



**Metropolitan Water  
Reclamation District  
of Greater Chicago**

*A Quick Guide for Developers*



# **Watershed Management Ordinance**



## Managing Stormwater

The WMO aims to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and Cook County homes and businesses from flood damage by managing and mitigating the effects of development and redevelopment on stormwater drainage. It provides uniform minimum stormwater management regulations for Cook County that are consistent with the region.

The WMO replaces the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) repealed Sewer Permit Ordinance (SPO). WMO permit requirements are more comprehensive than those of the SPO.

## How it Works

The WMO establishes rules and guidelines for development to ensure that flooding problems are not exacerbated. Permits are required prior to start of construction for new projects as described inside.

## Single Family Homes

The WMO was not intended to regulate most single family homes. When a new development is located in or near a Flood Protection Area, a permit may be required. See "WMO: A Quick Guide for Homeowners" and the WMO.

### **For More Information**

please visit [wmo.mwrd.org](http://wmo.mwrd.org)  
or contact the MWRD at 312.751.3255  
or [WMOInbox@mwrd.org](mailto:WMOInbox@mwrd.org)

## Permit Application Process

Please visit [wmo.mwrld.org](http://wmo.mwrld.org) to download the following resources:

- Permit forms;
- Submittal checklists;
- Permitting flowcharts.

If you have further questions about the WMO application process or require a written permit determination, please contact us at:

Metropolitan Water Reclamation  
District of Greater Chicago  
Local Sewer Systems Section  
111 East Erie Street  
Chicago, IL 60611-2893  
312.751.3255

## Permit Fees

The base fees include the following:

Watershed Management Permit: \$1,100

NRI ('Short Form' permit): \$250

Facility Connection Authorization: \$1,000 (within City of Chicago)

Permit Revision: \$500

Single Family Home: No Fees

Additional fees may be required depending on the type of development. Please visit [wmo.mwrld.org](http://wmo.mwrld.org) for information on other required fees.

## Review Times

Initial submittal review for developments not within Flood Protection Areas will be complete within 15 working days. Initial submittal review for developments within Flood Protection Areas will be complete within 30 working days. Resubmittal review time is 10 working days.

## **Permits are Required for:**

### **Development (Grading, Paving, Excavation, Etc.)**

- Disturbances of more than 0.5 acres (some exemptions apply);
- Reconfiguration of existing major or minor stormwater systems which alter the service areas of a site detention facility;
- Modifications to a detention facility.

### **Flood Protection Areas (Floodway, Floodplain, Wetlands, Riparian Environments)**

- Development within a Flood Protection Area or an indirect impact to a wetland;
- Foundation expansion that constitutes a substantial improvement of an existing building, as determined by the local municipality, that is located in the regulatory floodplain.

### **Qualified Sewer Construction (Sanitary or Combined Sewers)**

- Sewers, drainage, or detention in combined sewer areas tributary to combined sewers;
- Qualified sewer construction within MWRD's service area;
- Non-residential private treatment systems.

### **MWRD Impacts**

- Direct connections to an MWRD interceptor, reservoir, facility, or TARP structure;
- New or reconstructed sewers, drainage, or detention outfalls to waterways or Lake Michigan;
- Stormwater discharges directly to MWRD property.

## Developments Exempt from WMO Provisions:

- In-kind replacement of pervious area
- Pavement maintenance, repair, or in-kind replacement;
- Utility maintenance, repair, or in-kind replacement, excluding qualified sewer construction;
- Projects involving the modification of a septic system, potable water service line, or utility that serves an existing structure;
- Projects undertaken solely by state and federal agencies, excluding qualified sewer construction;
- Public flood control projects;
- All development within the City of Chicago, unless it involves:
  - An outfall to a waterway or Lake Michigan;
  - Stormwater discharges to MWRD property;
  - Connections to an MWRD sewer, interceptor, or TARP structure.

**For more details** see complete definitions for Development, Flood Protection Areas, and Qualified Sewer construction in the Watershed Management Ordinance, Appendix A.

# WMO: A Quick Guide for Developers

This pamphlet is an introduction for developers to the requirements and permit compliance process of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's Watershed Management Ordinance.



## **Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago**

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[mwrdd.org](http://mwrdd.org) 312.751.6633

