



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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For immediate release

October 21, 2019

MWRD hits the road to commemorate 130 years of vital work

First road show stop in Des Plaines inspires STEM and water careers



(Back, from L to R): MWRD Commissioner Marcelino Garcia, State Sen. Laura Murphy, Commissioner Cam Davis and President Kari K. Steele welcomed visitors of all ages to learn about the role of the MWRD in protecting their water, as part of a road show tour across Cook County.

In its ongoing effort to educate the communities it serves in protecting the water environment, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) has taken its work on the road, commemorating 130 years of service to its taxpayers and the planet.

MWRD commissioners and staff joined State Sen. Laura Murphy (28th District) to host an inaugural road show at the Science and Arts Academy in Des Plaines to teach visi-

tors of all ages about the MWRD, how to find a job and how to conduct business with the MWRD.

“As we celebrate 130 years in 2019, we are hitting the road to inform our taxpayers on the role we play in their everyday lives,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “We manage the water that flows down drains from across our region and protect our water resources by designing, building and maintaining the critical infrastructure that improves our quality of life.”

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MWRD hits the road to commemorate 130 years of vital work, *cont.*

By relocating its talented professionals to a local school, the MWRD used the opportunity to celebrate 130 years and inspire STEM and water industry careers. Founded in 1889 as the Sanitary District of Chicago, the MWRD was started 81 years prior to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The MWRD was formed primarily as a public health agency to reverse the flow of the Chicago River and protect drinking water sources in Lake Michigan and the Chicago River from contamination. That role has expanded today as the MWRD now serves approximately 5.25 million residents from Chicago and 128 suburban communities. The MWRD treats 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater per day through new innovation and resource recovery technology, while serving as the regional authority for stormwater management at a time when unpredictable storms and climate change demand a range of skills and attention to sustainable urban planning.

“It’s important for us to engage with the communities we serve because we can’t protect those water resources alone,” said Commissioner Cam Davis. “We thank Sen. Murphy and everyone for joining us at the Science and Arts Academy and we look forward to hitting the road a few more times this fall.”

At the road show event, MWRD engineers from the nearby Kirie Water Reclamation Plant were there to explain how the MWRD transforms wastewater into clean water. Other engineers were on hand to explain local and regional stormwater management projects and the MWRD’s biosolids and composting process, an example of recovered resource, like water,

which is developed after being removed from the treatment process and later used as a soil amendment.

Human resources staff discussed MWRD positions, upcoming examinations and how to apply for jobs. MWRD procurement managers engaged with business owners on future work opportunities. The MWRD Public Affairs Community Education team provided STEM activities for kids through technology and art. The MWRD Monitoring and Research Department also educated participants on how the MWRD measures and tests water quality. In addition, the Cook County Sheriff’s Office held a successful collection drive, taking in electronics for proper disposal and paper for safe shredding. Unwanted medicine was also collected for proper disposal, fulfilling an MWRD mission to keep drains drug free.

For those who missed the first roadshow, there are still opportunities to catch the MWRD on the road with stops to come on the following dates:

- Saturday, Oct. 26, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, 3857 W. 111th St., Chicago.
- Saturday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. to noon, at Von Steuben Metropolitan High School, 5039 N. Kimball Ave., Chicago.

Unwanted medicine, electronics and paper will be collected and destroyed at both events.



Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwr.org) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.