



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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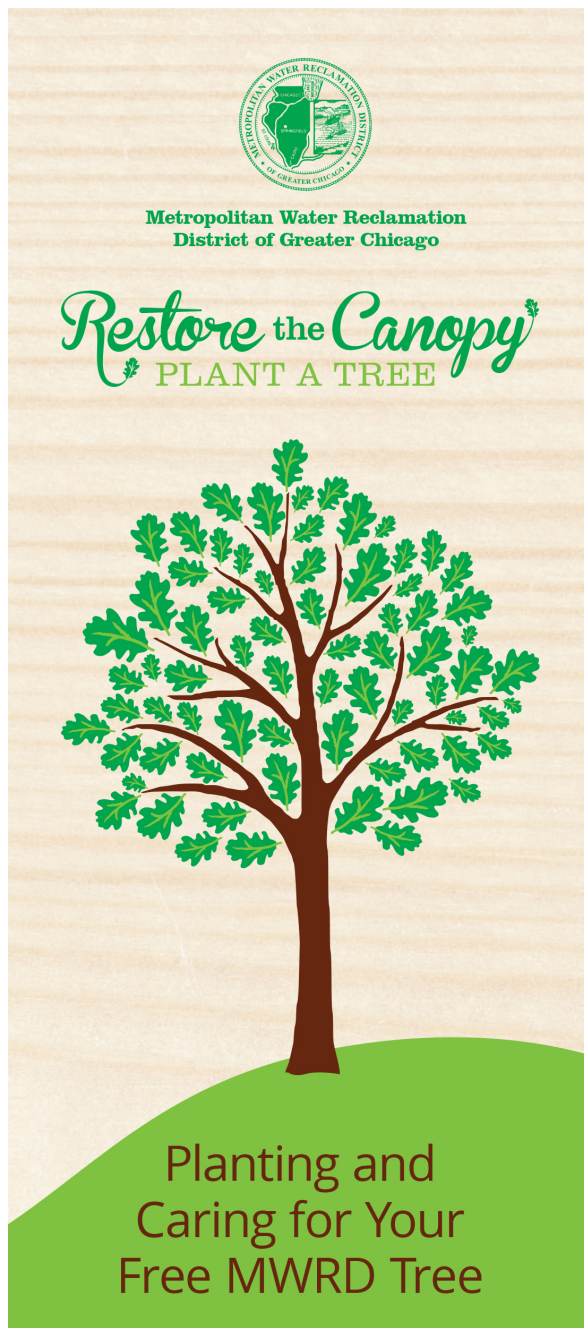
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## MWRD is working with communities to replenish our green canopy



A new initiative designed to restore the urban canopy and manage Cook County's stormwater kicked off this month as the first 100 oak tree saplings provided by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) were distributed at the Midlothian Rain Ready Open House held at the Midlothian Public Library and at the Wheeling Earth Day celebration held at Heritage Park.

The MWRD's new program is called "Restore the Canopy, Plant a Tree" and offers 18" oak saplings to municipalities, community groups, and schools to distribute and plant throughout Cook County. Trees are an important part of Chicago's ecosystem. They provide rain absorption, and a canopy that reduces city heat island effects. They also absorb carbon gasses and produce oxygen.

"There is no limit to the benefits that trees, especially oak trees, provide to our region," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "Trees can keep neighborhoods cooler and lower energy bills, provide oxygen and shade, buffer noise, provide protection from wind, and most importantly in our case, absorb water. We invite schools, community groups, and municipalities in our area to participate, and together build our canopy."

The saplings are available in individual pots or in bulk bags of 100 bare root saplings. Planting and care instructions, along with additional information regarding the benefits of trees, will be provided with each delivery. With advanced notice, the saplings can be picked up at MWRD facilities or delivered.

"As Midlothian seeks to replenish its tree canopy which was severely impacted by the emerald ash borer, these trees are a tremendous resource for our residents," said Karen Kreis, Village of Midlothian Trustee. "All of the saplings that MWRD provided for the Midlothian Rain Ready event were distributed, and we look forward to distributing trees at Midlothian's Annual Clean-Up Day on May 14, 2016." *(continued)*

The MWRD will distribute free trees every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to noon beginning May 4 at the Calumet, Egan, Hanover Park, Kirie, O'Brien, and Stickney Water Reclamation Plants. In addition, the MWRD will distribute free trees during public tours and open houses on Saturday, May 21 at these same plants.

The initiative can be especially useful to public and private schools as it offers teachers and students the opportunity to restore our region's depleted tree canopy through an educational experience that extends beyond the classroom. The saplings can be planted on school grounds or at students' homes as a way to educate students on how they can protect their environment and meet the MWRD's goals in stormwater management.

The MWRD is mapping the location and neighborhoods of where the canopy is being restored so a street address of where trees are planted is requested upon receipt.



*Jesse Quilantan is excited to be the first Cook County resident to receive and plant a free MWRD oak tree sapling.*

To find out more about how your school, organization or municipality can participate in this program, please contact the MWRD Office of Public Affairs at [public.affairs@mwrld.org](mailto:public.affairs@mwrld.org) or by calling (312) 751-6633.

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## Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

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*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrld.org](http://www.mwrld.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*