



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD innovation leads to energy efficiency through ComEd

New technology implemented by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is rewarding taxpayers with significant savings.

A new turbo blower installed at the MWRD's Lemont Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) has earned the MWRD more than \$142,000 in rebates through ComEd's Energy Efficiency Program. This new cost savings is in addition to more than \$553,000 in other rebates the MWRD has earned through ComEd, Peoples Gas and Nicor in the last three years to go along with cost savings through lower energy usage.

"Not only are we transforming water but we are producing energy at our water reclamation plants for reuse," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "These new energy efficiency savings and rebates through ComEd will help us fulfill our goal of providing the highest standards of excellence and delivering exceptional services to area residents at an affordable cost."

The MWRD installed a turbo blower in June 2018 that cuts down on energy costs and demands at the Lemont WRP, replacing infrastructure that had been in service since the plant opened in 1961. The new high-speed turbo blower performs the work of two of the previous centrifugal blowers to reduce redundancy. It also has a wider output range that allows the operators to better adjust the air supplied to the aeration process of secondary wastewater treatment, creating additional savings and accurate dissolved oxygen levels in the tanks. It was the second turbo blower the MWRD has installed, following successful implementation at the MWRD's Hanover Park WRP, where a similar ComEd rebate was earned.



(L-R): MWRD Executive Director Brian Perkovich, Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos and Managing Engineer Pinakin Desai displaying a check from ComEd to rebate the MWRD for its energy-efficient infrastructure.

The new turbo blower at the Lemont WRP cost \$235,352 and has magnetic bearings that reduce friction and increase the speed, allowing the blowers to operate more efficiently and reduce electrical costs. MWRD projections show that it can save more than 395,000 kilowatt-hours per year for a savings of \$27,613 per year. Despite the upfront cost, the MWRD believes it can meet a payback period in less than 8.5 years.

In 2018, ComEd launched new energy efficiency programs to help public sector customers manage energy use and save on electric bills. Thanks to the Future Energy Jobs Act, ComEd will invest up to \$1.4 billion over four years to substantially expand and create new energy efficiency offerings. The plan, approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission in 2017, offers 30 programs that are expected to help ComEd residential, business and public sector customers achieve 11.8 percent in total energy savings by the end of 2021 and stimulate job creation. *(continued)*

MWRD innovation leads to energy efficiency through ComEd *(cont.)*

After investing in new technology, the MWRD frequently applies for these rebates when the innovation qualifies for assistance. The utilities verify which projects meet energy efficient savings based on the kilowatt-hours saved per year.

“These energy efficiency programs have allowed us to rethink our technology and return savings to our taxpayers,” said Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos. “Thank you to our inventive staff, ComEd and our utility partners for harnessing these important resources to protect our taxpayers and the environment.”

The new turbo blowers make for a more pleasant work environment as well. Unlike the previous blowers that required workers to wear hearing protection, the new equipment operates quietly, reducing the risk of hearing damage.

In addition to the turbo blowers, the MWRD has



The MWRD's Lemont Water Reclamation Plant is home to a new energy efficient turbo blower that keeps air flowing to treat water and will save the MWRD nearly \$27,613 in energy costs annually.

also received energy efficiency rebates for interior lighting replacement, HVAC control upgrades, and new steam blanket insulation on pipes, valves and traps at the WRPs.

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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.