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The MWRD of Greater Chicago's Nutrient Recovery Facility earns Top Honor from Water Environment Federation

The MWRD of Greater Chicago's Nutrient Recovery Facility at Stickney Water Reclamation Plant improves local waterways by significantly reducing waterway phosphorus levels through recovery and reuse of vital nutrients

CHICAGO, IL (October 2, 2017) – The world's largest nutrient recovery facility that improves water quality of the Chicago Area Waterway System while reducing downstream phosphorus discharges into the Gulf of Mexico has won a coveted Project Excellence Award from the Water Environment Federation (WEF). The honor will be presented to the project's owner, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD); Black & Veatch, the facility's design-builder; and technology provider, Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies.

The project was instrumental in transitioning the largest wastewater treatment facility in the world — the MWRD's Stickney Water Reclamation Plant, located in Cicero, Illinois — into a resource recovery facility. Using Ostara's nutrient recovery technology, Black & Veatch worked with the MWRD and Ostara to design and build the nutrient recovery facility, which is reducing nutrient loads to the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Des Plaines River, Illinois River, and ultimately the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico.

"We are extremely honored to have received this recognition from WEF and have been fortunate to partner with the MWRD of Greater Chicago and Black & Veatch to build the largest nutrient recovery facility in the world, providing a cost effective and environmentally progressive solution to support the MWRD's clean water mandate," said Dan Parmar, President and CEO of Ostara. "This solution will ultimately help protect the Mississippi River Basin and provide a revenue stream to the District from the sale of the high value phosphorus fertilizer recovered."

The differentiator with Ostara's nutrient recovery solution implemented at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant is that not only does it reduce phosphorus loads within the operational system of the plant by recovering these nutrients into a high value, marketable fertilizer, but nutrient loads are also reduced downstream into the Mississippi River to help address phosphorus deposits in the Gulf.

"The MWRD is thrilled to receive the Project Excellence Award from the Water Environment Federation. We thank our partners at Black & Veatch and Ostara for helping us achieve this honor and developing the innovations that protect our environment and benefit our taxpayers," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "The nutrient recovery facility represents cleaner waterways locally and abroad, creates an instant revenue stream, provides for the agricultural community and aids the planet in facing a scarcity of phosphorus and harmful algae blooms."

Designed to treat up to 1.44 billion gallons of water each day and serving more than 2.3 million residents including the central part of Chicago and 46 suburban communities, the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant is pioneering this critical industry shift from water treatment to recovery for reuse.



“This facility richly illustrates how innovation combined with decades of water and wastewater treatment expertise can produce new efficiencies as well as wins for the environment,” said Mike Orth, Executive Managing Director for the Americas in Black & Veatch’s water business. “We are honored to be recognized by WEF and to be partnered with Ostara and the MWRD.”

The award will be presented during WEF’s Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC 2017), the world’s largest annual water quality conference and exhibition, Sept. 30-Oct. 4 in Chicago. Based in Alexandria, Virginia, WEF bestows the annual Project Excellence Award to outstanding programs and product execution in the water sector. Among other criteria, projects are evaluated on innovation, sustainability and community benefit.

Editor’s notes:

- The award will be presented on Tuesday, Oct. 3, at WEFTEC 2017 in Chicago, Illinois.
- The fertilizer produced — Crystal Green® — is the first fertilizer technology to provide a continuous release of phosphorus, which is virtually water insoluble and uniquely Root-Activated™. Crystal Green releases nutrients only in response to organic acids (citrates) produced by growing roots, fertilizing plants on demand. This unique mode-of-action increases fertilizer efficiency and minimizes nutrient loss, significantly reducing leaching and runoff which further helps to protect the Chicago Area Waterway System from nutrient pollution.
- WEFTEC is recognized as the world’s largest annual water quality technical conference and exhibition, providing extensive educational opportunities and unparalleled access to the field’s most cutting edge technologies and services.
- The Black & Veatch-designed Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS) Initial Expansion project in Orange County, CA, an alternative water supply system that bolsters water security for a large portion of Southern California, won a WEF Project Excellence Award in 2016.

About Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies Inc.

Ostara helps protect precious water resources by changing the way cities around the world manage nutrients in wastewater streams. The company’s Pearl® and WASSTRIP® technology recovers phosphorus and nitrogen at municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants and transforms them into a high-value, eco-friendly fertilizer, Crystal Green®. The process greatly reduces nutrient management costs and helps plants meet increasingly stringent discharge limits while improving operating reliability. Crystal Green is the first continuous release granular fertilizer to provide Root-Activated™ phosphorus, nitrogen and magnesium (5-28-0-10Mg), and is marketed globally to professionals in the turf, horticultural and agriculture sectors. Ostara operates multiple facilities throughout North America and Europe and opened the world’s largest nutrient recovery facility in partnership with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago in Spring 2016. For more information, visit www.ostara.com and www.crystalgreen.com.

About Black & Veatch

Black & Veatch is an employee-owned, global leader in building critical human infrastructure in Energy, Water, Telecommunications and Government Services. Since 1915, we have helped our clients improve the lives of people in over 100 countries through consulting, engineering, construction, operations and program management. Our revenues in 2016 were US\$3.2 billion. Follow us on www.bv.com and in social media.



About the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (www.mwrd.org) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for used water treatment and stormwater management in an 883.5 square mile service area in Cook County, Illinois. The MWRD's mission is to protect the health and safety of the public in its service area, the quality of the water supply source (Lake Michigan), improve and protect the quality of water in watercourses, protect businesses and homes from flood damages, and manage water as a vital resource. The MWRD is committed to achieving the highest standards of excellence in fulfilling its mission. A designated Utility of the Future, the MWRD recovers resources that promote a clean and sustainable environment, provide a return to taxpayers and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through both tried and true practices as well as transformative technologies.

Ostara Media Contact Information:

DEBRA HADDEN | +1 604 637-9031P | +1 604-240-3196 M | dhadden@ostara.com

Black & Veatch Media Contact Information:

CHRISTOPHER CLARK | +1 913-458-2778 P | +1 816-674-0572 M | clarkca@bv.com
24-HOUR MEDIA HOTLINE | +1 866-496-9149

MWRD Media Contact Information:

ALLISON FORE | +1 312-751-6626 P | Allison.fore@mwrd.org