

Entry: 483

"Where Does IT Go?" animation

Started at: 9/23/2021 02:42 PM - Finalized at: 10/6/2021 09:24 AM

<b>Page: NEAA Nomination Form</b>
APPLICATION DEADLINE: <b>Friday, October 22, 2021, 11:59 pm PST</b>
<b>All fields indicated by a red asterisk (*) must be completed</b>
<b>Category</b> Public Information & Education: Video
NOMINATING AGENCY'S INFORMATION
<b>Name &amp; Title of Individual Submitting this Application</b> Brian A. Perkovich, Executive Director
<b>Submitting Agency's Name</b> Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
<b>State (2letters)</b> IL
<b>Service Area Population of Submitting Agency</b> 5 million
<b>Social Media (Indicate all that applies)</b> Communications Person's Name & Email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
<b>Communications Contact</b> Brian A. Perkovich
<b>Communications Contact's Email</b> Perkovichb@mwr.org
<b>Facebook</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MetropolitanWaterReclamationDistrict">https://www.facebook.com/MetropolitanWaterReclamationDistrict</a> ( <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MetropolitanWaterReclamationDistrict">https://www.facebook.com/MetropolitanWaterReclamationDistrict</a> )
<b>Instagram</b> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/mwr_of_greater_chicago/">https://www.instagram.com/mwr_of_greater_chicago/</a> ( <a href="https://www.instagram.com/mwr_of_greater_chicago/">https://www.instagram.com/mwr_of_greater_chicago/</a> )

**Twitter**

<https://twitter.com/MWRDGC> (<https://twitter.com/MWRDGC>)

**Agency Logo - Hi-Res Picture (jpg; or .png)**

Download File ([https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/2c53672a-6267-447d-aa96-f39676c5f92e?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22MWRD\\_Seal\\_with\\_Name\\_Blue.jpg%22&response-content-type=image%2Fjpeg&Signature=tIbgvFdW51pH8TWU220Y%2BooQSx0%3D](https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/2c53672a-6267-447d-aa96-f39676c5f92e?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22MWRD_Seal_with_Name_Blue.jpg%22&response-content-type=image%2Fjpeg&Signature=tIbgvFdW51pH8TWU220Y%2BooQSx0%3D))

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**PROJECT / INDIVIDUAL NOMINEE'S INFORMATION****Name of Nominated Project / Program or Nominee (as it will appear on the NEAA award)**

"Where Does IT Go?" animation

**Has this project / program ever been submitted for NEAA recognition in the past?**

No

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION****Narrative Description: Project / Program or Individual (attach pdf, limited to 4 pages, double-spaced, 12pt)**

Download File (<https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/c0fb93d5-e89a-4f9a-a03b-c7dc9381b5fd?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22MWRD%20Project%20Narrative%20%20video.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=xyR2j6HEVC5sP7Io6i8g7ihXzfA%3D>)

AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22MWRD%20Project%20Narrative%20%20video.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=xyR2j6HEVC5sP7Io6i8g7ihXzfA%3D)

**Supplemental Information Included - i.e. images, video, add'l document (Optional)**

Yes

**Supporting Material (PDF, limited to 4 pages)**

Download File ([https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/587196ff-8054-452b-85ae-08400765f19c?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WDIG\\_poster.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=pbozUv%2FtViyiiERPswXx702YOwI%3D](https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/587196ff-8054-452b-85ae-08400765f19c?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WDIG_poster.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=pbozUv%2FtViyiiERPswXx702YOwI%3D))

AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WDIG\_poster.pdf%22&response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&Signature=pbozUv%2FtViyiiERPswXx702YOwI%3D)

**Supporting Material - Video (provide link)**

[https://youtu.be/ed\\_kMwLK9q8](https://youtu.be/ed_kMwLK9q8) ([https://youtu.be/ed\\_kMwLK9q8](https://youtu.be/ed_kMwLK9q8))

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

Please attach a third-person article (350-400 words MS doc) - something that a layperson would understand, describing your project / program to be posted on the front page of NACWA's website as part of our "Member Spotlight" section.

**Member Spotlight Document (MS Word)**

Download File (<https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/ea902ba2-fb7c-426e-9c15-e5d34670d60b?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Member%20Spotlight%20MWRD.docx%22&response-content-type=application%2Fvnd.openxmlformats-officedocument.wordprocessingml.document&Signature=mDjdpZDPGXA2BID0Gk47D0BJ7pw%3D>)

**Member Spotlight Hi-Res Picture (jpg; or .png)**

Download File ([https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/5e4adc6e-3947-457b-8703-f387256a278c?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WhereDoesItGo\\_cover.jpg%22&response-content-type=image%2Fjpeg&Signature=htqdSyosuMv8LrJ%2BTWkDo07BVAo%3D](https://vo-general.s3.amazonaws.com/1791819d-f6fc-46c3-b1b7-a1d38a2bd4d4/5e4adc6e-3947-457b-8703-f387256a278c?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ4PRWO26HAX3IOCA&Expires=1723306002&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22WhereDoesItGo_cover.jpg%22&response-content-type=image%2Fjpeg&Signature=htqdSyosuMv8LrJ%2BTWkDo07BVAo%3D))

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**PROJECT POSTER or PROJECT WEBSITE**

Please include a hi-res PDF or website link of your Project to be displayed on NACWA's NEAA website (example of last year's honorees (<https://www.nacwa.org/about-us/awards/national-environmental-achievement-award-program/neaa-2021-honorees>))

**Project Poster / Website (indicate at least one)**

Project Website

**Project Website**

<https://mwr.org/where-does-it-go> (<https://mwr.org/where-does-it-go>)

**APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION**

Please contact [btrombino@nacwa.org](mailto:btrombino@nacwa.org) (<mailto:membership@nacwa.org>; [btrombino@nacwa.org](mailto:btrombino@nacwa.org)?subject=Who%20is%20Our%20NACWA%20Primary%20Contact%20for%20the%20NEAA%20application%3F) if you do not know the name of your NACWA Representative (SUBJECT: Who is Our NACWA Primary Contact for the NEAA application?

**Signature of Individual Submitting Application (pdf/jpg)****Name of Submitting Agency's NACWA Representative**

Brian A. Perkovich

**Title of Submitting Agency's NACWA Representative**

Executive Director

**Email of Submitting Agency's NACWA Representative**

PerkovichB@mwr.org

**Signature of Submitting Agency's NACWA Representative (pdf/jpg)**

**Does this Project/Program involve another NACWA Agency?**

No

**Please review your application prior to finalizing it. All fields with a red asterisk (\*) must be completed. If you have any questions in regard to submitting your application, please contact Bredy Trombino (<mailto:btrombino@nacwa.org?subject=Application%20Questions%20-%20PreCompletion>) at 202.533.1820.**

**Project Narrative: “Where Does IT Go?” animation by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago**

You flush your toilet, pour something down a sink, or wash a load of laundry, but have you ever wondered what happens to all of that dirty water after it leaves your home? The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) answers that question and more in its newly released children’s animation inspired by its storybook titled “Where Does IT Go?”. The animation is available in English, Spanish and Chinese and can be viewed at [youtube.com/c/metropolitanwaterreclamationdistrict](https://youtube.com/c/metropolitanwaterreclamationdistrict).

“Where Does IT Go?” introduces the MWRD’s Water Science Explorers, a cast of fictional characters, Yadira, Paul, and Jessica. These students are curious and wonder what happens when they flush the toilet. They embark on a special mission in a magical vehicle to uncover the mystery of where pee, poop, and toilet paper go.

The animation was created in-house by the MWRD Office of Public Affairs (PA) which also created the illustrations for the storybook. The book has been distributed for free to over 14,000 people; while it was designed and distributed to students enrolled in grades four and up, the animation reaches students of all ages through its visuals, sounds, and motions.

The “Where Does IT Go?” animation is the first of its kind for the MWRD. The PA team was seeking a creative and colorful way to explain the wastewater treatment process to its 5.2 million residents and especially to its K-12 community. The PA team created a script that includes actual dialogue the team encounters when speaking with students during community outreach events. For example, when asked what they think happens after they flush the toilet, many students have said, “I always thought pee and poop went down to the sewer and found its way to the ocean.”

An understanding of the residents in Cook County required that we appeal to languages that are most reflected in our service area, including Chinese, English, and Spanish. In addition to relatable dialogue, one of the featured voices in the Spanish animation is Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda, who was the first Latina to join the MWRD Board of Commissioners. In addition, her son performed the role of “Paul.”

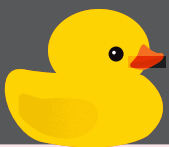
“As the daughter of immigrants, I know that language barriers can prevent families from feeling comfortable engaging with government offices,” said Commissioner Corral Sepúlveda. “By creating and publishing this animation, the more than 1 million Spanish-speakers of Cook County will be able to see themselves reflected in MWRD’s mission and service delivery. That is why it was particularly special for me and my son to be a part of the recording!”

Recording the voice actors was no easy feat during the pandemic, but technology allowed staff to coordinate actors and equipment safely and successfully while following CDC guidelines. As a result, the video integrates exciting sound effects, a moving soundtrack and actual photos and video, including historical photos from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century to drone footage filmed by the PA team’s drone pilots.

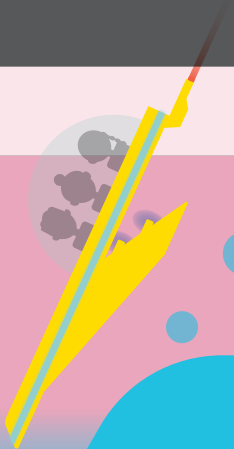
The PA team began promoting both the book and animation to 1,800 MWRD staff earlier this year. A dedicated landing page at [www.mwrd.org/where-does-it-go](http://www.mwrd.org/where-does-it-go) was developed and outreach components included e-blasts; social media posts; mailing fliers to hundreds of libraries, schools, and municipality leaders; as well as distributions at community outreach events. The promotional strategy included a timely release of each video – the English version was released in April 2021 to celebrate Earth Day; the Chinese version was released in May 2021 to celebrate Asian Pacific American

Heritage Month; and the Spanish version was released in September 2021 to celebrate Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month. The goal is to reach as many Cook County students as possible with this innovative tool which explains complex subject matter in a fun and entertaining way while inspiring the next generation of water professionals.

“We are happy to offer this comprehensive learning experience for students,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “Just like the book, the animation is great educational entertainment that anyone can view from the comfort of their home. Cook County parents, guardians, and educators have been encouraged to host their own family night or STEM watch party.”



Metropolitan Water  
Reclamation District  
of Greater Chicago



## HOW TO HOST A “WHERE DOES IT GO?” STEAM MOVIE NIGHT

**About the Film:** You flush your toilet, pour something down a sink, or wash a load of laundry, but have you ever wondered what happens to all of that dirty water after it leaves your home? The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) answers that question and more in its newly released children’s animation inspired by its storybook titled “Where Does IT Go?” (WDIG). Join the MWRD’s Water Science Explorers, Yadira, Paul, and Jessica, as they embark on a special mission in a magical vehicle to uncover the mystery of where pee, poop, and toilet paper go.



- Set the date and use animation teasers, book website, and #MWRDwheredoesitgo to promote event online.
- Order FREE print copies of the WDIG storybook (available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Polish) from the MWRD for event attendees to receive at the event. (Open to Cook County residents, while supplies last.)
- Ask students to bring 1-2 empty rolls of toilet paper to event for a STEAM activity.

### Planning the event



**Visit MWRD YouTube channel** and pick version (English, Chinese, Spanish) to show.

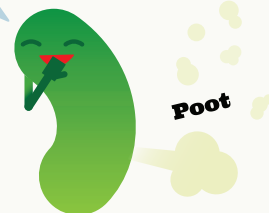
- Take photos and post to social media. Tag the MWRD and use #MWRDwheredoesitgo so that we can repost or email us at [communityeducation@mwr.org](mailto:communityeducation@mwr.org).
- After the animation ends, play a trivia game. Keep score and send the winner’s name to the MWRD for a special WDIG gift, which will be mailed to the winner for free. (Open to Cook County residents and subject to availability.)
- Distribute **print copies** of WDIG and encourage students to complete the STEM activities inside the book at a later date.

### Hosting the event



- Who are the Water Science Explorers?
- What adventure do the Water Science Explorers take?
- Why should we clean wastewater?
- Why does Yadira say that “microbes are the stars of the wastewater treatment process”?
- Where is the final stop for the Water Science Explorers? What is the local waterway at this location?
- What are three ways that animals rely on our local waterways?

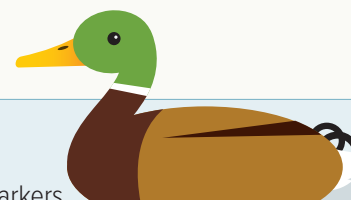
### Trivia Questions



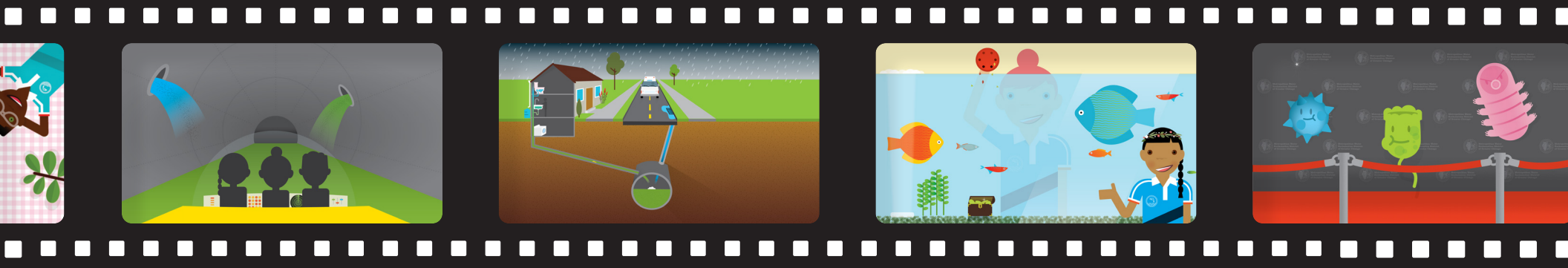
### Closing STEAM Activity: STEM + ART = STEAM

Celebrate the animals who rely on our local waterways. They include fish, ducks, turtles, frogs, etc.

Recycle empty toilet paper roll and use to create your favorite animal from our local waterways. Tools needed include toilet paper roll, markers, glue, construction paper, scissors, and eye stickers. Create sample animals and prepare and cut helpful shapes so students can easily assemble animal. For older students, ask them to make three dimensional animals.








MWRD Commissioner Eira L. Corral Sepúlveda  
September 29 at 3:30 PM · 🌐

As a part of Latinx Heritage Month, the [Metropolitan Water Reclamation District](#) published a Spanish animation of our “Where Does IT Go?” storybook, which features both me and my son as voice actors! 🎤

As the daughter of immigrants, I know that language barriers often prevent families from feeling comfortable engaging with government offices. By creating and publishing this animation, the more than 1 million Spanish-speakers of Cook County will be able to see themselves reflected in MWRD’s mission and service delivery. Knowing this made being a part of the recording even more special! 🇺🇸💙💜



YOUTUBE.COM  
WDIG Animation SPANISH  
¿Adónde va? “ADÓNDE VA?” es la historia de tres jóvenes exploradores acuáticos que viajan en...

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
May 4 · 🌐

This morning we observed Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month with a visit to Ward Elementary School in Bridgeport and Haines Elementary School and Pui Tak Christian School in Chinatown. Commissioner Josina Morita and Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos unveiled our new children’s book, “Where Does IT Go?” now translated in Chinese. In addition to distributing books, they also handed out seeds of solidarity that represent the unity that the MWRD is building with Asian American communities, as well as our commitment to improving water quality and enhancing open space through green infrastructure. Once planted and blooming, the flowers will serve as a reminder that there is no room for hate and that we must all stand together to support our diverse community. The storybook, which features Ping Tom Memorial Park along the South Branch of the Chicago River in Chinatown, educates readers about the wastewater treatment process, what to flush and our commitment to protecting our water environment, while also encouraging students to take an interest in STEM-related careers. #MWRDWhereDoesITGo? #WaterScienceExplorers #asianpacificamericanheritagemonth

**THE HEGEWISCH TIMES**  
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www.hegwtimes.com

Volume 6 - Issue 1 April 1, 2021 Published Quarterly

How did we get here? Page 2 Facebook.com/hegwtimes Page 5

**Cub Scouts of Pack 773**  
Learning about water treatment, where it goes

by Lisa Sowa-Downs, staff writer (hegwtimes@gmail.com)

Cub Scouts of Pack 773 participated in a new educational incentive of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago to teach children about the water treatment process, facilities and equipment. Each scout received a copy of “Where Does it Go?” a colorful book that tells the story of three young water science explorers who travel in a magical ship through the pipes, sewers and tanks that are used to clean dirty water. At the end of the story, there were STEM workbook activities and puzzles for the students to complete. Rebecca Woolley, public affairs specialist, met with the scouts via Zoom to discuss the water treatment process and job opportunities with MWRD. The scouts also received a complimentary storybook bag. To bring this program to your classroom or scouting program, contact Rebecca Woolley at woolley@mwrdd.org.

## Storybook Review

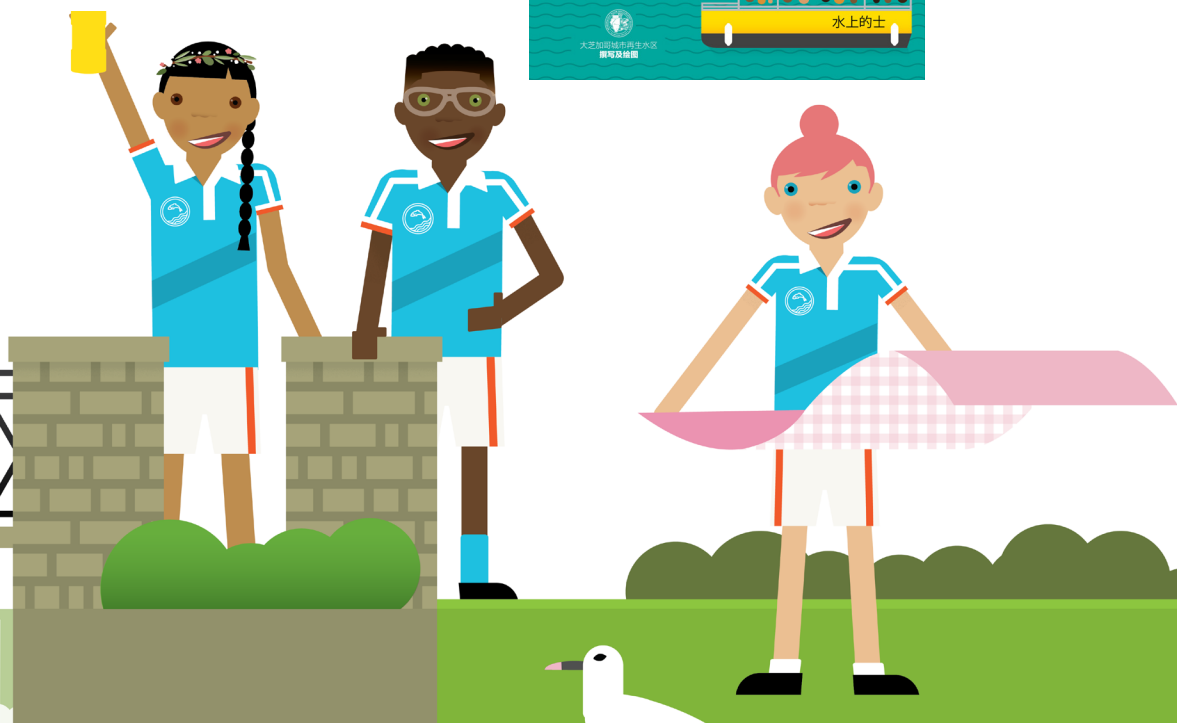
“What I love about the “Where Does it Go?” storybook is that it can be revisited again and again, exploring different concepts with the young reader every time, from the water cycle, to microbiology, to basic physics, to social responsibility, just to name a few. Using water treatment as the jumping off point, it spurs the young reader to be curious about the world around them: about their environment, about the value of resources, and about how their actions have consequences.”

TOM KUNETZ  
Past President of the  
Water Environment Federation

PARTNERSHIP WITH



**Coalition For A Better Chinese American Community**  
華埠更好團結聯盟





**Member Spotlight: “Where Does IT Go?” animation by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago**

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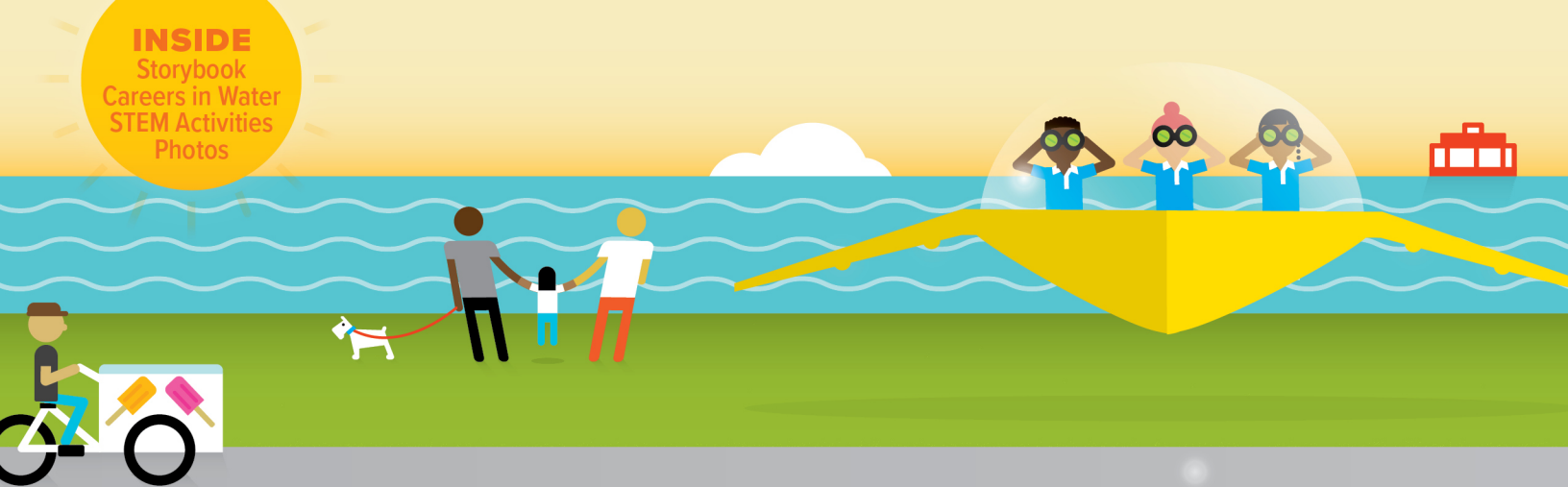
The animation was created in-house by the MWRD Office of Public Affairs (PA). The animations are based on illustrations created for the storybook, which has been distributed for free to over 14,000 people. While the book was designed for students in grades fourth and up, the animation reaches students of all ages.

The “Where Does IT Go?” animation is the first of its kind for the MWRD. The PA team was seeking a creative and colorful way to explain the wastewater treatment process to its 5.2 million residents and especially to its K-12 community. The PA team created a script that includes actual dialogue the team encounters when speaking with students during community outreach events.

Recording the animation was no easy feat during the pandemic, but technology allowed staff to coordinate actors and equipment safely and successfully while following CDC guidelines. As a result, the video integrates exciting sound effects, a moving soundtrack and actual photos and video, including historical photos from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to drone footage filmed by the PA team’s drone pilots.

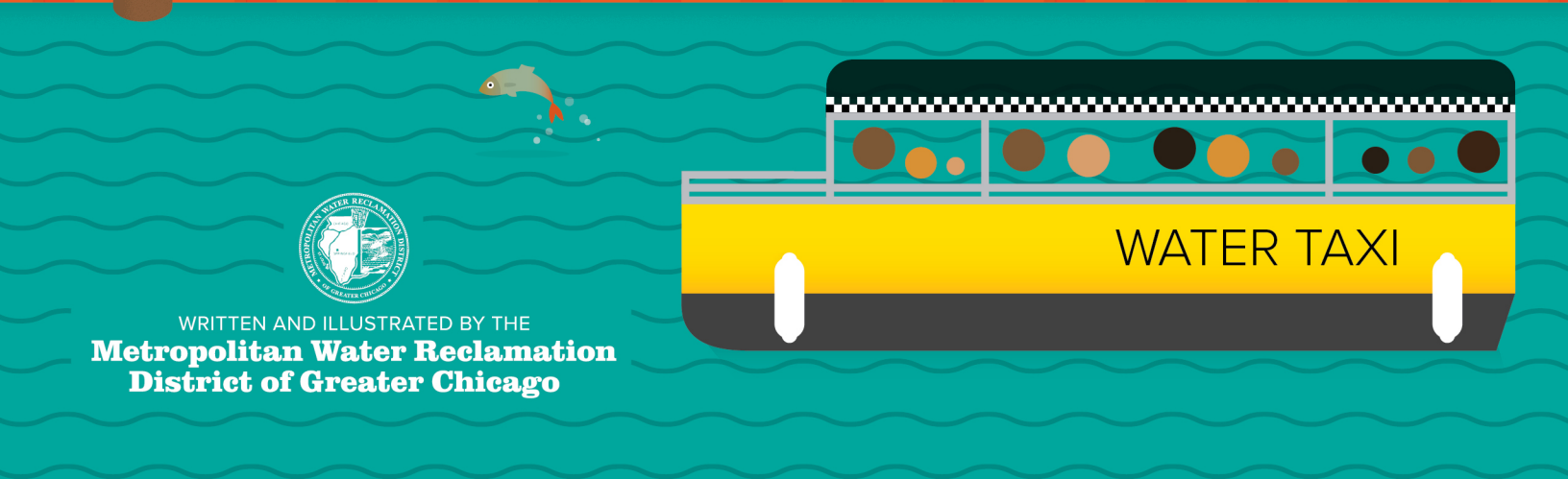
The PA team has promoted the animation via a custom webpage at [www.mwrd.org/where-does-it-go](http://www.mwrd.org/where-does-it-go); e-blasts; social media; mailings to libraries, schools, and municipality leaders; and at virtual and outdoor community outreach events. The promotional strategy incorporated the timely release of each video – the English version was released in April 2021 to celebrate Earth Day; the Chinese version was released in May 2021 to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month; and the Spanish version was released in September 2021 to celebrate Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month. The PA team’s goal is to reach as many Cook County students as possible with this innovative tool which teaches complex subject matter in a fun and entertaining way, while inspiring the next generation of water professionals.

**INSIDE**  
Storybook  
Careers in Water  
STEM Activities  
Photos



# WHERE DOES **IT** GO?

ADVENTURES WITH THE WATER SCIENCE EXPLORERS



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY THE  
**Metropolitan Water Reclamation  
District of Greater Chicago**