



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

File #: 19-0478, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION FOR BOARD MEETING OF MAY 16, 2019

RESOLUTION sponsored by the Board of Commissioners recognizing the 130th Anniversary of the founding of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is celebrating its 130th anniversary on May 29, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD was created as the Sanitary District of Chicago in 1889 by the Illinois General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, a large reason the Chicago region exists today is because of the work of the MWRD; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD reversed the Chicago River in 1900 by constructing the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to take wastewater away from Lake Michigan to send downstream, thus protecting the source of the region's drinking water; and

WHEREAS, as the MWRD established a new Chicago Area Waterways System (CAWS) and constructed treatment plants and interceptor sewers that conveyed wastewater from local collection systems to the plants for treatment; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD built 22 pumping stations and the Calumet Sewage Treatment Plant in 1922 which were followed by six additional water reclamation plants, one of which is the world's largest; and

WHEREAS, from 1955 through 1988, the MWRD was called the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago, and effective Jan 1, 1989 the name was changed to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD constructed 560 miles of intercepting sewers and force mains which are fed by 10,000 local sewer system connections and are critical in managing stormwater and preserving the waterways; and

WHEREAS, today the MWRD treats an average of 1.3 billion gallons of water each day, and the MWRD's total water treatment capacity is over 2 billion gallons per day; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD controls 76.1 miles of navigable waterways, which are part of the inland waterway system connecting the Great Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico, along with 34 stormwater detention reservoirs to provide regional stormwater flood damage reduction; and

WHEREAS, in 1972 the MWRD started building the MWRD's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP), one of the country's largest public works projects for pollution and flood control. Three reservoirs are in operation, in addition to 109 miles of tunnels that hold rainwater mixed with used water during storm events; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 the Illinois General Assembly granted authority to the MWRD to manage stormwater for Cook County; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD currently has more than 120 stormwater management projects in design or construction that incorporate elements of both gray and green infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, other projects include improving Chicago schoolyards to better manage water through a partnership known as Space to Grow, acquiring flood prone properties to take homes out of the flood plain and relieve struggling homeowners, and distributing more than 130,000 rain barrels and 60,000 free oak tree saplings to soak up stormwater, while also offsetting the regional loss of ash trees; and

WHEREAS, the number of fish species found in the CAWS has drastically increased since the 1970s when monitoring of the fish population first began. From 10 known species in 1974, that number has increased to 76, including 59 that have been found in the CAWS since 2000; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD is implementing several innovations in renewable energy, while also recovering and developing reuse opportunities for water, biosolids, algae, phosphorus and other nutrients collected during the water treatment process; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD is a proactive agency that prides itself on many partnerships and collaborative efforts to improve the quality of life throughout Cook County. Through its culture of excellence, collaboration, innovation and work that extends beyond traditional water management, the MWRD was honored as a “Utility of the Future”; and

WHEREAS, by removing and recovering nutrients from our waterways, we are protecting waters downstream in the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, by reducing energy consumption, we are finding new solutions to cut down greenhouse gas emissions and protecting the planet; and

WHEREAS, the MWRD looks forward to providing that same environmental protection in the future; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, do hereby recognize the 130th Anniversary of the MWRD; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Dated: May 16, 2019