



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

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MWRD workshop convenes road salting experts *Protecting the water environment starts with protecting local streets*

WHO: The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD), municipal public works departments, transportation agencies and private contractors.

WHAT: Industry leaders and experts will join the MWRD to discuss and learn the best road salting strategies that protect motorists and the environment.

WHERE: Egan Water Reclamation Plant, 550 S. Meacham Rd., Schaumburg, IL.

WHEN: Tuesday, May 1, 2018, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

It has been a long winter and between freeze-thaw cycles, vehicle use and salt applications, local streets have sustained heavy wear and tear, but the same can be said for nearby waterways adjusting to salt runoff and its effect on aquatic life and water quality. Industry leaders and experts will join the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to discuss and learn best management practices for deploying road salt, listen to expert speakers, network with other municipalities and learn how to make and apply a salt brine at a workshop to be held May 1 at the MWRD's Egan Water Reclamation Plant in Schaumburg.

In its ongoing mission to protect the local water environment, the MWRD in conjunction with the Illinois EPA, coordinates stakeholders to address chloride levels in area waterways as part of the Chicago Area Waterways Chloride Initiative Work Group. Rock salt (sodium chloride) and salt runoff are harmful to wildlife, insects, surface water and soil

along roadways and sidewalks. Sodium chloride and impurities in road salt end up in runoff from rain, melted snow and ice, and are released into local environments by the splash and spray caused by vehicles. Road salts travel onto vegetation, into the soil and groundwater, through storm drains and into the surface waters that the MWRD aims to protect. Chloride in surface waters can be toxic to many forms of aquatic life, including fish, insects, amphibians and macroinvertebrates, which live in water for all or part of their lives and are a significant part of the food chain for fish and birds. Studies show that chlorides in urban streams have increased substantially over the last 50 years, especially in northern metropolitan areas like Chicago.

The discussions and lessons shared together at the workshop will help local municipalities and transportation agencies work together to develop a solution that is beneficial to the motoring public, the waterways and local communities.

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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 used water treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.