



**TRI-COUNTY
WATER**

CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

P.O. Box 347
Montrose, Colorado 81402

Renter or Owner Responsibility

Who is responsible for paying a water bill for service to a rental unit? District policy states that the owner of the water tap, who owns a "water use right", is ultimately responsible for all charges incurred by anyone using water through that tap and meter on the domestic water system.

Bills are mailed directly to the owner or to the renter at the owner's request. Delinquent notices are mailed to both parties. Once a year the District will leave a note at the service address as a final effort to avoid termination of service.

The District has some suggestions to help owners avoid future rental utility problems:

- ◆ Owners should protect themselves by collecting a damage deposit from a renter.
- ◆ Owners should call all utility companies for outstanding bills before a deposit is returned to a renter.

If you have any questions about our process or the District's policies, please give us a call and we will be glad to help you.

An "acre-foot" of water is the amount of water required to cover one acre of ground at a depth of one foot or 325,900 gallons.



Seasons Greetings

Tri-County Water *Connections*

Conservancy District

Cost of Service Study

The Cost of Service (COS) Study has been completed and presented to the Board of Directors. The Study shows the cost of our services, to supply domestic water to our customers, is \$2.16 per thousand gallons of water. Currently, the District uses a declining rate schedule; high volume users pay less than \$2.16 per thousand while others pay more than this target average. The Board's goal is to gradually move toward the actual cost of service over the next few years. To move toward this goal and minimize impacts to customers, the lowest rates are eliminated or raised to move toward the average COS. The table indicates prices effective January 1, 2001.

Water Rates

0 - 6,000	gallons \$21.60
7,000 - 12,000	gallons \$2.80 per 1000 gals.
13,000 - 20,000	gallons \$2.25 per 1000 gals.
21,000 - 60,000	gallons \$1.70 per 1000 gals.
60,000 and more	gallons \$1.50 per 1000 gals.

Minimum Rates

5/8" or 1" meter	\$21.60 - 6,000 GAL.
1 1/2" OR 2" METER	\$45.15 - 15,000 GAL
Availability of Service	\$12.00 - 5/8" meter only

Most District customers will notice no change to their current bill. Residential customers using less than 60,000 gallons per 56 days will not be affected at this time. Taps billed at the Availability of Service rate will experience an increase from \$10.80 to \$12.00 per billing cycle.

Customers using more than 60,000 gallons per billing period will experience an increase.

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Tri-County Water
Conservancy District
647 North 7th Street
P.O. Box 347
Montrose, Colorado 81402

970-249-3369
970-249-8277 Fax
tcw@montrose.net

Please write, call, or fax Tri-County Water with any questions, concerns, comments, or helpful hints.
WE VALUE YOUR INPUT!



Proposed dams on the Uncompahgre River & Dallas Creek would have inundated the town of Ridgway.

Reflections

A continuing series of the history and development of the Tri-County Water Conservancy District.

The plan presented in the Dallas Creek Project Feasibility Report would have developed a total water supply of 75,300 acre-feet annually, including 60,300 acre-feet for irrigation and 15,000 acre-feet for municipal use. In this plan, three reservoirs would have been constructed in the upper reaches of the project area; Ridgway Reservoir (146,500 acre-feet) on the Uncompahgre River and Dallas Creek, Dallas Divide Reservoir (17,600 acre-feet) on Pleasant Valley Creek, and Sneva Reservoir (825 acre-feet) at a site off-stream from Cow Creek. Each reservoir would have received part of its water supply from diversions of nearby

streams and each would have supplied one or more distribution canals.

This plan was the basis for Congressional authorization of the project in 1968 by the Colorado River Basin Act. However, advance planning studies indicated that the site proposed for Ridgway Reservoir was not geologically satisfactory as bedrock was discovered at more than 290 feet below the river bed. Because of the geological problems and to avoid the inundation of the town of Ridgway, this site was rejected. After intensive geologic and engineering investigations the dam site was moved downstream to its present location at a point just below the mouth of Alkali Creek.

As time went on, it also became evident that further plan changes would be necessary because of shifts in national and regional priorities away from irrigation and toward municipal and industrial water use.



Cost of Service Study - cont' page one

The COS Study also revealed current tap fees were inadequate to support current and future needs of the District. The Board resolved to split the tap fee into two parts: plan investment and cost of installation. Cost of installation will vary for each service depending on the District's actual cost to install the tap. Tap fees will increase on January 1, 2001 as shown here.

The COS Study will be available to anyone wishing a copy. We will be glad to answer any questions that you have about the COS Study. We are making every effort to make this transition as easy as possible, however, the reality of the situation is the change is

imperative for the District to continue to provide the quality, cost effective service each customer deserves.

Meter	Plant Investment
5/8"	\$3,000
1"	\$7,000
1 1/2"	\$14,000
2"	\$22,000

Future tap fees will be plant investment fee, listed above, plus actual cost of installation.



Water Chat

◆ What are cross-connections and why are they a problem?

A cross-connection is a connection between a drinking water pipe and a potential contaminant or pollutant. Here is a common example: a hose hooked to a chemical sprayer is turned on and the water pressure drops. The chemical is drawn back into the house and subsequently into the public water system, causing a serious threat to public drinking water. This problem can be prevented by using an attachment on your hose called a back-flow-prevention device or maintaining a sufficient air gap.

Residences connected to the public drinking water system and a well at the same time are violating cross-connection control regulations and policies. Well water is not monitored or treated and can pose a threat.

If you have any questions, please contact Tri-County Water or the Colorado Department of Health. Removing or avoiding cross-connections is vital to insuring safe drinking water.

◆ Is it safe to drink from my garden hose?

No! A vinyl garden hose contains chemicals that maintain its flexibility. These chemicals are harmful to humans and animals. There is a "food-grade" plastic hose which will not contaminate the water. It is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Recreationalists should use this type of hose to hook up to a drinking water tap at a campsite.

Remember, even a well flushed "food-grade" hose can cause problems. Make sure the hose ends are clean of chemicals and germs from previous uses.



Programmatic Biological Opinion

Preparation for an environmental assessment of the Gunnison River Basin is under way. The Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with the assistance of several state and local entities,

PBO is an environmental assessment conducted to define future water depletions in the Gunnison River

are preparing a Programmatic Biological Opinion. This is an environmental statement to

define future allowable consumptive use of water resources and mitigation efforts required to protect any and all endangered species that reside in the geographical area being considered. The Gunnison River Basin includes all of the Gunnison River drainage basin from the Continental Divide above Taylor Park Reservoir to the confluence of the Gunnison and Colorado Rivers at Grand Junction, including all tributaries to the Gunnison and the Uncompahgre River drainage.

During this process, which will take about two years, an effort will be made to define future water depletions (consumptive) to the river basin and the impacts that those depletions will have on the endangered fish species known to reside in the Gunnison River.

The objective of the PBO is to provide an environmental assessment that will facilitate future water resource development in the drainage basin. Environmental assessment is required by federal law any time a federal permit is issued. This document will be used as the environmental assessment for future depletions of water resources to the basin. As entities like Tri-County Water embark on future development of water resources, the PBO will significantly reduce the cost of that development by streamlining the environmental review process.

