Q) Do you support installing disinfection technology at Stickney, the world’s largest wastewater treatment plant?

A) Yes. If scientific evidence shows that the installation of disinfection technology is needed at Stickney then I would support its use within budgetary parameters. Disinfection technology is already being installed at the O’Brien Plant (Ultraviolet Disinfection) and at the Calumet Plant (Chlorine Disinfection). Disinfection technology is something that can not only improve the water environment but also create jobs.

Q) How would you improve the current phosphorus-removal plans underway at the MWRD? Do you think this important? If so, why?

A) One way we could potentially improve the current phosphorus-removal plans is to encourage, and possible incentive, more of our users to reduce the phosphorus load in their discharges. We can also continue to expand our efforts in the area of phosphorus recovery. Yes, I do think this is important. Although phosphorus is needed, too much phosphorus in the environment can negatively effect the quality of our water. Too much phosphorus can also lead to the creation of algal blooms which can seriously harm aquatic life.

Q) Do you support any alternatives to maximize the capacity of the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan? Which ones do you support?

A) I support operational plans that maximize the storage capacity in the tunnels and reservoirs during heavy rain events. Once the McCook reservoir is completed next year, that will greatly increase the total capacity.

Q) What do you think the MWRD’s role should be in reducing chloride usage?

A) The MWRD should continue to be a leader in reducing chloride usage by working with other local governments and state agencies to reduce the use of road salts in our region. This would in turn reduce the amount of chlorides entering the waterways which increases significantly in the winter months due to the use of road salts. The MWRD should also continue to monitor safe chloride amounts in the waterway system.

Q) What should the MWRD’s role be in reducing combined sewer overflows? What is the MWRD’s role in informing the public about CSO’s? How would rate the MWRD’s performance in informing the public about CSO’s, and why?

A) Combined sewer systems are owned by municipalities. The MWRD should help those municipalities enforce restrictions on the entrance of extraneous flows like stormwater from entering their sewer systems. The MWRD should encourage the the separation of combined sewers whenever possible. The MWRD developed a plan for actively informing the public about CSO’s occurrences and impacts. The affected public includes both governmental agencies and private entities. I would give the MWRD a good rating regarding their performance in informing the public about CSO’s because of their coordination with the City of Chicago and Suburban municipalities and giving them the ability to link to our website‘s CSO page. The MWRD has also created a list of emails of interested parties who are sent email alerts when a CSO occurs. Another way the MWRD informs the public about CSO’s is by installing signs on MWRD property in areas by the waterway.

Q) How do you the see role of wastewater treatment agencies changing over the next 10 years?

A) Over the next 10 years the role of wastewater treatment agencies will continue towards further engaging in resource recovery initiatives. Wastewater treatment agencies will also be responsible for promoting beneficial reuse of the wastewater after it has been treated. Wastewater treatment agencies will also have to be out ahead of the curve in developing new technology for the disposal and/or reuse of biosolids (sludge). But maybe the most evident role change will be to evolve with the changing times and operate in the most efficient ways possible such as becoming energy neutral.

Q) Should the MWRD set a goal of making Chicago area waterways clean enough for swimming?

A) Yes, that is an excellent goal. The goal should also be to make the waterways as clean as possible for recreational use. Scientific studies on water quality should be utilized to determine what recreational uses could be safely allowed for all people to use the waterways.

Q) What should the MWRD’s role be in addressing Asian carp and other invasive species in Chicago area waterways?

A) The Army Corps of Engineers has taken the lead in responding to the presence of Asian Carp and other invasive species, like zebra mussels, in the waterways. The MWRD should support the efforts of the Corps to control the Asian Carp and other invasive species

Q) The MWRD is Cook County’s second largest landowner. Does the District have a responsibility to ensure companies to which it leases land are good environmental stewards?

A) Yes. Provisions should be included in land leases that prohibit environmentally harmful activities and these provisions should be strictly enforced. Furthermore, MWRD Police should regularly patrol property owned by the MWRD to discover and investigate nay dangerous conditions.

Q) How would you rate the current performance of the District?

A) I would rate it as very good. The MWRD consistently receives awards for its performance as a wastewater treatment agency. The MWRD also consistently receives high marks for the development of its annual budget. The MWRD has a very highly skilled, highly intelligent work force and the MWRD has instituted a civil service employment system for many years.

Q) What should the District’s role be in coordinating efforts with other government agencies in the Chicago area watersheds to manage those watersheds?

A) The MWRD should support the efforts of other governmental agencies and encourage those agencies to develop area-wide approaches to the problems presented by heavy rainfall events. The MWRD should make its technical and scientific expertise available to these agencies in their efforts to manage watersheds. The MWRD can assist in reviewing plans, offering advice and encouraging the coordination of activities.