



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Ribbon cutting, fireworks launch Midlothian's newly improved Memorial Park

Midlothian Village President Sharon Rybak, Midlothian Park District Board President Michael Kohlstedt, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos and other officials and veterans helped inaugurate a new era for the Midlothian Park District as an improved Memorial Park was unveiled during a grand opening ceremony held on June 28. The park is located at 145th and Kedzie.

The park's renovation includes two bocce ball courts, three bring-your-own bean bag games, fitness equipment, additional walking trails, a paved parking lot and five lighted softball/baseball fields configured in a hub. The Park District used MWRD biosolids to renovate the fields. Last year, MWRD soil scientists surveyed the site and analyzed the soil to develop a restoration plan which included the application of 516 dry tons, or 26 semi truckloads, of MWRD class A biosolids. The Park District has been using between two to 26 truckloads at 22 dry ton biosolids per truckload annually for the past eight years.

MWRD biosolids are a safe byproduct of the water treatment process that can be used to improve soil fertility and soil moisture holding capacity. The biosolids provide tremendous benefits and are commonly used to fertilize agricultural land, provide organic matter and nutrients to sod farms and nurseries, and for the construction and maintenance of golf courses, parks, and athletic fields.

Jerry Gillis, Midlothian Superintendent of Parks and Grounds, said "having used the biosolids over the past eight years, we knew how effective they were. Using them for our newly constructed ball fields made sense. We not only saved the cost of purchasing black dirt, but we have beautiful, lush, weed-free fields this spring thanks to the biosolids."

Commissioner Spyropoulos said that the MWRD appreciated the opportunity to work with Midlothian representatives on this project and that other Cook County communities should contact her office to learn more about using biosolids in their communities.

"We would be happy to send our scientists out to any Cook County community to do soil analyses to help improve their area soil," said Commissioner Spyropoulos. "Biosolids can be an excellent replacement for expensive fertilizers."

Following the official ribbon-cutting ceremony, the Park District hosted the annual fireworks display to honor local veterans and Independence Day.



*(L-R) MWRD Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos, Midlothian Park District Board Member Chuck Neilson, Park Board President and Village Clerk Michael Kohlstedt, Village President Sharon Rybak, Midlothian Superintendent of Parks and Grounds and Village Trustee Jerry Gillis, Village Trustees Karen Kreis and Gary L'Heureux participate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony to inaugurate the new Memorial Park facilities.*



*(L-R) MWRD Soil Scientist Olawale Oladeji, Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos, and Exec. Director David St. Pierre were on hand to inaugurate the new Memorial Park facilities in Midlothian.*

Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwr.org](http://www.mwr.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. **Our water environment, Take it personally.**