



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Rain barrels draw attention to water collection during Earth Week *MWRD, Shedd Aquarium and Gompers School use artistic flair*

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioners Michael A. Alvarez, Frank Avila, Patricia Horton, Kathleen Therese Meany and Debra Shore tried their hand at painting rain barrels with the assistance of 28 seventh grade students from Chicago's Gompers Fine Arts Option Elementary School today at the John G. Shedd Aquarium.

A view of Lake Michigan and the Chicago skyline from the Shedd Aquarium's North Terrace offered inspiration for the artwork. The event was designed to help educate the students and the public about the availability and benefits of rain barrel use and to demonstrate the many possibilities for rain barrel design and ornamentation. The rain barrels will be donated to Gompers School for continued water conservation efforts and education.

The MWRD is promoting its rain barrels as part of a broader green infrastructure program, which includes educating the public about the use of rain barrels and rain gardens, native landscaping, stormwater trees, bio-swales, green roofs, greenways, wetlands and porous pavement to achieve its mission of managing stormwater and reducing water pollution. Rain barrels are durable plastic containers that collect and store rainwater from a home's rooftop, via a disconnected downspout, for later use.

"Collecting rainwater for reuse is an environmentally-friendly practice," said David St. Pierre, MWRD Executive Director. "Water is a precious resource and everyone should do their part to conserve water. Rain barrels are an easy way to reuse rainwater at home."

The public can join this important mission by taking advantage of the MWRD rain barrel program, which offers 55 gallon capacity rain barrels for \$58 each, including home delivery and a starter installation kit.

"Shedd Aquarium is especially thrilled to partner with the MWRD during Earth Week, as this event not only provides an opportunity for conservation learning and growth among the participating students, but supports Shedd's overall conservation mission and educational initiatives," said Allen LaPointe, vice president of environmental quality.

Our water environment...Take it personally

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



Above: Gompers Fine Arts students at work painting one of the rain barrels. The 20 painted barrels will be donated to the school for continued water conservation & educational efforts. Below: Allen LaPointe, Vice President, Environmental Quality, Shedd Aquarium, and David St. Pierre, Executive Director, MWRD.

