



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD celebrates Pride Month and flies the Pride flag



MWRD Commissioners Josina Morita, Debra Shore, Marcelino Garcia and Kim Du Buclet joined staff and guests, including Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison, to wave the Pride flag for the first time in front of the MWRD's Main Office Building at 100 E. Erie St.

In recognition of Pride Month, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) raised the Pride flag for the first time outside its headquarters on Erie Street off the Magnificent Mile.

The rainbow striped flag is associated with the movement for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, and is a widely-recognized emblem of equality and inclusion.

“The Pride flag is a visible symbol of forward-thinking attitudes and policies that our agency has had in place for years, and in some cases decades,” said MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore. “But it’s also a reminder of the long -- and in some ways unfinished -- struggle for LGBT rights, and of our own commitment to freedom and equality. As we celebrate Pride Month, let’s pause to remember that every movement for civil rights in

the United States ultimately frees all of us.”

In 2007, Commissioner Shore and her fellow commissioners enacted fair treatment policies for employees and their domestic partners, ensuring equal access to health care benefits for same-sex couples. In 2017, Commissioner Shore and her colleagues also championed measures to ensure that same-sex spouses of District employees who had retired before marriage equality became law in Illinois were assured the same retirement benefits as opposite-sex spouses.

This June marked the 50th anniversary of a raid by the New York Police Department on the Stonewall Inn, a tavern that was a place of celebration and community for LGBT people. The raid spawned spontaneous acts of individual civil disobedience that blossomed into a larger demonstration of *(continued)*

MWRD celebrates Pride Month and flies the Pride flag, *cont.*



Cheers and cellphone cameras were in hand as the Pride flag went up above Erie Street before the MWRD's Board of Commissioners' meeting on June 20.

community solidarity and resistance, ultimately drawing national attention and becoming a source of inspiration for the wider movement for LGBT rights.

To commemorate the anniversary, the MWRD Board of Commissioners also recognized the contributions of the LGBT business community. Commissioner Shore and Commissioner Marcelino Garcia presented resolutions to Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison and the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, including Chamber founder Tracy Baim, current director Jerome Holston and business owner Dan Earles.

"We applaud Commissioner Morrison and the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois for the difference they have made in the lives of the many business owners of Illinois and the countless employees and customers they have impacted," said Commissioner Garcia. "Like the Stonewall Inn movement, if you stand back and don't take chances and push for justice and



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(L-R) President Kari K. Steele, Comm. Marcelino Garcia and Comm. Josina Morita.

acceptance, society will not change. Thank you to the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois for their courage in prompting those changes that have driven economic development and given small business owners a genuine opportunity."

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.