



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD Commissioner Spyropoulos, HACIA observe sustainable achievements during Millennium Park tour

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago Chairman of Finance Mariyana Spyropoulos recently joined Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA) members in touring Millennium Park, a sustainable, environmentally-friendly attraction located in the heart of downtown Chicago.

Millennium Park Executive Director Ed Uhler, the tour's leader, pointed out the park's ecological attributes. One of the most unique features is the park's Great Lawn which was designed in layers hidden below the surface which allow it to dry within minutes after a rainstorm. In addition to serving as a manmade water collection device, the Great Lawn also serves as the roof of a parking garage that offers thousands of parking spaces.

Over 80 percent of rain water is recycled at the park. One of the ways it does this is through Crown Fountain. The fountain is a porous pool that collects and recycles water while simultaneously serving as an in-



Commissioner Spyropoulos with Ed Uhler, Executive Director of Millennium Park, standing near Crown Fountain.

teractive feature that randomly shows the faces of 1,000 Chicagoans.

Scattered among the native landscaping are trees that are designed to capture stormwater, along with drought resistant plants that can adapt to harsh Midwestern winters.

The Lurie Garden provides a five acre model of responsible horticulture, providing a healthy habitat for a wide variety of native plants and wildlife. This plant community pro-

vides safe shelter for migratory birds, butterflies, honeybees, and beneficial insects. With its ecological design, less water is required than traditional gardens.

“Millennium Park is a great example of what government can accomplish to be sustainable yet innovative,” said Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos. “The city obviously thought outside the box, and this has become a great asset to the Chicago area.”