



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Peoples Gas honors MWRD with Energy Efficiency Award

A \$26-million heat exchanger system upgrade at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD) Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) is leading to reduced energy demands, cost savings for taxpayers and now awards.

Peoples Gas honored the MWRD at its 2022 Energy Forum with an Energy Efficiency Award, presented to MWRD President Kari K. Steele at the event held Sept. 29 at Guaranteed Rate Field.

"We are honored to attend the 2022 Peoples Gas Energy Forum and receive an Energy Efficiency Award for the heat exchanger installation and boiler removal project at our Calumet Water Reclamation Plant," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "By exploring and embracing new and innovative water reclamation systems, we are taking control of our energy future and moving towards our next technological adventure as the utility of the future."

In 2019, the MWRD began construction on this project that included various system upgrades to the Calumet WRP's digester complex. The project, expected to be completed in late 2022, called for removing the heating boiler systems; installing steam-to-hot water heat exchanger systems and steam and condensate piping; replacing 12 heat exchangers; re-purposing a compressor building for electrical equipment; cleaning 11 digester tanks; replacing gas draw-off and gas mixing piping; and sandblasting and coating the underside to 12 tank covers. By removing these six boilers and replacing them with new energy-efficient heat exchangers and piping in-



Peoples Gas Manager of Energy Efficiency Programs Jean Gibson (fifth from left) presents MWRD President Kari K. Steele and MWRD staff with an Energy Efficiency Award at Guaranteed Rate Field on Sept. 29.

frastructure, the MWRD can more efficiently manage the heat process, reduce its carbon footprint and save taxpayers by cutting down maintenance and energy costs.

"The innovative, energy-efficient solution implemented with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago will save energy and money while adhering to the strict safety requirements of their facility," said Jean Gibson, Manager of Energy Efficiency Programs, Peoples Gas. "We are proud to have planned and executed the project alongside the MWRD team, and we congratulate them on this fantastic achievement."

The anaerobic digesters are an important phase of the treatment process because it is here that the MWRD takes organic material from wastewater and heats it to generate biogas, which is then used to fuel boilers. This then produces steam or hot (continued)

Peoples Gas honors MWRD with Energy Efficiency Award, *cont.*

water to heat buildings and processes at MWRD water reclamation plants. For decades, the MWRD has created clean, renewable energy from this sustainable system to offset the need to purchase natural gas.

The Calumet Water Reclamation Plant, 400 E. 130th St., Chicago, has benefited from a wide variety of innovative upgrades over its 100-year history to adapt to energy demands. This plant treats up to 430 million gallons of wastewater each day to serve more than 970,000 residents living on the South Side of Chicago and 48 surrounding suburbs across 300 square miles.

“Just as the way we treat wastewater has evolved over the past century, so, too, have our processes,” said MWRD Commissioner Kimberly Du Buclet. “We are very honored to receive recognition such as the Energy Efficiency Award, but more importantly, we are proud to deliver cost effective services to the residents of Cook County.”



MWRD Commissioners Kimberly Du Buclet and Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda and staff tour a new heat exchanger system at a digester complex at the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant. The system will consume less energy and generate savings through the MWRD's sustainable generation of biogas to heat facilities.

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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 mwrld.org.