



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD's green infrastructure partnership program accepting pre-applications now

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is holding its annual call for green infrastructure projects to capture more stormwater and improve public spaces.

The MWRD is now accepting pre-application forms now through Dec. 31, 2023. To apply, visit mwrdr.org/gi-app. Pre-applications are mandatory, and qualified applicants will be notified to finalize their application in early 2024.

"July's heavy rainfall reminds us of the challenging effects of climate change, and the impact on our role to mitigate stormwater during these unpredicted and unprecedented rainstorm events," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "As many homes and businesses hit hardest by the July 2 rainstorm continue to recover, we want communities to know there are MWRD programs available to help mitigate rainfall, and our green infrastructure partnership program is one good option to consider. It will take a combination of gray and green infrastructure solutions to prepare us for the next round of storms."

Since 2014, the MWRD has helped complete 62 green infrastructure projects throughout Cook County to capture nearly 9 million gallons of stormwater per rain event. But more work is needed to mitigate Chicago area flooding.

Before the Chicago area was developed, flooding was less common because most of the area was not paved, and the ground was able to absorb most of the excess water. As the population grew, buildings, roads, sidewalks and parking lots were built, which reduced the green space that once was able to absorb the water. Factor in climate change and the unpredictable nature of more intense, frequent storms, and the stress on existing drainage systems becomes even more challenging.

"We are committed to the use of green infrastructure to help reduce flooding while reducing the load on the

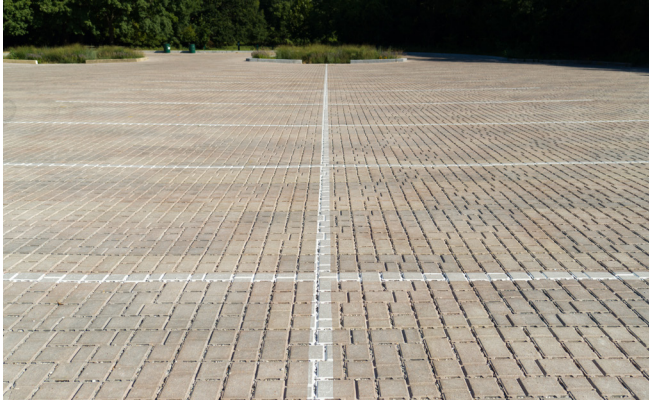


A demonstration rain garden at the Oak Park Public Works facility was completed with funding from the MWRD to better capture stormwater at public spaces inspiring future green infrastructure investments.

sewer system," said MWRD Commissioner Yumeka Brown. "If your community has a project in mind, we encourage public entities to apply to the MWRD for assistance."

The MWRD solicits applications and selects projects for partnerships through our Green Infrastructure Partnership Program (GIPP), as well as through the 'Local' Stormwater Partnership Program (SPP) and Flood-Prone Property Acquisition Program (FPPA). For the GIPP and the SPP, the selected partner is responsible for their project's design, contract advertisement and award, construction, and long-term maintenance. Public entities, such as municipalities, townships, county agencies, park districts, school districts, and other government organizations, will enter into an intergovernmental agreement to outline terms of the project. Under the SPP, the District may also provide technical assistance to identify possible alternatives to addressing flooding problems where solutions have not yet been identified by the local jurisdiction. Under the FPPA, the selected partner is responsible for acquisition of the property, demolition, and preserving the land as open space. *(continued)*

MWRD's green infrastructure partnership program accepting, *cont.*



Interlocking concrete permeable pavers installed at places like the Cook County Forest Preserve's Schuth's Grove (left) and Berry Lane in Flossmoor (right) can reduce stormwater runoff, clean and filter stormwater and improve water quality. These projects have been completed through local partnerships funded by the MWRD.

Green infrastructure uses natural or biological modes of controlling stormwater to prevent or reduce the flow of water from entering the sewer system. Stormwater is stored and slowly soaks into the underlying soil. The MWRD's green infrastructure partnership projects vary in size and scope and can include roadside bioswales, rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavement alleys and parking lots, and green streetscapes.

Potential projects submitted under the SPP should be intended to alleviate structure flooding and designed to manage stormwater through storage and conveyance improvements.

For additional questions regarding the program and how to apply, contact stormwater@mwrdd.org.

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at mwrdd.org.