



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Media Advisory

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Chinatown's Haines Elementary School selected for rain garden construction

"Reading, Writing, and Rain Gardens" is theme of sixth WEF service project

Who: Water Environment Federation, City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

What: Rain garden construction and ribbon cutting ceremony

When: Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013; construction begins at 9 a.m.; ribbon-cutting at 2:15 p.m.

Where: John C. Haines Elementary School, 247 W. 23rd Place, Chicago, IL

Water professionals from throughout the United States will congregate in Chicago beginning Oct. 4 for the Water Environment Federation's 86th Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference, WEFTEC® 2013. One highlight of the conference is a community service project, and this year, dozens of participants have already offered to spend Saturday, Oct. 5, constructing a rain garden at Haines Elementary School, 247 W. 23rd Pl., Chicago. Construction will begin at 9 a.m., and a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at 2 p.m.

Themed "Reading, Writing, and Rain Gardens," the project will consist of replacing concrete with green infrastructure on the school's playground. The 1000 sq. ft. rain garden and native landscaping will help relieve runoff from urban flooding in a critical public space for students. Because the Chicago region was developed in a swampy marsh on a generally flat landscape, water has a difficult time draining. With the addition of impervious pavement such as driveways, streets and buildings, water has nowhere to drain except the sewers. As a result, too much stormwater inundating the sewer system causes flooding, and a way to minimize this problem and allow water to collect where it falls is through green infrastructure.

"Locating the project at a school helps us increase the awareness of the value of water with impressionable young minds," said Tim Moran, Water Environment Federation team lead. "We hope to inspire students to the cause of clean water, underscore the importance of the water profession, and demonstrate to the community how to get started on clean water initiatives."

"Capturing rain where it falls and allowing that water to recharge our underground water supply is something we need to be doing throughout the Chicago region," said Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Debra Shore. "Having water professionals construct a rain garden here shows their commitment to managing water resources wisely and will leave a lasting sign of their good work."

For more information, contact Lori Harrison (703) 684-2480, lharrison@wef.org or Allison Fore (312) 751-6633, public.affairs@mwrdd.org.

About WEFTEC® 2013: As largest annual water quality conference and exhibition in the world, WEFTEC 2013 will feature 140 technical sessions, 27 workshops and an unrivaled exhibition that currently features 883 companies using more than 300,000 square feet of floor space.

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. ***Our water environment, Take it personally.***