

“Celebrating Disinfection,” *Friends of the Chicago River (IL)*



Photo courtesy MWRD

Full article text: In July 2015 Friends was cheering when the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) opened the new disinfection system at the Calumet Wastewater Treatment Plant with a press conference and ribbon cutting to mark the occasion. The event was attended by U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, USEPA Region 5 Administrator Susan Hedman, MWRD Commissioners, Friends' staff, and many others who worked long and hard to see this day come. The new facility uses chlorination/dechlorination to treat wastewater effluent from the plant which is discharged into the Little Calumet River. Starting in early spring, the MWRD will also begin disinfecting effluent at the O'Brien Wastewater Treatment Plant in Skokie using ultraviolet irradiation technology. Disinfection kills the pathogens from sewage and other inputs.

Friends first called for disinfection, which will greatly improve the river's water quality, in our 2000 report, "Waterways for Our Future," produced with Openlands and The Civic Federation.