



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Press Release

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For immediate release

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New green roof tops Racine Ave. Pumping Station



Pictured is the new green roof at the Racine Avenue Pumping Station (RAPS), a building that houses main sewage pumps that pump wastewater to the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant. The structure's total building roof area is 33,000 sq. ft. and approx. 4,500 sq. ft. is structurally-rated to handle the additional vegetative roof loading.

Green infrastructure is an important tool in the effort to reduce flooding. While rain gardens, rain barrels and permeable pavement are more common forms that can be found around the region, another equally useful method of capturing stormwater can be found in a green roof. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) recently completed the construction of a green roof at the Racine Avenue Pumping Station (RAPS).

RAPS is a building that houses main sewage pumps that pump wastewater to the Stickney Water Rec-

lamation Plant. The coarse screen building extension houses a conveyor system that removes trash from wastewater. Removing this trash helps prevent damaging water treatment pumps. The structure's total building roof area is 33,000 sq. ft. Approx. 4,500 sq. ft. is structurally-rated to handle the additional vegetative roof loading.

Originally constructed in 1939, the most recent roof replacement was performed in 1996 with a 10 year warranty. The 19 year old tar roof showed its age: numerous leaks and worn-out repairs (continued)

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.



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Additional photos of the new green roof at the Racine Avenue Pumping Station (RAPS), a building that houses main sewage pumps that pump wastewater to the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant.

required replacement. However, instead of replacing the roof with heavy, impermeable tar, the new roof is a combination of asphalt and plantings. Because of their ability to withstand harsh weather conditions, a variety of Sedum plants were installed. These native plants are low maintenance; irrigation is needed initially to establish the plantings and during drought periods, and routine weed removal will help the roof maintain its appearance.

“We all know that Chicago weather can be harsh, and we face extreme temperature swings and mois-

ture levels,” said MWRD President Mariyana T. Spyropoulos. “This new vegetative roof is definitely an improvement and will greatly benefit the agency and the environment. We expect it to slow stormwater runoff and absorb heat. It also has an insulating effect for the building which will result in lower electrical costs for operating the building.”

The MWRD will also continue to monitor the success of the plantings and maintenance costs and use this information as we continue to seek other opportunities for green/vegetative roofs.

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