



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Green parking lots represent commitment from MWRD and La Grange to protect environment and address stormwater



(L-R) Laurie Braun, Peg Peterson and Bruce Whiteway, La Grange Environmental Quality Commission; Beth Augustine, La Grange Village Trustee; Thomas Livingston, La Grange Village President; Kari K. Steele, MWRD President; Ryan Gillingham, Director of Public Works; Matt Moffitt, Baxter & Woodman Consulting Engineer; Andri Peterson, Village Manager, cut the ribbon on the new permeable parking lot at Village Hall, 53 S. La Grange Rd., LaGrange.

A partnership between the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and village of La Grange will yield more stormwater protection and heighten awareness for sustainable solutions to mitigate flooding.

Construction was recently completed on two parking lots located at 53 S. La Grange Rd. and 20 W. Harris Ave. in La Grange, using interlocking concrete permeable pavers that together retain nearly 95,000 gallons of stormwater per rain event. Built over soil and aggregate base and bedding layers, the pavers reduce stormwater runoff, clean and filter stormwater and improve water quality in addition to introducing a sparkling new amenity that improves the driving surface and attracts customers to local businesses.



Already in use, the new permeable parking lot in La Grange is designed to retain stormwater.

“We commend the village of La Grange for joining us in addressing record rain fall and promoting resiliency through these impressive green infrastructure installations,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “Changing weather patterns pose a real threat to our way of life, and investing in more sustainable long-term solutions where possible is a trailblazing decision that will mark the way of the future and help us alleviate flooding concerns in urban environments.”

No stranger to innovative and sustainable construction practices, La Grange has a growing collection of permeable parking lots, following the 2013 construction of similar pavement at a commuter lot at Burlington Avenue and Brainard Avenue.

“The Village of La Grange appreciates the collaborative relationship that we have with the MWRD and are proud to be a recipient of the funds which allows us to further both the Village’s and MWRD’s environmental goals,” said Village President Tom Livingston. *(continued)*

Green parking lots represent commitment from MWRD and La Grange, *cont.*



Beth Augustine, Village Trustee, Thomas Livingston, Village President, and MWRD President Kari K. Steele stand on the new permeable parking lot at 53 S. La Grange Rd., LaGrange.

The parking lots, totaling \$498,000, come as a result of the MWRD's Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program in which the MWRD annually calls for local municipalities and public agencies to submit project applications that utilize different forms of green infrastructure. Under terms of the agreement, the MWRD agreed to fund nearly \$300,000, toward the project, with the village paying for engineering and the remainder of the construction costs, and performing long-term maintenance.

"Permeable parking lots may go unnoticed most days or may have little human interaction other than the soles of our shoes and wheels of our tires, but these parking lots are accomplishing much more than you see on surface," said MWRD Commissioner Cameron Davis.



The permeable parking lot under construction earlier this year.

"These lots represent mindful environmental planning that addresses climate change and prepares future generations for drier tomorrows. Let's hope more communities take note."

Green infrastructure performs as a stormwater management tool designed to capture water and allow it to infiltrate into the ground before it would otherwise enter the traditional conveyance system. These engineered installations store, infiltrate, and evaporate stormwater, thereby mimicking the natural water cycle. The project is expected to reduce local flooding in the area, and provide educational opportunities for local residents on the benefits of green infrastructure.

Officials with the MWRD and La Grange celebrated the new lot alongside the village's popular weekly farmer's market, which the MWRD has also participated on occasion to distribute free oak tree saplings to promote other forms of green infrastructure, as part of the MWRD's Restore the Canopy initiative to offset the loss of the tree population and absorb more stormwater. <https://youtu.be/V4ihRnUu9sI>

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.