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MSD Waterway Protection Tunnel nears completion *with capping of working shaft*

On May 16, MSD's largest infrastructure project to date—the Waterway Protection Tunnel—passed a construction milestone with the capping of the working shaft, an essential step allowing operation of the tunnel.

Six pieces of preformed concrete weighing a total of 220 tons forming a 48-foot diameter concrete cap, were put into place by crane. Throughout construction, the working shaft was used to lower both machinery and workers 200-feet down to the worksite.

The surface restoration work is ongoing, with the tunnel expected to go into service in early June. When operational, the 18-stories deep, four-mile-long, 20-foot diameter tunnel will provide protection from combined stormwater and wastewater overflows for the public and the Ohio River and Beargrass Creek.

“The Waterway Protection Tunnel will ultimately prevent 439-million gallons of a mixture of rainwater and wastewater from overflowing and polluting the Ohio River and Beargrass Creek in a typical rainfall year. Helping our waterways be safe and clean is beneficial to residents now and well into the future,” said MSD Executive Director Tony Parrott.

Background

MSD's Waterway Protection Tunnel stretches four miles from 11th and Rowan streets to Grinstead Drive and Lexington Road. The tunnel can store up to 55 million gallons of combined stormwater and wastewater until sewage treatment capacity is available, preventing the water from passing untreated into the Ohio River and Beargrass Creek.

Upon full completion of work and site restoration, the land at 11th and Rowan streets will be transferred to Waterfront Development Corporation for the future Phase IV expansion of Waterfront Park. The site includes MSD's Rowan Pump Station, which serves a practical purpose on the inside and doubles as an architectural feature and a colorful light show on the outside.



About MSD

The Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) works to achieve and maintain clean, environmentally safe waterways for a healthy and vibrant community. The organization's more than 670 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro, and wastewater service in portions of Bullitt and Oldham counties. In addition to operating and maintaining Louisville Metro's sewer system, floodwall system, water quality treatment centers and flood pumping stations, MSD invests in hundreds of infrastructure improvement projects each year, plants more than 1,000 trees and other vegetation annually to enhance water filtration and reduce runoff, and provides numerous outreach programs to inform and educate the community about protecting our waterways.