



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Illinois stormwater management leaders praise MWRD

The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) selected the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to receive an award that recognizes the best accomplishments in stormwater management.

IAFSM leadership presented the 2022 award for Stormwater Management to the MWRD during its annual conferences last month at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott in Normal, Ill. The annual award recognizes floodplain managers, individuals, groups, consultants, or agencies who improved stormwater management or reduced urban flood risks through creative engineering, regulatory measures, or other approaches.

“We are honored to receive this recognition from the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “We are equally proud to serve our taxpayers in this critical role, mitigating flooding across Cook County through a proactive, equitable stormwater management program. Together with our partners we are determined to build resilient communities facing the unpredictable nature of climate change.”

Since 2004, the MWRD has served as the regional authority to manage stormwater for Cook County. In this role, the MWRD has introduced a wide range of strategies to address stormwater and flooding through proper watershed regulations, watershed planning and both local and regional projects. These projects have included massive flood control reservoirs, miles of stream improvements, underground detention, permeable parking lots, alleys, and schoolyards, and the removal



A restored Addison Creek near Northlake has benefited from MWRD partnerships and engineering to address stormwater management and improve waterway conveyance. The MWRD was honored by the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management for its creative engineering and regulatory measures to reduce flood risks.

of thousands of yards of debris from local streams each year. Between regional flood control projects and local stormwater partnerships, the MWRD has developed a capital improvement plan resulting in more than 200 projects aimed at flood reduction, protecting over 16,000 structures.

“Flooding in Cook County is a serious issue that requires innovative thinking, hard work, collaboration and investment,” said MWRD Commissioner Chakena D. Perry. “We continue to manage stormwater by implementing a combination of gray and green infrastructure, enforcing regulation like the Watershed Management Ordinance, and developing creative programs like the acquisition of flood-prone properties.”

Under its countywide Stormwater Management Program, the MWRD adopted and implemented the Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) (*continued*)

Illinois stormwater management leaders praise MWRD, *cont.*

to provide uniform minimum stormwater regulations for Cook County consistent with other ordinances in the region to ensure development and redevelopment projects do not exacerbate flooding. Since its adoption in 2014, the WMO has helped retain more than 300 acre-feet of rainwater in green infrastructure volume control practices. The MWRD has completed more than 60 successful green infrastructure projects throughout Cook County since 2015, with more than 30 in progress. In total, once complete, these projects will retain more than 14.5 million gallons of stormwater volume per rain event.

The MWRD's countywide Stormwater Management Program's mission is to provide Cook County with effective rules, regulations and capital improvement projects that reduce the potential for stormwater damage to life, public health, safety, property and the environment.

The MWRD has identified stormwater management as one of its five major strategic goals, while also addressing the effects of climate change on the MWRD's work and communities served.



The MWRD is investing in innovative stormwater management solutions, such as the Marvin Parkway Flood Control Project in Park Ridge. Here, the MWRD is partnering with Park Ridge to construct an underground storage facility that helps mitigate flooding and retain water.

The IAFSM was founded in 1986 by professionals interested in and responsible for floodplain and stormwater management in Illinois. The IAFSM strives to promote the common interest in floodplain and stormwater management, enhance cooperation among various local, state, and federal agencies and encourage effective and innovative approaches to managing the State's floodplain and stormwater management systems.

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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.