



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

PRESS RELEASE

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MWRD upholds platinum performances with sustained excellence in meeting permits



MWRD skilled trades keep operations humming so that nearly 5.2 million people have essential wastewater treatment services each day and that clean water is returned to the environment.

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) has honored the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) with platinum awards for its shining commitment to managing the region's water environment.

NACWA announced that the MWRD will be honored with the Excellence in Management (EIM) Platinum Recogni-

tion award and six Platinum Peak Performance awards for having six water reclamation plants (WRPs) extend a streak of more than five years of achieving 100 percent compliance in meeting National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

Despite a pandemic, torrential rain storms, urban runoff and more than 400 billion gallons of *(continued)*

MWRD upholds platinum performances with sustained excellence, *cont.*



Staff at water reclamation plants are the backbone of MWRD work to keep water flowing for the region. The MWRD treats about 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater on average each day and transforms it into clean water to be returned to a thriving environment.

wastewater each year, the MWRD staff has been undeterred in meeting stringent permits and its mission by transforming wastewater and stormwater into clean water to protect the Chicago region's environment.

The EIM recognition celebrates the MWRD and other utilities' commitment to sustainable, successful programs that exemplify the attributes of effective management. The MWRD and other utilities will be honored for the platinum awards during NACWA's Utility Leadership Conference & 53rd Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky on July 12.

"We commend our water reclamation plant staff for maintaining this sustained record of service and excellence in management," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "Whether it was the pandemic or the unpredictable nature of storms, our goal is to assure clean water is being discharged to local waterways after final treatment."

The EIM award takes into account product quality, financial viability, customer satisfaction, stakeholder understanding and support, operational optimization, employee and leadership development, enterprise resiliency, infrastructure strategy and performance, community sustainability and water resource sustainability. In a detailed application, the MWRD outlined how it met these objectives through metrics and other standards.

The MWRD was praised for topping the charts with a Plat-

inum Peak Performance award at six WRPs:

- Calumet Water Reclamation Plant, Chicago, 31 years
- Lemont Water Reclamation Plant, Lemont, 26 years
- James C. Kirie Water Reclamation Plant, Des Plaines, 18 years
- O'Brien Water Reclamation Plant, Skokie, 17 years
- Hanover Park Water Reclamation Plant, Hanover Park, 15 years
- John E. Egan Water Reclamation Plant, Schaumburg, 9 years

"Thank you to NACWA for this well-deserved recognition," said MWRD Commissioner Daniel Pogorzelski. "We hope these platinum awards shine a light on our staff's essential services and their work around the clock to protect our environment."

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the MWRD continued to provide critically important water reclamation operations and stormwater management services to ensure the region's wastewater is cleaned and that public health and the environment are protected. Between the MWRD's Maintenance and Operations staff, Monitoring and Research pollution control teams and the Industrial Waste Division, MWRD staff work together to monitor flows entering the WRPs and meet increasingly challenging permit guidelines.

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 mwr.org.