparing for the next storm. It's partnerships like these with Niles that we treasure, as we work toward solutions to flooding all across Cook County."

The \$9.1 million project, considered the largest infrastructure project in the history of Niles, will protect more than 140 homes in Niles that have sustained flood damages in recent years. The project was financed through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund — administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency — and a \$2 million reimbursement from the MWRD. The project consists of approximately 12,500 feet of new storm and sanitary sewers, with a 72-inch main line extending more than 3,200 feet along Cleveland and Monroe Streets. This will provide relief from surface water flooding for the area generally bounded by Main Street to the north, Harlem Avenue to the east, Monroe Street to the south, and Oketo Avenue to the west. (continued)

## Niles flood relief project named Public Works Project of the Year *(continued)*

The project, which was finished three months early in the spring of 2017, also provides protection for the environment. In addition to reducing surface water flooding in the area, the project will also protect the Chicago River by separating used water from combined sewers that drain into the waterway. Niles also coordinated with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to construct a new recreation trail connecting Caldwell Avenue to the North Branch Chicago River Trail.

“Interagency coordination and cooperation was key to this project, and 140 homes will now see reduced flood risk,” said Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo.

Local dignitaries and MWRD officials gathered with neighbors from the community last March at the Grennan Heights Gym in Niles to celebrate the completion of the project with an indoor picnic. President Spyropoulos and Mayor Przybylo and community officials tossed mops into the trash as a symbolic gesture to represent the residents’ relief from flooding.

The Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvement Project is the last project in Tier I of Niles’ Stormwater Master Plan and one of many partnerships the MWRD and Niles have established to combat flooding. The MWRD also contributed approximately half of the estimated \$400,000 for the construction of a bioswale and a 1,070 square yard permeable pavement parking lot to be located adjacent to Oak Park, centrally located in Niles. The project will reduce localized flooding, reduce the flow of stormwater into the local combined sewer system and provide educational and volunteer opportunities for the community. The bioswale and permeable pavement parking lot near a public park will serve to further the MWRD’s goal of informing the public of the value of green infrastructure.

“These projects will help prevent flooding in Niles, while also improving water quality in the North Branch of the Chicago River,” said MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore. “By sharing the costs of the project with communities like Niles, the MWRD can maximize its impact across all of Cook County.”

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### Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

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