



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD Vice President McGowan brings rain barrel program to West Side

Rain barrel workshop set for June 23 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Amundsen Park, 6200 W. Bloomingdale Ave., Chicago



In the photo (left to right): Bettye Gilliam, Rose Williams, Mattie Holmes, LaVonne Carr, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago Vice President Barbara McGowan, Annie Robertson, 29rd Ward Ald. Chris Taliaferro and Mattie Peoples were included among a crowd gathering at the South Austin Coalition Community Council Senior Forum last month to learn about rain barrels.

At the invitation of Lillian Drummond of the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services Austin Senior Satellite Center located at 5071 W. Congress Parkway in Chicago, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Vice President Barbara McGowan is partnering with 29rd Ward Ald. Chris Taliaferro and local non government organizations to bring rain barrels to the West Side.

Alderman Taliaferro, Commissioner McGowan, and

Arnold Bearden, president of the Community Environmental Network and Gladys Avenue Block Club, will host a rain barrel registration and installation workshop on Tuesday, June 23, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Amundsen Park, 6200 W. Bloomingdale Ave. The event was sparked by Lillian Drummond who is a utility assistant chairperson with the South Austin Coalition Community Council and senior advocate and volunteer for the city of Chicago Austin Senior Satellite Center. Pete Probst of the Rainwater Action Network community group will

MWRD Vice President McGowan brings rain barrel program to West Side *(continued)*



In the photo (left to right): Arnold Bearden, president of the Community Environmental Network; 29th Ward Ald. Chris Taliaferro; Lillian Drummond, senior advocate and volunteer for the city of Chicago Austin Senior Satellite Center; and Barbara McGowan, vice president of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, are joining forces to distribute rain barrels in Austin.

show attendees how to install the barrels, and Meg Kelly from Space to Grow/Openlands will discuss healthy schools.

A kickoff for the free distribution program was held in May at Leland Elementary School, 512 S. Laverne Ave. Dozens of seniors registered for a free rain barrel, compliments of the MWRD.

“Conserving water is a major issue during these summer months when significant rain events occur,” said Commissioner McGowan. “Residents who are signing up know that rain barrels will allow homeowners to save this water for their gardens and car washes, and more importantly, this water will also prevent water from entering our sewer system and backing up into our homes and streets.”

Residents living in the 29th Ward can access the MWRD’s rain barrel program through the Community Environmental Network and Alderman Taliaferro’s office by calling (773) 237-6460. After placing orders, the barrels will be delivered to the homeowners in about a month. There is a limit of four per resident.

The newly formed partnership is a result of new rain barrel distribution program the MWRD established to coordinate with different city wards and suburbs. City ward offices can work with non-governmental organizations and community groups like the Community Environmental Network to enroll in the program.

Rain barrels are a valuable form of green infrastructure because the 55-gallon barrels are designed to capture and reuse rain water that is bound for the sewer system, and instead, that water is diverted to gardens and other useful areas. By disconnecting the downspouts that normally transfer roof runoff to the sewer system, the rain barrels can now reduce basement backups and reduce the combined sewer overflow volume, overland flooding and infiltration and inflow. For more information about the rain barrel program, visit www.mwrdd.org.

The Leland School partnership came as a result of Space to Grow, a project managed by the Healthy Schools Campaign and Openlands organizations and made possible through the financial support of Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Department of Water Management and the MWRD. For more information, visit www.space2grow.org.

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

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.