



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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For immediate release October 9, 2013

Debra Shore receives WEF Public Officials Award

MWRD commissioner recognized for contributions to water improvement at WEFTEC

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Debra Shore was presented with the Public Officials Award during the Water Environment Federation's celebration of excellence reception and ceremony held at the McCormick Place Convention Center on Oct. 8. The Public Officials Award is presented to an elected or appointed public official that has made a documented significant contribution in the areas of clean water legislation, public policy, government service or another area of public prominence that resulted in improvements to the water environment.

"This is a great honor, and I am very proud to bring this award back to the District," said Commissioner Shore. "Everyone who works at the District is committed to improving the water environment to make the Chicago waterways and region a better place to live and work."

Commissioner Shore is chairman of two MWRD committees, the Municipalities Committee and the Public Information and Education Committee. She is also vice chairman of the Budget and Employment Committee and the Engineering Committee. Committee assignments are vital to agency operations as their leaders establish policy direction.

Since the MWRD is charged with wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Commissioner Shore is working to expedite projects that will help alleviate flooding and improve water quality. The Watershed Management Ordinance, which passed on October 3, is one such project.

"No region can have a healthy economy without a healthy environment," said Commissioner Shore. "The Watershed Management Ordinance is but one important step in our efforts to protect public health and water quality by seeking to treat rain as a resource and not as a problem."

Commissioner Shore is also working to bring innovative technologies to the MWRD. "All those things that we used to call 'waste' – the methane gas generated by sewage treatment, the phosphorus in effluent, our biosolids, even treated wastewater – all these have value, and we are in the process of trying to capture and monetize that value. We are developing methods for recovery and reuse of phosphorus and nitrogen from the wastewater treatment process that will further enhance water quality. Just yesterday we announced a partnership with Ostara to begin planning for the nutrient recovery facility. How exciting to be part of this transformation to a resource recovery agency."

Dr. Krishna Pagilla, an Illinois Institute of Technology professor and president of the Illinois Water Environment Association, submitted the Commissioner's original nomination; he also received the Fair Distinguished Engineering Educator Medal and Camp Applied Research award at WEFTEC 2013.

"Commissioner Shore's work in protecting the wilderness areas in Chicago area and her commitment to storm water management in Cook County are demonstrated examples of her dedication to preserving and improving the water environment. This award, richly deserved, will further strengthen her resolve and commitment for continued leadership to protect our water resources" said Dr. Pagilla.



Cordell Samuels, WEF President, at left, presented MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore with the Water Environment Federation's Public Official award during a ceremony at WEFTEC.

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