



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

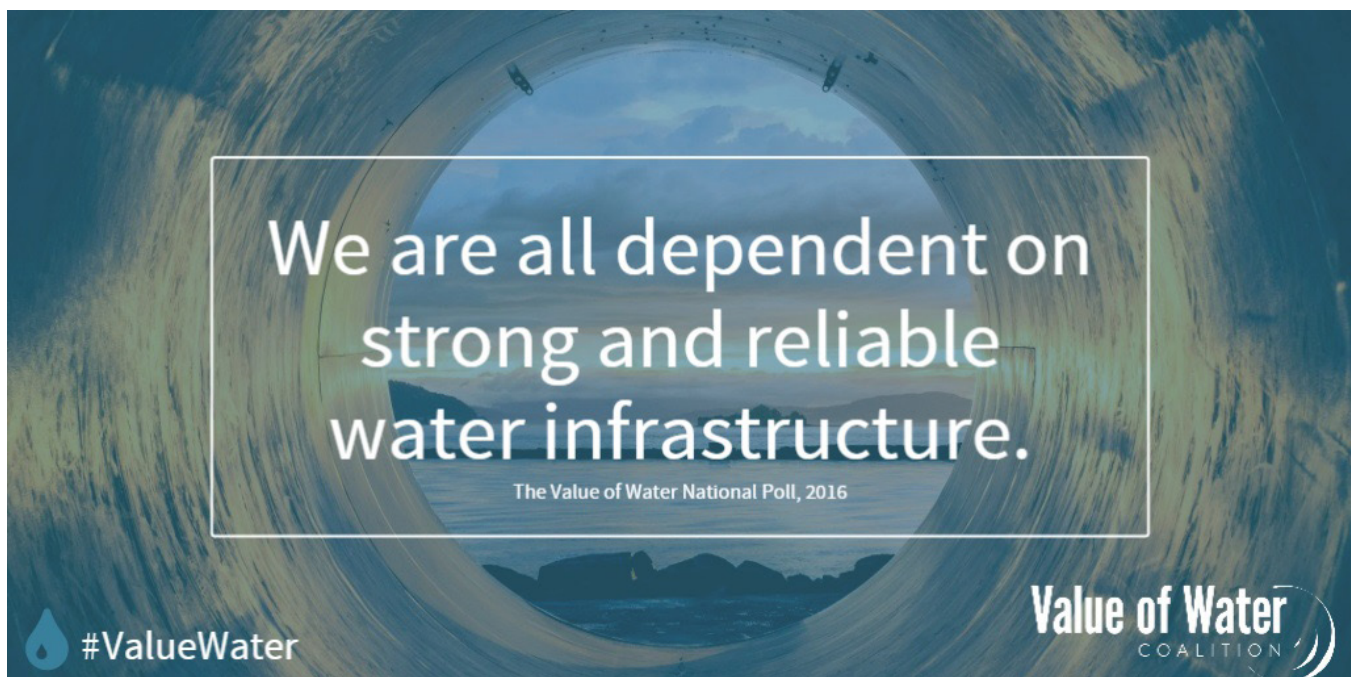
allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

February 24, 2016

New National Poll Finds 95% of Americans Want Public Officials to Invest in Water Systems, 60% Are Willing to Pay More for Secure Water Service



February 24, 2016 – Washington, DC – The Value of Water Coalition today released the results of a new national poll on public attitudes and concerns about water. The poll found that Americans are deeply concerned with the state of water infrastructure that we all rely on. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD), along with 30 other water utilities, companies, and policy organizations across the country, is a member of the Value of Water Coalition.

Respondents were evenly split (47/47), initially, with their willingness to personally spend more on their water bills for increased investment in water systems. Once poll respondents received additional information about water issues, 60 percent of Americans are in favor of paying more to invest in water infrastructure—an increase of 13 percent.

“This is a critical time and important opportunity to have a conversation across the country about the importance of investing in our water systems. Being able to drink water straight from the tap and knowing that wastewater is safely and responsibly treated are top concerns for Americans. As a nation, we must prioritize investment in our water systems—to maintain high-quality water service today and for future generations,” said Radhika Fox, director of the Value of Water Coalition and CEO of the US Water Alliance.

In light of the crisis in Flint, Michigan, 95 percent of respondents said it was important or very important for public officials to invest in water systems so other communities didn’t face what happened in Flint.



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Value of Water poll *(continued)*

“To us at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, protecting, managing and improving our area’s water quality is a daily responsibility,” said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. “But while we pledge to continue our commitment to clean, safe, reliable and affordable water from our precious front yard in Lake Michigan, we acknowledge that this luxury is no guarantee throughout the world and even here locally without continued investment.”

The issues that resonated with Americans were clear: we’re all dependent on water infrastructure, and we need to invest in it.

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About the poll: American Viewpoints and Hart Research conducted this national poll via phone of 1,000 adults across the country in January, 2016. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent at 95 percent confidence, and fifty percent of the interviewees have a cell phone.

The Value of Water Coalition educates and inspires people about how water is essential, invaluable, and needs investment. The Coalition has come together to advance positive solutions to our nation’s pressing water challenges. Members include: Alexandria Renew Enterprises, American Society of Civil Engineers, American Water, American Water Works Association, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, Black and Veatch, Brown and Caldwell, Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority, CH2M, DC Water, Dow Chemical Company, Hampton Roads Sanitation District, Hazen and Sawyer, Kansas City Water Services, LA Sanitation, Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, MWH Global, National Association of Clean Water Agencies, National Association of Water Companies, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Philadelphia Water Department, Plumbing Manufacturers International, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Suez, US Water Alliance, Veolia, WaterReuse, Water Environment Federation, and Xylem, Inc. Learn more about the Coalition at www.thevalueofwater.org.

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.