



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD hosts stormwater expo as part of flooding study in southwest suburbs

Date set for April 26 at Lake Katherine Nature Center & Botanic Gardens

- Who:** Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
- What:** Free stormwater expo
- When:** Tuesday, April 26, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Where:** Lake Katherine Nature Center & Botanic Gardens, 7402 W. Lake Katherine Drive, Palos Heights

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is working with communities for improved stormwater management. As part of a continuing study to address flooding issues in the southwest suburbs, the MWRD will host a free stormwater expo on Tuesday, April 26, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Lake Katherine Nature Center & Botanic Gardens, 7402 W. Lake Katherine Drive in Palos Heights.

A team of MWRD engineers and consultants are hosting the expo as part of the Roberts Road Area Stormwater Master Plan Pilot Study, one of five studies the MWRD is conducting throughout Cook County. The Roberts Road area covers Justice, Palos Hills, Hickory Hills, Bridgeview and portions of Bedford Park. Residents of these communities are encouraged to attend the free expo and learn about green infrastructure solutions to urban flooding issues. Demonstrations on actions homeowners can take to reduce flooding on their properties, including information about rain gardens, rain barrels, gardening with native plants, and pervious pavers will be included. As part of a new MWRD initiative to restore the urban canopy, visitors will also have the opportunity to take a home a free oak tree sapling to be planted and used in the MWRD's efforts to better manage stormwater.

"When it comes to flooding, we want to let residents know that we are all in this together," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "Every action that one homeowner takes to reduce rainwater runoff reduces the flooding threat to neighbors downstream. If we can direct more rain water to soak into the ground, we can protect sewers and ditches from being overloaded and as a result, protect properties from floods and backups."

As a result of heavy rainstorms and changing weather patterns, when the capacity of area waterways and sewers are exceeded there simply is nowhere else for the water to go. While traditional gray infrastructure improvements, like storm sewers, can be effective in addressing flooding problems, green infrastructure practices which capture water where it falls can also help reduce stormwater runoff and its impacts. Green infrastructure can be placed in public places and on residential properties to reduce flooding at that property and downstream.

The intent of the MWRD's master plan study is to develop a community-based and supported plan to address local flooding. The expo is one component of the study's various outreach engagements. Through this study, MWRD is evaluating a wide range of traditional stormwater and green infrastructure concepts to reduce urban flooding. After surveying and meeting with residents last fall, the team has prepared a suite of materials designed to help local communities talk about flooding issues and possible solutions to residents in constructive ways. These materials include information designed to assist in overcoming common barriers to adopting green infrastructure practices on private property and will be made available to all municipalities and departments in this project area.

For more information about the stormwater expo, contact MWRD Public Affairs at (312) 751-6633 or email public.affairs@mwrld.org.

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