



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

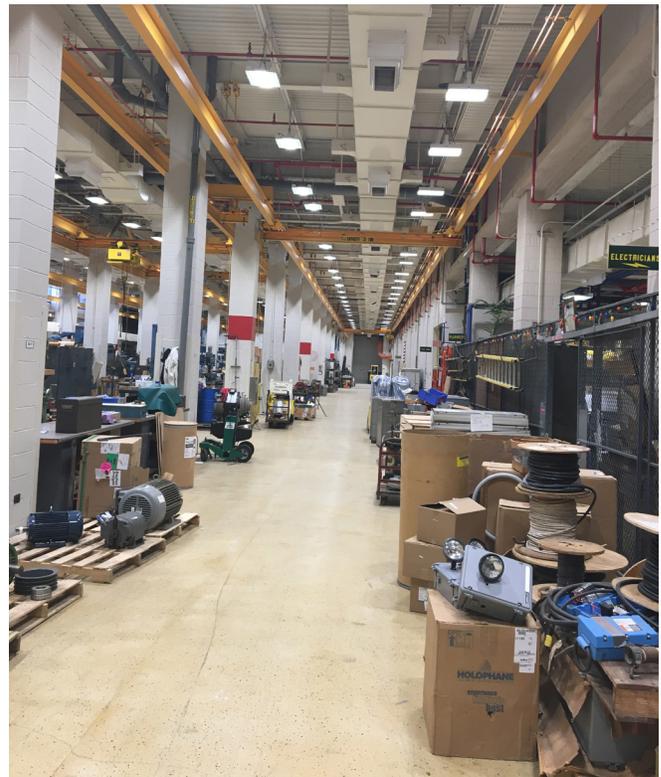
allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

August 25, 2020

IEPA grant boosts MWRD with energy efficiency lighting



New LED lighting was installed at the storeroom at Stickney Water Reclamation Plant, where various trades store equipment to keep the plant operating. Energy consumption was reduced by more than half because of upgrades at the plant made possible through a new grant from the IEPA.

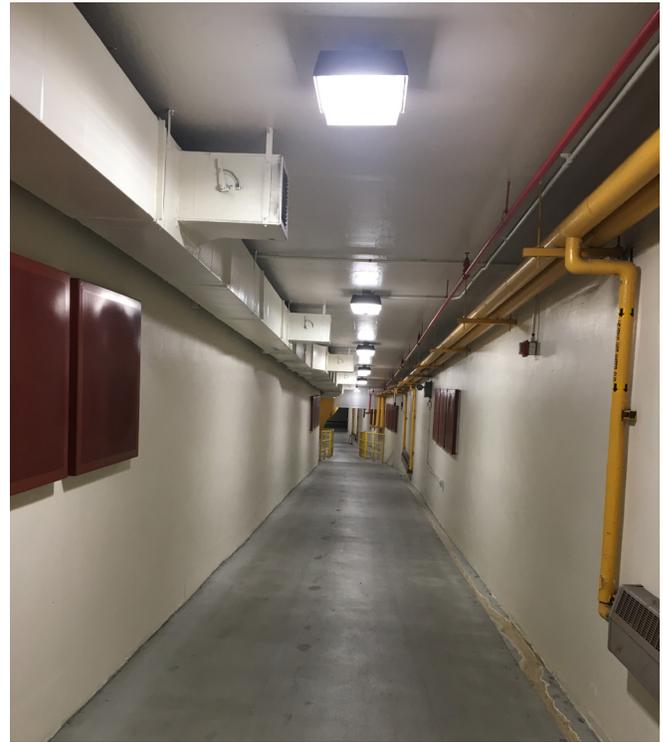
A generous grant is now yielding major energy savings for one of the world's largest wastewater treatment plants. Thanks to a \$1.5-million grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) Office of Energy, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) Stickney Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) was able to upgrade its lighting and HVAC controls for maximum energy efficiency. The upgrades are reducing lighting energy consumption by more than 50 percent for approximately 7,474 fixtures that were replaced or retrofitted.

"We operate treatment plants with an eye towards energy efficiency," said MWRD Commissioner Josina Morita.

"Thanks to the IEPA Office of Energy, we are exploring and embracing technology, taking control of our energy future and meeting our goals as a utility of the future."

The Stickney WRP serves 2.3 million people living in Chicago and 46 suburban communities within 260 square miles of Cook County. The plant can treat up to 1.44-billion gallons of water per day, or 1-million gallons per minute, making it one of the largest treatment plants in the world to provide full secondary treatment by volume. In 2019, the plant treated more than 800 million gallons per day, which required considerable energy to pump and convey water. The energy efficiency upgrades provide critical savings to plant operations and benefit taxpayers. *(continued)*

IEPA grant boosts MWRD with energy efficiency lighting, *cont.*



LED light upgrades improve a pedway at the MWRD's Stickney WRP and can produce light up to 90 percent more efficiently than incandescent light bulbs. Thanks to IEPA funding, the MWRD is working to become more sustainable by pursuing an array of environmental improvement projects, like LED lighting, while also developing technologies for renewable energy generation.

The lighting improvements continue a recent trend of energy efficiency upgrades and investments at MWRD facilities. In 2012, the MWRD entered into an agreement with the Public Building Commission of Chicago to conduct an energy audit of all buildings and to participate in the Multi-Agency Guaranteed Energy Performance Contracting Program. The Energy Service Company (ESCO) Noresco conducted an audit to identify opportunities for energy reduction at MWRD facilities and replace outdated equipment with new, energy efficient equipment. Following all the energy efficiency upgrades, it is estimated that the MWRD will save approximately \$325,000 annually.

“These innovations in energy savings protect our planet and our taxpayers,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “Working to save on energy costs will benefit our bottom line, reduce our carbon footprint and promote a cleaner and more sustainable environment for the entire region to

follow. Thanks to the support of the IEPA, we can make that difference.”

The MWRD has long been a leader in energy efficiency efforts. For decades, the MWRD has created clean, renewable energy from organic material removed from the wastewater. Biogas that is produced in anaerobic digesters is used to fuel boilers which produce steam or hot water to heat buildings and processes at the water reclamation plants. The MWRD also generates and markets electrical capacity at its Lockport Powerhouse to maximize energy production through water. The powerhouse utilizes two six-megawatt turbines that produce 40 million kWh per year of hydroelectric power which is sold to the local power company for an estimated revenue stream of \$1.2 million in 2020. Among other energy efficiency projects that the MWRD employs include electric vehicles, green roofs, water reuse, biosolids production and continuous investment in new infrastructure.

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at mwrld.org.