

Update on the Flood Mitigation Project (FMP)

On June 15, 2015 the Village of Elmwood Park (Village) experienced a storm event that produced approximately 5 inches of rainfall over a 24-hour period. Prior to this storm event, it had already rained approximately 2 inches over the previous 48 hours, which resulted in saturated soils. The storm was incredibly intense and produced a huge volume of water over a short period of time. In many places throughout the region, the amount of water that fell was greater than the street's inlet capacity. This was the case not only in Elmwood Park, but in communities throughout the Chicagoland area.

We found that the streets where the FMP has been complete drained far faster than they otherwise would have. This was welcome relief! While the streets collected some water temporarily due to the intensity of the storm, we were pleased to see them fully drain in a reasonable timeframe.

We are also pleased to report that the newly constructed storm water pumping station and reservoir operated precisely as it was designed to, utilizing its full pumping capability during the height of the storm. As a result, an estimated 27 million gallons of water were pumped out of the reservoir – water that otherwise would likely have sat on the streets of Elmwood Park for hours. This volume of water would also have further burdened the combination sewer which reached capacity and surcharged into the streets during the storm. The new storm sewer system not only lessened the period of time the streets held water, it also provided additional capacity for the remainder of the Village. This allowed streets not connected to the FMP to drain into the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's system faster than similar storm events of the past have allowed.

While much work has been completed, there is still a lot of work to be done to connect all of the designed areas to the FMP. Areas around Diversey and 75th Avenue, 74th Court and Shubert and other streets throughout the Westwood area are not yet complete and therefore did not experience the relief they will once connected to the system. The Village and its contractors are working diligently to complete the remainder of the project in 2015.

The FMP was designed to provide direct relief to the areas throughout town that are most prone to severe flooding. The Village is well aware that there are other areas that do not adequately drain which were not included in the FMP. These areas should still feel some benefit of this project due to the additional capacity being afforded to the combined sewers.

Upon completion of the FMP, the Village will continue to analyze how the system operates and will make the necessary modifications to ensure the Village's residents receive the highest level of protection possible.