



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD continues to monitor severe storms storm update: 9:45 a.m.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) works around the clock to provide flood protection for Cook County. We monitor the weather and lower the Chicago Area Waterway System to provide maximum capacity for stormwater in the area waterways, tunnels and reservoir system.

In addition, we operate seven wastewater treatment plants throughout the region. These plants take in a combined flow of over 3 billion gallons a day. During rain events, the MWRD maximizes flow to the plants to ensure we 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 structures to move as much water as possible out of the system. This provides protection from overbank flooding as well as more capacity for stormwater. At this time, no gates have been opened to release water to Lake Michigan.

There has been minimal rain to the south side of the county but over 3 inches has fallen across the north side of Chicago and northern part of Cook County.

Tunnels that comprise the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) system are at the following levels: the Mainstream Tunnel has reached 92% capacity, the Des Plaines Tunnel has reached 60% capacity and the Calumet Tunnel is at 4%. 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. This will provide maximum capacity for combined stormwater flows.

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Our Water Environment: Take it personally

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrdd.org) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.