

YP TOUR OF THE MWRD



The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) hosted tours of the latest phase of the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP). The Young Professionals Committee attended a tour of the Mainstream Pumping Station and the McCook Reservoir, the last and largest of the three reservoirs, on October 15, 2017. The tour provided a complete overview of the TARP system and illustrated how the system protects area waterways from pollution and mitigates flooding.

TARP is a system of deep tunnels and reservoirs that collect combined stormwater and sewage during large rain events that would otherwise overflow into waterways. The stored water is pumped from TARP to the water reclamation plants to be treated before being released to waterways.

Construction of TARP has spanned more than 40 years and has required innovative approaches to drilling and tunneling. The first phase of TARP began in 1975 and consists of nearly

110 miles of 150 –300' deep rock tunnels that provide 2.3 billion gallons of storage volume. Phase I was completed in 2006. The second phase of TARP consists of three reservoirs that will improve the pollution control benefits of the Phase I tunnels. The Majewski Reservoir, completed in 1998, provides 350 million gallons of storage and the Thornton Reservoir, completed in 2015, provides another 7.9 billion gallons. The YP Committee toured Phase I of the McCook reservoir, which went online in December 2017 and provides 3.5 billion gallons of storage. Phase II will take another 10 years to complete and will provide another 6.5 billion gallons of storage. Once complete, TARP will have a total capacity of 20.55 billion gallons.

TARP is one of the country's largest civil engineering projects ever undertaken and benefits 3.9 million residents in Chicago and 51 surrounding communities! Have any site visit ideas for 2018? Let us know! 💧