



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Changes to MWRD Resource Recovery Ordinance reduces brewery waste tipping fees

Area breweries will have the opportunity to tip or deliver their organic waste locally at a more affordable cost at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) Calumet Water Reclamation Plant (WRP).

Under revisions to the MWRD's Resource Recovery Ordinance, the charge for delivery of certain high strength liquid waste (HSLW) and other liquid recovered resources delivered to the Calumet WRP is now reduced to \$.03 per gallon. Calumet WRP, 400 E. 130th St. in Chicago, collects this high strength organic material (HSOM) to improve and stabilize the MWRD's biological phosphorus (Bio-P) removal process during wastewater treatment.

"We hope that by bringing a low price option to the marketplace it will encourage more breweries to consider delivering their spent yeast, grains, hops and other organic waste to the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant," said MWRD Commissioner Kim Du Buclet. "This affordable option will help divert high strength materials from landfills and into our treatment process to improve our water environment and protect our planet. We are committed to working together and helping promote sustainability efforts within the brewing community here in Illinois."

The MWRD's Resource Recovery Program, originally adopted in 2016, strives to reduce greenhouse gases and create a more sustainable environment by offering greener alternatives for disposing material that the MWRD can recover for future productive reuse opportunities. In addition to HSOM and HSLW, the MWRD collects vegetative material, such as yard waste, and wood chips from qualified municipalities and industrial, trade, agri-



Calumet Water Reclamation Plant's secondary aeration tanks benefit from brewery waste high in readily biodegradable carbon that serves as food for phosphate accumulating organisms that remove excess nutrients from the water and lead to cleaner water downstream.

cultural, and other commercial companies to produce a compost product.

The MWRD's Bio-P process ensures cleaner water downstream after the water is treated and released back into the environment. The Bio-P program, a permit only program, brings in millions of gallons of carbon-rich material each year, ranging from spent yeast from local breweries to waste recovered from portable restrooms. The material is then safely disposed of locally to reduce hauling distances and further protect the environment. Since launching the Bio-P program in 2017, the MWRD has already received more than 10 million gallons of HSOM at its Calumet and Stickney WRPs, providing Cook County taxpayers with a revenue stream of greater than \$500,000.

The sugary and starch liquid wastes provide readily biodegradable carbon that serves as food for *(continued)*

Changes to MWRD Resource Recovery Ordinance, *cont.*

the phosphate accumulating organisms that work under anaerobic and aerobic conditions in the MWRD's wastewater treatment process. These organisms work to remove organic material from wastewater and to recover more phosphorus than normal microorganisms. Too much phosphorus in the water can lead to harmful algal blooms that have depleted oxygen in the water and created hypoxic conditions in the Gulf of Mexico, where Chicago area water eventually flows after reaching the Mississippi River Basin. In the case of the Calumet WRP, after the water is cleaned, it is released into the Little Calumet River before flowing downstream to the Cal-Sag Channel, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Illinois River and eventually the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico.

"We're grateful to the Board of Commissioners for approving the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's Resource Recovery Ordinance, which enables our brewers to dispose of CO₂ in a more sustainable, cost-effective manner," shared Danielle D'Alessandro, execu-

tive director for the Illinois Craft Brewers Guild. "Our brewing community is fully committed to doing our part to lower our carbon footprint, and measures like this allow us to do so without compromising our revenue, which is essential in our current environment. We look forward to continuing to work with the District to bring to life similar programs in the future."

The Ordinance now requires that HSLW and other liquid recovered resources delivered to the CWRP are from brewery facilities or have a chemical oxygen demand greater than 100,000 milligrams per liter with a soluble fraction no less than 80 percent, based upon the nominal capacity of the delivery vehicle irrespective of the actual volume delivered. A sample from each delivery is taken by MWRD environmental specialists. Based on the revised costs, a tanker truck will make a \$150 payment for a 5,000-gallon delivery. The change amounts to a 40 percent reduction in the MWRD's fees. To purchase Bio-P coupons, visit [here](#). For questions, contact biop@mwrld.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 mwrld.org.