



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Thai delegation visits MWRD facilities as part of international learning exchange



*A delegation from Thailand and representatives from the offices of U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth and U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin met with MWRD commissioners and staff at the McCook Reservoir Stage 1, which can capture 3.5 billion gallons of water, protecting local water resources and communities from flooding.*

Following a visit from Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) officials in June to Bangkok, a delegation of Thai leaders and water experts visited the Chicago area for a glimpse of the MWRD's work and to exchange knowledge in protecting public health and the world's water environment.

MWRD Commissioner Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda and Commissioner Daniel Pogorzelski welcomed a delegation of leaders from Thailand, including Deputy Minister of Education Dr. Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich. Joining the delegation were representatives from the offices of U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth and

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and officials with the Royal Thai Consulate of Chicago, the Office of Vocational Education Commission of Thailand, and the Office of the National Water Resource of Thailand.

"We were proud to welcome Deputy Minister of Education Sophonpanich and our counterparts from Thailand who are also working to improve and protect the earth's prized water resources," said Commissioner Corral Sepúlveda. "We value the opportunity to exchange information and learn from one another."

*(continued)*

## Thai delegation visits MWRD facilities, *cont.*

This continued learning exchange was made possible through the MWRD's affiliation with the international Water and Waste Management (WWM) Conference, which convened in Bangkok, Thailand in June, with Commissioner Corral Sepúlveda serving as conference chairperson. Several MWRD staff and retirees attended and spoke at the conference, while Sen. Duckworth provided an inaugural address.

As part of the delegation's visit, they met with MWRD engineers and treatment plant operators at the MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) before making stops at the MWRD's Mainstream Pumping Station in Hodgkins and McCook Reservoir in Bedford Park. Stickney WRP, with its capacity to treat up to 1.44 billion gallons of water per day, and the McCook Reservoir, part of the MWRD's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) expected to store 10 billion gallons of water per day once complete, are both considered among the world's largest of their kind.

MWRD staff at the Stickney WRP process wastewater from Chicago as well as 46 other communities within a 260-square-mile-area and transform the flow into clean water in about 12 hours. The MWRD recovers critical resources like water, energy, nutrients, algae and soil amendments, and returns the water safely to the environment.

"The sheer size of our infrastructure, the volume of water we treat and manage, and our commitment to protecting our environment makes our work an international attraction," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "Thank you to Commissioners Corral Sepúlveda and Pogorzelski for welcoming the delegation. We also thank the Thai delegation and Senators Duckworth and Durbin for their shared commitment to protecting our natural resources."



*A Thai delegation joined MWRD Commissioners Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda and Daniel Pogorzelski and MWRD staff for a visit to the bottom of Mainstream Pumping Station to see the impressive infrastructure required to convey water 300 feet below ground to Stickney Water Reclamation Plant for treatment.*

Unmatched in size throughout the world, TARP works to protect and improve area waterways and Lake Michigan and reduces flooding throughout Cook County.

"With 110 miles of deep tunnels and four giant reservoirs, TARP is one of the country's largest public works projects for pollution and flood control," said MWRD Commissioner Pogorzelski.

WWM strives to promote science, technology, and policy-based solutions for sustainable management of water and solid waste. WWM aims to integrate the principles of waste and water management as a part of environmentally sustainable development, facilitating a global platform for knowledge sharing and networking. To learn more, visit [waterandwastemanagement.org](http://waterandwastemanagement.org).

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