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**Mayor Rahm Emanuel Joins Governor Pat Quinn and U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson To Announce
Capital Funding to Disinfect the Chicago River**
State Grant to Upgrade Chicago River Treatment Plants

CHICAGO – Mayor Emanuel joined Governor Quinn and U.S. EPA Administrator Jackson to announce today \$10 million in state funding to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago to improve water quality in Chicago area waterways. The funding being provided through the *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital program will support design and engineering of new facilities to disinfect discharges into the Chicago River/Chicago Area Waterway System at two wastewater treatment plants. The work will result in healthier, cleaner water than ever before.

“The Chicago River is an Illinois treasure that should be clean and safe,” Governor Quinn said. “Cleaning up our waterways will not only improve the quality of life in the Chicago area, but also attract more tourists and residents to Illinois.”

The state is providing \$10 million through *Illinois Jobs Now!* to support the estimated \$21 million total engineering and design costs. The project will include upgrading technology at the Calumet Water Reclamation Plant and the North Side Water Reclamation Plant. Technology improvements will center on the chlorination/de-chlorination process for discharges into the Chicago River from the Calumet plant, and ultraviolet treatment with low-pressure, high-output lamps to treat discharges from the North Side plant.

“I am committed to establishing the Chicago River as the city’s next recreational frontier, so our residents can enjoy the river as it fosters economic opportunity throughout our city and neighborhoods,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “I



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am supportive of all efforts to improve the water quality of the river and move us toward our goals for this wonderful resource.”

Construction gets underway later this fall and final design work will be finished by March 2013. The entire project is estimated to be completed by December 2015, and disinfection processes implemented ahead of the 2016 recreational season.

“The families and businesses of Chicago know that the river here is a critical part of their lives and their economy. They want clean, healthy waters where they can swim and sail and safely enjoy themselves,” said USEPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. “The EPA has been working closely with Governor Quinn and Mayor Emanuel and all of the local supporters who are committed to restoring their waters and bringing those benefits to the community. As we mark the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act this year, we’re happy to see the progress that has been made and will continue working to revitalize and protect water across America.”

“A common vision and common purpose are essential components to any successful endeavor,” said MWRD Executive Director David St. Pierre. “It’s truly an honor and privilege to have a mayor, a governor and a federal representative all behind the important work of recovering the quality of our water system. We’re truly grateful for the governor’s support and know that together we will succeed.”

Today’s announcement builds on plans Governor Quinn announced during his State of the State address to ensure clean water in Illinois communities by upgrading wastewater systems throughout the state. According to the USEPA, Illinois has a more than \$17 billion capital need for publicly-owned wastewater pipes and treatment facilities, combined sewer overflow correction and stormwater management - the 6th highest need in the nation.

The state will assist in projects to upgrade aging systems, and construct new waste and drinking water plants around Illinois. The Governor’s proposal will improve the health and safety of Illinois residents, as well as support job creation.

Today’s funding builds on more than \$248 million in state- and federally-funded upgrades and improvements at MWRD facilities since Governor Quinn took office. Those projects include funding for facility improvements at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant and replacing deteriorating sewer lines throughout the city of Chicago. The USEPA, the state of Illinois and the MWRD are working together to support green infrastructure projects and other steps to reduce untreated stormwater overflows into the waterways.

For more information on EPA’s work on the Chicago River: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/chicagoriver/>.

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