

Lockport Powerhouse Rehabilitation Stretches to 2029 - MWRD Records Also List 2030

Tim Rueckert calls for answers on generator outages, conflicting schedules, and lost renewable energy income

COOK COUNTY, IL - MWRD records confirm that the Lockport Powerhouse generated no electricity in 2023 because of generator outages. Its 2025 budget assumed those outages would be resolved in 2025. Yet on September 3, 2026, the Board of Commissioners approved advertising a turbine-generator rehabilitation contract with a tentative completion date of December 31, 2029.

The project fact sheet attached to that same board item lists substantial completion in December 2030. MWRD commissioner candidate Tim Rueckert is calling for a public explanation of the outages, the rehabilitation timeline, and the conflicting completion dates.

The September approval authorized advertising Contract 27-601-31, estimated at \$18.525 million to \$22.425 million, to inspect, test, and rehabilitate two Kaplan turbine-generator units. It was authorization to seek bids, not a construction contract award.

The board letter tentatively schedules advertising for November 4, 2026, bid opening for December 16, 2026, and an award for January 21, 2027. The attached fact sheet instead lists a March 2027 award. Taxpayers deserve a single, reliable schedule and an explanation of what determines the return to electricity production.

Public assets. Public revenue. Public accountability.

MWRD describes Lockport as generating approximately \$1 million annually in electricity revenue. Its published records show \$836,182.59 in 2022. Those historical figures demonstrate the value of reliable generation; they do not establish an audited total of shutdown losses.

The District also earns money from renewable energy credits, or RECs. Its Climate Action Plan reports that Lockport generated 32,483 RECs in 2021, with an estimated value of \$590,000. That is a historical valuation, not a guaranteed annual income figure.

MWRD's 2025 budget records \$645,618 in actual 2023 revenue from REC sales despite no electricity generation that year. A full accounting must distinguish electricity sales, new credits generated, and proceeds from credits sold. The District should explain the timing of those sales and quantify foregone income.

"Renewable energy should be both an environmental benefit and a responsible financial investment," Rueckert added. "When a publicly owned power station stops producing electricity, taxpayers lose the benefit of that energy and the revenue it could generate. The MWRD has earned additional income from renewable energy credits in the past. The public deserves to know how much revenue has been lost and why the District took so long to move forward."

Rueckert calls for a full public accounting

- The outage record: When did each generating unit stop producing electricity, why, and has either unit returned to service since 2023?
- The response: What inspections, repairs, design work, and procurement steps were taken, and why did the 2025 budget assume the outages would be resolved that year?
- The financial impact: What electricity sales and REC proceeds were received each year, how much generation and income were foregone, and what are the total projected rehabilitation costs?
- The schedule: Why does the board letter target December 2029 while its attached fact sheet lists December 2030, and when will each unit resume generation?
- The safeguards: What maintenance, reporting, and project oversight will protect this public asset from prolonged outages in the future?

These questions concern electricity generation. Lockport also serves a separate, essential role in controlling waterway levels; a generator outage does not by itself establish that those water-management functions stopped.

Taxpayers deserve timely action, transparent financial reporting, and responsible stewardship of facilities that provide environmental and economic benefits. The Board should explain what happened, what has been done, and when reliable generation will resume.

“The MWRD should be leading by example when it comes to renewable energy and responsible government,” Rueckert said. “Yet this is another example of the MWRD commissioners’ failure to respond in a timely manner. We need to stop accepting delays as business as usual. The public deserves answers, accountability, and a clear plan to get this facility back to work.”

About Tim Rueckert

Tim Rueckert is a candidate for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago Board of Commissioners, advocating for transparency, fiscal responsibility, environmental stewardship, and accountability to taxpayers.

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Supporting MWRD records

[September 3, 2026 board item: Contract 27-601-31](#)

[Project fact sheet attached to the board item](#)

[2025 Final Budget: General Division, printed page 239](#)

[MWRD Lockport Powerhouse: historical electricity revenue](#)

[MWRD Climate Action Plan: printed page 24](#)