



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

October 16, 2018

MWRD praised for 10 year biosolids partnership



The National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) Platinum Award was presented to MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila from NBP Advisory Committee Chair and MWRD retiree Dan Collins. The honor recognizes the MWRD for a sustainable biosolids program that benefits the environment.

For 10 years of advancement, innovation and meticulous attention to meeting and exceeding national standards, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) was recognized for establishing an elite biosolids program.

On Oct. 3, the MWRD received commendation from the National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) for being a NBP Platinum member for a decade. The achievement was observed at the annual Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC) held this year at the Ernest Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA.

“On behalf of the National Biosolids Partnership, I would like to commend the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago for being a NBP Platinum member for 10 years. It is an incredible accomplishment and shows your dedication to environmentally-sound biosolids management practices,” said Patrick Dube, Ph.D., technical program manager for the Water Science & Engineering Center with the Water Environment Federation (WEF).

Biosolids are a product of the wastewater treatment process that can help reduce turf maintenance costs by improving soil quality. Using biosolids increases soil organic



The MWRD Board of Commissioners and executive staff celebrate national awards bestowed upon the MWRD at the Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC).

matter which reduces nutrient loss from soils, increases water infiltration into soil, and increases the amount of water retained by soils. MWRD biosolids are classified as “Exceptional Quality” (EQ), according to federal and state regulatory standards, and are a superior alternative to chemical products used on athletic turf and lawns.

NBP serves as the information clearinghouse on effective biosolids practices and offers technical assistance and a Biosolids Environmental Management System (EMS)-based certification program that requires participating organizations to go beyond regulatory requirements through an extensive audit and evaluations. The NBP, an alliance of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, WEF and U.S. EPA program, makes the program available to public agencies and private companies.

More than 100 organizations have participated in NBP management training, and 33 have had their programs verified by independent third-party auditors, certified by the NBP and received national recognition for their achievement. Platinum status is the highest level of certification and few organizations have reached the “Platinum 10 Year-Plus” level.

“Meeting the standards set by the National Biosolids Partnership is a major accomplishment and credit to our staff and our management of an effective biosolids *(continued)*

MWRD praised for 10 year biosolids partnership, *cont.*

program,” said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. “We take great pride in turning what was formerly considered waste into a product that is beneficial to the environment and for years has transformed Chicago area golf courses, athletic fields and parks into green and fertile land.”

The MWRD produces approximately 145,000 tons of biosolids annually, and 98 percent of all biosolids products are beneficially reused as a soil amendment. As part of the MWRD’s Resource Recovery ordinance, the MWRD recently began creating a premium quality compost product. To enhance the compost, the MWRD accepts bulk quantities of woodchips to be used in the co-composting process. The EQ Compost supplies organic matter and improves the structure and porosity of soils. This allows plants to more effectively utilize nutrients. The EQ Compost can be blended with topsoil and potting soil for establishing plants or used as a mulch around already established plants.

“We are happy to receive recognition for a sustainable practice that can enrich soil, replace nonrenewable landscaping resources and reduce carbon emissions and en-



MWRD biosolids are blended with woodchips in windrow turners to create a premium quality compost product that can be used locally in gardens and lawns, golf courses, parks and fields.

ergy demands especially when used locally,” said MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila. “By appreciating and elevating these programs we can make an immediate impact to our environment.”

To learn more about MWRD compost visit compost.mwr.org.

###

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwr.org) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.