



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore
Public Affairs Specialist
312.751.6633
publicaffairsinfo@mwrdd.org
100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

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Firefighters practice maneuvers at MWRD facility *Mainstream Pumping Station offers unique environment for steep rescue*

Countless lives and homes are saved every year thanks to the efforts of the area's brave firefighters. Preparation and training often requires access to unusual training locations, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) recently provided a unique environment for practicing rope-climbing maneuvers in a steep, tightly-enclosed space. Located at the MWRD's Mainstream Pumping Station in Hodgkins, the facility includes a 300' empty elevator shaft that is used to move equipment up and down for the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP).

"It is an honor to provide access to our facility for these training activities," said MWRD Executive Director Dave St. Pierre. "These brave men and women put their lives on the line each time an alarm bell rings. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their selflessness and for their commitment to their profession and the communities they serve."

"The shaft is a rare, yet perfect location for fire departments to practice rappelling," said Captain Kevin Mulligan, Pleasantview Fire Protection District, LaGrange Highlands, Illinois. "We certainly appreciate the opportunity to use this unique setting for training exercises."

The Mainstream Pumping Station was built to prevent backflows into Lake Michigan, eliminate waterway pollution caused by combined sewer overflows and provide an outlet for flood waters. The Mainstream Pumping Station is one of three stations in the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan that the MWRD designed and is constructing to capture combined sewer overflows from an area of 375 square miles. The sewage and stormwater which enters the tunnel system is transported to Mainstream which then pumps the flow to the MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant in Cicero, IL.

"Many thanks to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District staff and Commissioners for allowing all of us to have this annual training," said Captain Mulligan. "This is a fantastic opportunity and everyone is appreciative."



Bill Taylor, firefighter/paramedic for the Pleasantview Fire Department during training at the MWRD's Mainstream Pumping Station in Hodgkins.

Fifty one members from 11 area fire departments listed below participated in the annual technical rescue training at Mainstream Pumping Station:

Argonne Fire Department
Darien Woodridge Fire Protection District
Hinsdale Fire Department
LaGrange Fire Department
LaGrange Park Fire Department
Lemont Fire Protection District
McCook Fire Department
Pleasantview Fire Protection District
Tri State Fire Protection District
Westmont Fire Department
Western Springs Fire Department

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.