



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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For immediate release

April 4, 2017

## MWRD flood relief prompts Niles residents to toss mops into the trash



*MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos and Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo participate in the ceremonial mop toss celebrating the completion of the Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvement Project at Grennan Heights Park in Niles. The project will reduce flood risk for more than 140 homes.*

Throwing mops into the trash is not typical of most ribbon cutting ceremonies, but for the largest infrastructure project in the history of Niles it was a befitting sign of relief to come thanks in part to the contributions of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD).

The symbolic act of discarding mops represents peace of mind to homeowners who turned to the Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvement Project to protect more than 140 local homes in Niles that have sustained flood damages in recent years due to overland flows.

The anticipated \$9.1 million project was financed through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund — administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency — and a \$2 million reimbursement from the MWRD. The project consists of approximately 12,500 feet of new storm and sanitary sewer, with a 72-inch main line extending more than 3,200 feet



*MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos speaks to a crowd of residents and dignitaries gathered at Grennan Heights Gym in Niles to celebrate the completion of the Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvement Project. Engineers used advanced computer modeling software to determine how and why the areas were flooding and analyzed a variety of proposed projects to develop the most cost-effective solution.*

along Cleveland and Monroe Streets that will provide relief from surface water flooding for the area generally bounded by Main Street to the north, Harlem Avenue to the east, Monroe Street to the south, and Oketo Avenue to the west.

“We are happy to help Niles residents throw away their mops and look forward to a drier and more resilient future,” said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. “I would like to commend Mayor Przybylo, the Niles Board of Trustees, Chairman Joe LoVerde and the Niles Stormwater Commission, the IEPA, Cook County Forest Preserve District and our stormwater engineers at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago for their collaboration on this project and their urgency in preparing for the next storm. It’s partnerships like these with Niles that we treasure, as we work toward solutions to flooding all across Cook County.” *(continued)*

## MWRD flood relief prompts Niles residents to toss mops *(continued)*

The project, which was finished three months early, also provides protection for the environment. In addition to reducing surface water flooding in the area, the project will also protect the Chicago River by separating wastewater from combined sewers that drain into the waterway. Niles also coordinated with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to construct a new recreation trail connecting Caldwell Avenue to the North Branch Chicago River Trail.

“Interagency coordination and cooperation was key to this project, and 140 homes will now see reduced flood risk. We know our job is not done, as such the Village is currently in the process of updating the stormwater relief program to plan for the future. We continue to forge ahead in Niles and show that great things truly are possible here,” said Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo. Local dignitaries and MWRD officials gathered with neighbors from the community at the Grennan Heights Gym in Niles to celebrate the completion of the project with an indoor picnic. The Cleveland Corridor Sewer Improvement Project is the last project in Tier I of Niles’ Stormwater Master Plan.

The flood relief project is one of many partnerships the MWRD and Niles have established to combat flooding. The MWRD is also contributing approximately half of the estimated \$400,000 for the construction of a bioswale and a 1,070 square yard permeable pavement parking lot to be located adjacent to Oak Park, centrally located in Niles. The project also aims to reduce localized flooding, reduce the flow of stormwater into the local combined sewer system and provides educational and volunteer opportunities for the community. The bioswale and permeable pavement parking lot near a public park will serve to further the MWRD’s goal of informing the public of the value of Green Infrastructure. The project has already been started and will be completed in the summer.

In 2016, Niles also participated in the MWRD’s free rain barrel program, which led to the distribution of hundreds of rain barrels to residents to capture rainwater from roofs and save the water for reuse, keeping it out of the sewer system and preventing sewer overflows and flooding.

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### Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrld.org](http://www.mwrld.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*