



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Watershed Management Ordinance Update May 7, 2020

On May 7, 2020, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) amended the Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO), which regulates sewer construction within MWRD's service area and development within suburban Cook County. The WMO provides uniform stormwater management regulations to prevent future commercial, municipal, and residential development and redevelopment projects from exacerbating flooding and protects environmentally sensitive areas.

The amendment includes changes to the WMO to allow the regional stormwater detention and volume control trading program pilot study required under §208.1 to commence, and updates references to rainfall data from Bulletin 70 (2019) to Bulletin 75. The two watershed planning areas selected for the pilot study are the Lower Des Plaines and Little Calumet River, which have watershed specific release rates of 0.20 cfs/acre and 0.25 cfs/acre, respectively. These watershed planning areas were selected because of their large size and lower release rates. Starting now through January 1, 2025, projects located within these two watershed planning areas do not need to demonstrate site limitations and constraints to be able to participate in detention and volume control trading. However, certain requirements outlined in Article 5 of the WMO must be met.

For volume control, at least 50% of the volume control storage must be provided on the project

site. The remaining can be provided in an offsite retention-based practice. To utilize offsite detention, onsite detention volume for the 10-year, 24-hour storm event must be provided. Additionally, the proposed peak runoff rates cannot exceed the existing peak runoff rates and any existing detention volume cannot be reduced.

Offsite retention-based practices and/or detention facilities must comply with the following:

- Be located in the same watershed planning area as the development
- Be approved under a Watershed Management Permit
- Capture stormwater runoff from an equivalent impervious area that is not already used to satisfy WMO stormwater requirements
- Be functional before the development site is completed
- Have an executed maintenance agreement
- Be included with a recorded Schedule R and Exhibit R

Please note, for an existing detention facility to qualify as a supply site, a Watershed Management Permit is required to demonstrate a new area that was previously not detained is now tributary to the detention facility. If you have a specific stormwater trading project that you would like to discuss, please contact Lolita Thompson at ThompsonL@mwrdd.org to set up a pre-application meeting. Changes can be viewed in a redline document linked [here](#).