

MWRD dealing with rainy weather

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is ready to help and assist residents when it comes to storm flooding.

“We monitor the weather and lower the Chicago Area Waterway System to provide maximum capacity for storm water in the area waterways, tunnels and reservoir system,” said MWRD President Kathleen Therese Meany.

In addition, the MWRD operates seven plants throughout the region. These plants take in a combined flow of more than 3 billion gallons a day. During rain events, the MWRD maximizes flow to the plants to ensure they are moving the maximum amount of water through the system.

When the Chicago area waterway levels are higher than Lake Michigan and predetermined elevations are reached, the MWRD opens control struc-



Kathleen Therese Meany

tures to move as much water as possible out of the system. This provides protection from overbank flooding as well as more capacity for storm water. At this time, no gates have been opened to release water to Lake Michigan, Meany said.

There has been minimal rain to the south side of the county, but more than 3.5 inches has fallen across the north side of Chicago and northern part of Cook County.

Tunnels that comprise the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan system are at the following levels: the Mainstream Tunnel has reached 92-percent capacity; the Des Plaines Tunnel has reached 60-percent capacity, and the Calumet Tunnel is at 4 percent. The tunnel system is 109 miles and holds 2.7 billion gallons of water.

“We encourage the public to minimize their use of water in their homes to reduce the amount of water flowing into the sewer system during extraordinary rain events such as what is occurring,” Meany said. “This will provide maximum capacity for combined storm water flows. We are here to serve you 24 hours a day.”