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Press Release

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Free family fun and education at stormwater expo

Harwood Heights and MWRD host as part of stormwater management plan

The Harwood Heights Stormwater Expo will be held at Union Ridge School, 4600 North Oak Park Ave. on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will feature activities for children, plant and seed packets and a raised garden bed kit give-away, demonstrations on green infrastructure and an update on the Harwood Heights Stormwater Management Master Plan. It will also feature several booths to explain how to decrease flooding on residents' property. Hands-on demonstrations will educate residents about methods to mitigate flooding. The event is free and community members of all ages are invited to attend.

"We want to get feedback from the community on the Master Plan as well as provide an engaging educational forum for our residents to learn about green infrastructure possibilities for their community," said Harwood Heights Mayor Arlene Jezierny. "It will be fun for the whole family."

With funding and support from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD), Harwood Heights is building on the work that has been completed to date to reduce flooding in the community. The village is working with MWRD to create a comprehensive Stormwater Management Master Plan that will include a variety of solutions to address flooding.

The project began in early spring and since that time the project team has conducted a survey to better understand residents' preferences and identify additional solutions to flooding issues. A public meeting was also held in July.

Over 75 people came to learn about green infrastructure methods, give input on how to address these issues and how the community can work together to reduce flooding within Harwood Heights.

"This is a community-wide effort to concentrate on how we can combat flooding, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago is here to lend a hand and create a plan that will introduce viable solutions," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "We appreciate Harwood Heights residents' participation in this study and hope we can work together to improve the quality of life for local residents and businesses impacted by flooding."

The Stormwater Management Master Plan is expected to be complete in 2016 and will include:

- A list of potential projects and actions to reduce flood impacts in Harwood Heights. Solutions to be considered will include both traditional stormwater projects and innovative solutions such as green infrastructure.
- A range of solutions that can be implemented at many levels (individual lot, block, neighborhood, or community).

The community will have a chance to give input throughout the process through a second survey at the end of 2015, various events throughout the year, and a final public meeting in 2016.

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