



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Tree planting at MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant honors Morton Arboretum and The Conservation Foundation

In commemoration of the centennial anniversary of the Morton Arboretum and 50th anniversary of The Conservation Foundation (TCF), staff and leaders at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) planted a new tree at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant they hope will last another 100 years.

The tree was donated by Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. (CBBEL). It is one of 75 trees that CBBEL plans to donate to more than 40 communities across the Chicago area in honor of the Morton Arboretum and TCF.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with outstanding civic organizations like the Morton Arboretum and The Conservation Foundation which are equally dedicated to environmental stewardship and sustainability," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "Today we plant this Princeton American Elm here at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant in honor of these milestone anniversaries. Many thanks to Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. for their generosity."

CBBEL is closely tied to both the Morton Arboretum and TCF through founder and CEO Christopher Burke who served as past chair and current member of the Morton Arboretum Board of trustees, as well as Chairman of TCF Board of Directors.

"In recognition of these organizations, we're donating these trees because they are crucially important elements of our environment: they reduce air pollution, encourage physical activity, enhance mental health and more," said Thomas J. Burke Jr., executive vice president and head of the Water Resources Department for CBBEL. "We are proud to work with the MWRD and their staff on many great projects, including Addison Creek Reservoir and the Mount Prospect flood storage



MWRD staff joined Christopher B. Burke Engineering, the Morton Arboretum and The Conservation Foundation for a tree planting ceremony at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant on Oct. 18.

projects most recently, and provide this tree for health and beauty on the MWRD property."

The MWRD also remains strong advocates of trees as a stormwater tool. The MWRD distributed nearly 10,000 trees this year as part of its Restore the Canopy program, providing Cook County residents with an opportunity to help restore the region's depleted tree canopy and protect communities from flooding. The MWRD launched the program in 2016, following substantial tree loss due to the emerald ash borer infestations and extreme weather. In that time and despite a pandemic, the MWRD has managed to distribute about 100,000 tree saplings, the majority of which are varieties of oaks. Not only do the trees provide a beautiful green canopy, but the trees also serve as a powerful and effective form of green infrastructure, soaking up stormwater, mitigating flooding and improving water quality by keeping runoff out of the sewers.

"We are delighted to accept this new Princeton American Elm that will adorn our Stickney Water Reclamation Plant, collect carbon, shelter us from (continued)

Tree planting at MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant, *cont.*

the sun and the storms and brighten the day for our staff and visitors driving down Pershing Road,” said MWRD Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos. “Thank you to Christopher B. Burke Engineering, the Morton Arboretum and The Conservation Fund for their commitments to protecting our regional trees and our water resources.”

The Lisle-based Morton Arboretum strives to collect and study trees, shrubs, and other plants from around the world, to display them across naturally beautiful landscapes for people to study and enjoy, and to learn how to grow them in ways that enhance the environment. The Arboretum's goal is to encourage the planting and conservation of trees and other plants for a greener, healthier, and more beautiful world.

Founded in 1972, The Conservation Foundation is one of the region's oldest and largest not-for profit land and watershed conservation organizations dedicated to preserving and restoring open space, protecting rivers and watersheds and promoting stewardship of the environment in northeastern Illinois. Based in Naperville, TCF focuses



MWRD President Kari K. Steele and Thomas J. Burke Jr., executive vice president and head of the Water Resources Department for Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd., gave remarks at a tree planting ceremony at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant. Burke Engineering donated a Princeton American Elm.

their work in DuPage, Kane, Kendall and Will Counties, but has also contributed toward significant projects in Cook, DeKalb, Grundy and LaSalle Counties.

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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 mwrld.org.