



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

Press Release

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For immediate release

June 10, 2022

IWEA and WEF shower MWRD staff and leadership with awards



Illinois Water Environment Association (IWEA) President Kelly Lockerbie (left) and IWEA Awards Committee Chair Brooke Kenny (right) present MWRD President Kari K. Steele with the IWEA Public Official Award for 2022.

Reuniting in person for the first time in three years, the annual Illinois Wastewater Professionals Conference held recently in Springfield also became an opportunity to highlight and honor the work of many talented and dedicated leaders at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD).

The MWRD was well represented through a number of awards handed out by the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and Illinois Water Environment Association (IWEA), which saluted MWRD President Kari K. Steele with the 2022 Public Official Award.

“It is with great pleasure that we present the Illinois Water Environment Association’s Public Official Award to President Steele,” said IWEA President Kelly Lockerbie. “On behalf of IWEA, we’d like to thank President Steele for her commitment to improving the water environment and preserving Illinois’ natural resources.”

In a brief presentation at the MWRD, Lockerbie credited President Steele for her ability to steer the MWRD in the right fiscal course during an unpredictable economy, earning a AAA credit rating from Fitch Ratings. IWEA leadership also praised President Steele for the MWRD’s commitment to the environment, stormwater management, meeting stringent permits, being named a “Utility of the Future” and continued focus on the Space to Grow program, which works with other local partners to convert schoolyards at Chicago Public Schools to permeable, vibrant places to play and learn.

“Thank you to IWEA for this honor and attention to our important work at the MWRD protecting the water environment,” said President Steele. “Congratulations also to our award-winning staff members and other WEF and IWEA water professionals who show up to work each day dedicated to serving our Illinois communities and protecting our water resources for future generations.”

(Continued.)

Leadership Awards *(continued from previous page.)*

Other MWRD award winners included:



Maureen Durkin

IWEA honored MWRD Managing Civil Engineer Maureen Durkin with the Golden Manhole Collection Systems Award in recognition of her dedication and professionalism in promoting the collections systems field. Ms. Durkin works in the MWRD's Local Sewer Systems Section, where she oversees administration of the MWRD's Watershed Management Ordinance, which includes the MWRD's Infiltration and Inflow Control Program and regulations for construction of sanitary and combined sewer tributaries to the MWRD's system. She is a member of the Collection Facilities Committees of both WEF and IWEA.



Adam Gronski

IWEA honored MWRD Assistant Director of Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Adam Gronski with the Kenneth C. Merideth Memorial Award for going above and beyond as a member of IWEA throughout the years. Mr. Gronski has worked at the MWRD since 1994, contributing to both the Engineering and M&O Departments. While in Engineering, he worked on the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP), where he oversaw construction on the Little Calumet Deep Tunnel Leg and multiple projects associated with the McCook Reservoir. While in M&O, Mr. Gronski was the head of the technical services unit which addressed regulatory and permitting aspects for the operation of the MWRD's seven WRPs. He has also managed the MWRD's Kirie WRP in Des Plaines and Hanover Park WRP, and currently oversees four of the MWRD's seven WRPs, in Skokie, Schaumburg and Des Plaines and Hanover Park.



Edward Jankun

IWEA honored MWRD Associate Civil Engineer Edward Jankun with the Outstanding Young Professional Award for his contribution as a young water environment professional. Mr. Jankun has 10 years of engineering experience split between the solid waste and wastewater industries. Since joining the MWRD in late 2017, Mr. Jankun has been an active member of both the Water Environment Federation and the IWEA, particularly with the Students and Young Professionals Committees of both organizations.



Tiffany Poole

WEF honored MWRD Supervising Environmental Chemist Tiffany Poole with the Laboratory Excellence Award, recognizing her outstanding performance, professionalism, and contributions to the water quality analysis profession. Ms. Poole manages a staff of analysts in the MWRD's Monitoring and Research Department's Analytical Laboratory Division, which analyzes aqueous, sediment, and soil samples collected in daily operations and submitted by industrial waste users. She serves as the laboratory manager for the Industrial Waste Analytical Laboratory Section at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant.

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

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