



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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African American History Month kicks off at the MWRD with flag raising ceremony

Neither a pandemic nor a snowstorm prevented festivities from taking place as the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) raised the African American flag for the second year to kick off African American History Month.

President Kari K. Steele, Vice President Barbara McGowan, and Commissioners Cameron Davis, Kimberly Du Buclet, Eira Corral Sepúlveda and Mariyana Spyropoulos spoke in front of the MWRD headquarters, 100 E. Erie St., for a flag raising ceremony to kick off African American History Month. The commissioners were joined by Dr. Elizabeth Lockhart, executive director of the Arthur Lockhart Resource Institute, an organization enriching, empowering and encouraging the veterans of the Austin/West Garfield community. To see footage of the event, visit the MWRD's [YouTube channel](#).

MWRD commissioners and staff distributed calendars, the MWRD's new children's book "Where Does IT Go?", and African American pins and flags to drivers passing by the building. Despite the pandemic, the MWRD is committed to maintaining the annual African American History Month celebrations that began over 30 years ago. These traditions represent the MWRD's pledge toward water equity, resiliency and service toward protecting the water environment for more than five million people each day across Cook County.

"We have again dedicated the entire month to recognizing and applauding the contributions of African Americans," said Vice President McGowan, who was inducted into the Civil Rights Hall of Fame in



From L to R: MWRD Commissioner Eira Corral Sepúlveda, Commissioner Kimberly Du Buclet, Executive Director Brian Perkovich, Vice President Barbara McGowan, President Kari K. Steele, Commissioner Cameron Davis and Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos help raise the flag to commemorate African American History Month.

2020. "This is the second annual raising of the African American Flag to support the black community and highlight our commitment to diversity."

Although traditional gatherings are not *(continued)*

African American History Month kicks off at the MWRD, *cont.*



MWRD Vice President Barbara McGowan explains why the MWRD is raising the African American Flag for the second year.



Cars drove by the MWRD's main office building on Erie Street to watch a flag raising ceremony to kick off African American History Month and mark the MWRD's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

possible due to the pandemic, the MWRD will continue celebrating African American History Month in unique ways. Each weekday, a video commemorating the contributions of African Americans will be shared on the MWRD's YouTube channel and posted on the website mwrdd.org.

“We know circumstances are different this year than most but raising the flag and honoring the month

gives us pause to recognize our heritage and the many contributions of African Americans in society today,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “We thank those leaders who have gone before us and we strive each day to follow in their footsteps to make our world a better place through clean water and healthy communities.”

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at mwrdd.org.