



Office of the Chicago City
Clerk



R2012-216

Office of the City Clerk

City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	2/15/2012
Sponsor(s):	Burke, Edward M. (14)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Commemoration of 50th anniversary of dyeing Chicago River green
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, For fifty years, the Chicago River has been dyed green to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, a tradition which carries significant meaning for the thousands of Chicagoans whose family trees took root in Ireland; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of this anniversary by Alderman Edward M. Burke; and

WHEREAS, On the Saturday nearest to St. Patrick's Day each year, forty pounds of powdered vegetable dye are deposited into the Chicago River, turning it a brilliant shade of emerald green; and

WHEREAS, This annual tradition is sponsored by the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers Union; and

WHEREAS, During the early years, the river was dyed green by Thomas Rowan, Sr. and Michael Butler; and

WHEREAS, The annual tradition is continued today by Michael Butler, Mark Butler, Thomas Rowan, Jr. and Robert Rowan; and

WHEREAS, Only the select few who actually participate in the dyeing process are privy to the formula which results in that perfect Irish green; and

WHEREAS, Dyeing the Chicago River green was the brainchild of Stephen M. Bailey, a business manager for the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers Local Union #110 for much of the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, In late 1961, Stephen M. Bailey discovered that the dye used by his plumbers to detect leaks into the Chicago River could also dye that same river a perfect shade of Irish green and a tradition was born; and

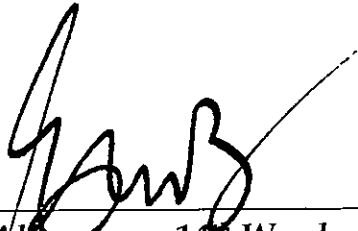
WHEREAS, Chicago was the first city ever to attempt such a transformation, and is believed to be the only municipality to successfully performed the feat year after year; and

WHEREAS, In keeping with the traditions of her native city, First Lady Michelle Obama requested in 2009 that the White House fountains be dyed green in observance of St. Patrick's Day; and

WHEREAS, Chicagoans of Irish descent are fond of saying that the dye which goes into the Chicago River each year travels to the Illinois River, then to the Mississippi, and then to the Gulf of Mexico before crossing the North Atlantic to the Irish Sea where it serves as a greeting to the Irish from their kinfolk in Chicago; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this fifteenth day of February, 2012, do hereby congratulate Michael Butler, Mark Butler, Thomas Rowan, Jr. and Robert Rowan on this fifty-year tradition and do hereby express our appreciation to them for helping all Chicagoans celebrate St. Patrick's Day by dyeing the Chicago River green; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Michael Butler, Mark Butler, Thomas Rowan, Jr. and Robert Rowan.



Allanman - 14th Ward