



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Get Growing Foundation sprouts from MWRD's EQ Compost

The time is right to get growing, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is collaborating with the Get Growing Foundation to supply its Exceptional Quality (EQ) Compost to be used during the Get Growing! Expo to take place at three locations throughout the Chicago area in June.

The MWRD's EQ Compost is a sustainable and environmentally beneficial product derived from the water reclamation process that blends biosolids with woodchips to create a product rich in organic matter to improve the structure and porosity of soils.

The Get Growing Foundation rose out of the Chicago Flower & Garden Show by bringing education and programming to the annual event. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Navy Pier show was canceled days before its March 2020 opening. Yet, its programs and education continue to live on through the Foundation. Much like a food truck, the organization operates "Plant Truck Chicago," a seasonal mobile plant boutique providing education, outreach and access to much needed plant material in and around the Chicago area, with a special focus on under-served communities.

The partnership between the Get Growing Foundation and MWRD was facilitated by MWRD President Kari K. Steele. The MWRD participated in the Flower and Garden Show since 2018 to distribute its compost and also discuss the benefits of installing green infrastructure to manage stormwater at home. "MWRD's compost have been used to improve soil quality at popular destinations like Maggie Dal-



Get Growing Foundation President and Founder Tony Abruscato and MWRD President Kari K. Steele stand before 10 cubic yards of MWRD's EQ Compost, which will be used to fill planter beds for display throughout the Chicago area in June during the Get Growing! Expo.

ey Park, the 606 Trail, on golf courses and athletic fields, at both public parks and schools in the Chicago area for many years," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "The use of EQ Compost by the Get Growing Foundation is an extension to the many locations currently benefitting from the MWRD quality soil enhancement."

The Get Growing! Expo, presented by Wintrust, will take place at three locations, including the Magnificent Mile, June 4-6 at Pioneer Court, 401 Michigan Ave.; June 11-13 at Stone Temple Baptist Church in North Lawndale, 3607 W. Douglas Blvd.; and June 18-20 at Brookfield Zoo, 8400 W. 31st Street, in Brookfield. Visit getgrowingfoundation.org for details. During the expo, plant experts will be on-hand to teach visitors how to maximize greenspace. Each event will have interactive garden vignettes, containers with small-space ideas and native (*continued*)

Get Growing Foundation sprouts from MWRD's EQ Compost, *cont.*

plant varieties. Get Growing Foundation President and Founder Abruscato said they plan to grow native pollinators, vegetables and herbs, shade-based plants and “whimsical and inspirational” flowers.

“We are excited to engage communities again and offer exceptional planting options. Plants are not only beautiful when properly cared for, they can also provide peace and relaxation on any day regardless of the weather,” said Abruscato. “Some even say they are great listeners.”

This week the MWRD brought back its popular “Bring Your Own Bucket” program, providing piles of its EQ Compost outside select water reclamation plants while supplies last.

To learn more about the MWRD's EQ Compost, visit <https://mwr.org/eq-compost>.



MWRD President Kari K. Steele visits the Plant Truck Chicago with Get Growing Foundation President and Founder Tony Abruscato. Be on the lookout for the plant truck throughout the Chicago area in June, as it offers gardening tips and education at the foundation's Get Growing! Expo.

To learn more about Get Growing, visit: <https://getgrowingfoundation.org/>.

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at mwr.org.