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MEDIA ADVISORY

January 8, 2018

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Carving a Tunnel 18 Stories Underground — MSD Ready to Break Ground on Waterway Protection Tunnel

WHAT: Louisville MSD will break ground to begin construction of a 2.5-mile tunnel that will be 18 stories underground. The Waterway Protection Tunnel will eliminate 351 million gallons of sewage and rainfall from combining and entering local waterways in a typical rainfall year.

WHEN: Wednesday, January 10, 1:45 PM

WHERE: 200 North 12th Street (north of the flood wall). The event will be inside a tent (with heat).

MORE: This groundbreaking will highlight the innovation behind the tunnel project and outline the construction schedule. Louisville Metro Mayor Greg Fischer and MSD Executive Director Tony Parrott will explain how the tunnel project will work over the next two years and highlight its benefit to the community.

The Waterway Protection Tunnel is part of MSD's larger effort to prevent sewage from overflowing into Louisville's waterways. MSD's basins and tunnel will capture rainwater and sewage during rain events. The underground storage areas keep the mixture of rainwater and sewage until the rain subsides. Then, the mixture is gradually released back into the sewer system for treatment.

The Waterway Protection Tunnel will eliminate 22 combined sewer overflow points that put 351 million gallons of sewage and rainfall in a typical year into the South Fork of Beargrass Creek and the Ohio River.

By 2020, MSD will capture and treat 98 percent of the combined sewer overflow volume in a typical year of rain. Combined sewer overflows will then total only 343 million gallons in a typical year. That is substantially less than the two- to nearly six-billion gallons of combined sewer overflows per year that MSD has reported in recent years.

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 600 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro. 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.