Breaking ground on MSD’s Waterway Protection Tunnel are (left to right): Joe Heron, Copper & Kings American Brandy founder and CEO; Deborah Bilitski, Waterfront Development Corp. Deputy Director; Bill Hollander, Metro Council District 9; Cheri Bryant Hamilton, Metro Council District 5; Barbara Sexton Smith, Metro Council District 4; Tony Parrott, MSD Executive Director; Greg Fischer, Louisville Metro Mayor; Angela Akridge, MSD Chief Engineer; Cyndi Caudill, MSD Board Chair; Jonathan Steflik, Black & Veatch Engineering Manager; Semek Oginski, Shea Traylor JV Project Manager; Ken Blair, Traylor Brothers Senior Manager.

MSD breaks ground on innovative Waterway Protection Tunnel

The January 10 groundbreaking for the Waterway Protection Tunnel at 200 North 12th Street brought city officials and local stakeholders together to kick off a massive and innovative undertaking that will help maintain safe, clean waterways for Louisville Metro. The 2.5-mile tunnel will be 18 stories underground and able to store up to 37 million gallons of combined rainwater and sewage.

The Waterway Protection Tunnel will capture 22 combined sewer overflow points that currently discharge 351 million gallons of mixtures of sewage and rainwater in a typical rainfall year into the South Fork of Beargrass Creek and the Ohio River. The tunnel will allow capture of 98 percent of these overflows and store them until the rain subsides and sewer system capacity is available. The mixtures will then be pumped back into the sewer system and conveyed to MSD’s Morris Forman Water Quality Treatment Center resulting in a safer, cleaner environment and waterways for our community.

An Innovative Solution

The Waterway Protection Tunnel is part of MSD’s Consent Decree that includes building storage basins across the community to help reduce sewer overflows. The tunnel is an innovative solution that replaces three storage basins originally planned 10 years ago to be located near Lexington Road and Payne Street; Story Avenue and Main Street; and, 13th and

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Rowan streets. Now, advances in technology and reductions in the cost to build the tunnel make it feasible to use a tunnel instead of three basins. The tunnel will have more storage capacity than the three basins for approximately the same cost, but construction will be less disruptive to Louisville’s Main Street arts and business district, Butchertown’s business district, Irish Hills residential community, and area traffic during the two-year construction period.

The tunnel shafts, which are 44 feet in diameter, are currently under construction.

Tunnel boring to begin in October
Refurbishing of the boring machine is taking place now in Pennsylvania. The boring machine will arrive in parts to the construction site in September, carried on 40 semi-tractor trailer trucks. The parts will be lowered into the shaft and reassembled underground. Boring should be underway in October.

The spinning bore head can cut through as much as 300 feet of rock in a day. The pieces of this rock will be carried to the surface on a conveyor system. The rock will be transported to a site in Indiana and used as construction fill. This work will take place 24 hours a day, five to six days a week.

We invite you to view an animated video of the boring process and to keep up with this project by visiting LouisvilleMSD.org/tunnel.

The tunnel is scheduled for completion by December 31, 2020.
Making a difference in the health of our streams

Working together, we can achieve safe, clean waterways. Make sure that you safely and properly dispose of expired prescription drugs and other medications, like unsealed cough syrups, eye drops and nose sprays; and bulk or loose capsules and pills. MSD reminds our customers that it is never safe to flush pharmaceutical products down the toilet or drain due to the following:

- If they seep into the drinking water and the groundwater, they can contaminate the environment.
- If such products are flushed down the drain, they can kill bacteria or produce drug-resistant bacteria in sewage treatment plants and septic systems.

Instead of flushing, you can safely dispose any unused prescriptions at the following locations:

- Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office in downtown Louisville, 531 Court Place, Suite 600, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM.
- St. Matthews Police Department, 3940 Grandview Avenue, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM.

Project DRI (Drainage Response Initiative) crews will soon begin drainage improvement work on:

- Cherian Drive/Janlyn Road
- Mitchell Lane
- Fort Sumter Court

Interested in working for one of our construction contractors?
For more information visit MSDJobLink.org.

Customer Compliments

MSD Customer Service Representatives Leila Cunningham and Johonne Hamilton provided excellent service when I called about a basement backup. I made several calls and had lots of questions. They were courteous and professional. Thank you to your staff for offering pleasant service during a stressful situation.

— Debbie Poulter

I would like to thank you for your prompt service and courteous employees. I called for service about a backup in the sewer line for my parents. An MSD crew responded in less than an hour.

The initial team diagnosed the problem. They went out of their way to make sure my 90-year-old father not only understood the issue but also was knowledgeable about what needed to be done to fix the situation.

The follow-up crew was also exceptional. They worked quickly to remove the roots that had invaded my parents’ sewer line. They kept my father informed — explaining everything, relieving his worries.

My father and I would like to commend Barry Bivin, Casey Bowlin Jr., Tadd Gilmore, Darrell Goodwin, Walter Jackson and MSD for excellent customer service.

— Geneva Rogde
Plan your rain garden now

Rain gardens help infiltrate rainwater before it reaches the drainage system, and reduce the amount of stormwater and pollutants running into storm drains, combined sewers or streams.

For your FREE Rain Garden Guide, contact MSD Customer Relations at 502.587.0603, or online at CustomerRelations@LouisvilleMSD.org.