



**TRI-COUNTY
WATER**

CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

P.O. Box 347
Montrose, Colorado 81402

Metering System Conversion

In an effort to maintain water rates and make operations more efficient and accurate, the Tri-County Water District Board has decided to convert existing meter reading systems to a Radio Read System (RRS). This conversion is expected to take two to four years with an estimated investment of \$1.3 million dollars for the District. The Board will not increase rates to finance the project.

Currently, water meters are read manually by looking at each individual meter. The new RRS sends electronically transmitted signals from an encoded register to a meter reader truck. Once all the data is collected from the field, the information is downloaded into the main office computer for accounting and billing purposes.

The electronic system is fast and accurate. The District believes the automated system will save time

and manpower, thus resulting in more accurate accounting of water usage with less opportunity for errors and confusion.

The water meter conversion project is to begin this fall in the Idlewild Subdivision south of Montrose. A new meter and transmitter will be installed in each meter pit. Once the system has been tested and proven, the conversion of the entire District will proceed.

The Board and staff at Tri-County will make every effort to keep you apprised of the project and thanks you in advance for your cooperation. Again, there will be no water rate increase as a result of this project. If you have any questions, please give us a call at the District office.



Tri-County Water *Connections* Conservancy District

Drought Continues

Despite a wet spring and summer for the Uncompahgre Valley, drought continues to plague the area. There are still water shortages in the Gunnison Basin. The Uncompahgre and Upper Gunnison rivers were short of water from early July through early September. During this time, a call was placed on the rivers to fulfill senior water rights.

Ridgway Reservoir filled early this year due to a quick and healthy spring run-off. The spring melt, from the San Juan Mountains, lasted a



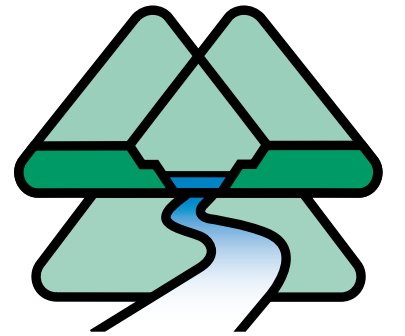
Uncompahgre Valley Irrigation-
Early 1900's

steady 45 days. This enabled Tri-County Water to store 30,000 acre feet of water. With the cooperative efforts of Tri-County Water, the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users, Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, irrigation needs were met by the Uncompahgre River system.

Though Ridgway Reservoir is a relatively small pool at the base of a large watershed, its operations helped keep the "call" off the Gunnison Basin until July. This allowed the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users and Bureau of

Reclamation to store 85,000 acre feet of water in Taylor Park and 550,000 acre feet in Blue Mesa Reservoirs. While water storage is on the increase, the reservoirs are only half full. It could take several years of average precipitation to again fill the reservoirs in the Gunnison and Colorado River Drainages.

Through careful operation of all area projects, water storage is increasing. Continued cooperation among water entities can only help the drought situation. Other methods, which keep the water system flowing, include the reduction of flows in the Gunnison Tunnel during the early summer, restricted water usage and a little help from nature.



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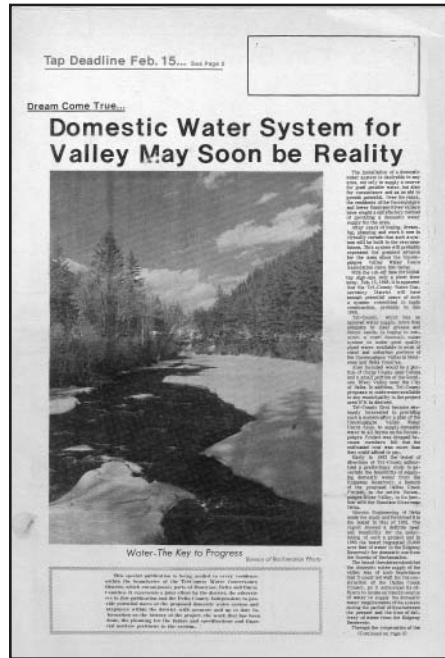
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Meter Conversion

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Conservancy District**
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**Please write, call, or fax Tri-County
Water with any questions, concerns,
comments, or helpful hints.**

WE VALUE YOUR INPUT!



1968 Special Insert-
Delta County Independent

Reflections

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

Domestic Water Supply System

Over the years, the residents of the Uncompahgre and lower Gunnison River valleys sought a satisfactory method of providing a rural domestic water supply for the area. This included the installation of a domestic water system to supply a source of good potable water.

To see such needs made a reality, the Tri-County Water Conservancy District was organized in 1957. The organization's purpose is to support and promote local efforts associated with the Colorado River Storage Project, and to work with the federal government on a program to repay the cost of projects. Dallas Creek was a participating project originally planned under the sponsorship of Tri-County.

After years of preliminary work, the District Board determined that the rural domestic water supply for the valley was of such importance that it could not wait for the construction of the Dallas Creek Project. The Board was authorized to find an interim source of water for the area. With the aid of the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association and the Bureau of Reclamation a contract was signed with Tri-County to provide the interim water.

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Pumping Charges

Many people call Tri-County Water with questions concerning billing. One of the most asked questions is about the pumping charge. That part of Tri-County's system south of Odgen road requires the use of pumps for water delivery. Those customers benefiting are charged a fee to offset the expense. There are 12 lifts to customers living at our highest elevations.

Tri-County uses the following formula to determine each customer's fee: \$0.30 per thousand gallons used per pumping level. The example to the right should help you calculate your pumping charge.

The pumping charge is not a revenue generating tool for the District, but rather a break even deal with money going to pay either San Miguel Power or Delta-Montrose Electric Associations. If you have questions about billing, call the District office.

TRI-COUNTY WATER P.O. BOX 347 MONTROSE, CO 81402 647 N. 7TH STREET (970) 249-3369		ACCOUNT FROM TO 07/14/03 09/08/03 PREVIOUS CURRENT USAGE 2761 2817 56		TRI-COUNTY WATER P.O. BOX 347 MONTROSE, CO 81402 PRE-SORT FIRST CLASS MAIL US POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 6 MONTROSE, CO 81402	
ACCOUNT NAME		PREV. BAL. 0.00 WATER 120.60 PUMPING 16.80 OTHER 0.00 PREVIOUS BALANCE 0.00 PLEASE PAY 137.40	WATER 120.60 PUMPING 16.80 OTHER 0.00	DUE DATE 09/22/03 PLEASE PAY 137.40 SERVICE ADDRESS Hwy 550	
PLEASE WRITE ACCOUNT NO. ON YOUR CHECK AND RETURN WITH THIS STUB		Hwy 550 Montrose, CO 81401			

Water Chat

- How much water would accumulate on a quarter-acre lot, 180 feet by 60 feet, if an inch of rain falls?

About 7,000 gallons of water.

- How does nature recycle water?

The natural water cycle is simply the evaporation of surface water that forms clouds and falls to earth as precipitation, such as rain, snow or sleet.

As water is recycled from the oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds and other water surfaces, the human factor plays a significant role. The cycle is interrupted for our use. Drinking water is collected from surface, groundwater and underground water known as aquifers. The United States alone, uses an estimated 253 billion gallons of fresh surface water daily and 65 billion gallons from groundwater. Once used, this wastewater is treated and discharged back into the river system to again be part of the water cycle.

The never-ending cycle covers 70 - 80 % of the earth's surface with water. However, less than one percent of the water is usable with conventional treatment. The following percentages are global water volume statistics:

- Oceans comprise - 97%
- Ice caps & glaciers - 2%
- Unusable deep underground - 0.3%
- Usuable underground - 0.3%
- Atmosphere contains - 0.3%
- Rivers, lakes & reservoirs contain - 0.1%

Source of Information
Plain Talk about Drinking
Water by
Dr. James M. Symons

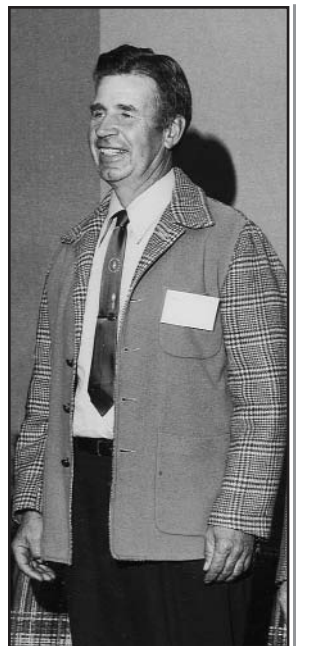
Reflections

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At this point, the Board needed to determine how many water customers would desire a domestic water supply system. In an effort to gather the information and collect revenue for the project, the District undertook an intensive subscription drive. To encourage as many people as possible to enroll, the board of directors offered an introductory water tap rate of \$125. This early sign-up campaign ran from November of 1967 through February 1968. A private engineering firm was given the information to determine the size and shape of the water system. The system itself would bring potable water through a pipeline to customers of the area. This would not only offer convenience for people, but make water available to most rural and suburban portions of the Uncompahgre Valley and Delta County. The system would bring a reliable water supply to the livestock industry, making it available for stock water year round.

Edgar Hotchkiss, current Board member and participant in the 1967-68 drive, was part of this effort to enlist area residents for domestic water service. The enrollment program was an important element in making domestic water service a reality for the region.

The next step in the development of the rural domestic water system was to analyze the collected information and call for a bond election to help pay for the project. The amount of the bond would be determined by potential users and city participation.



Edgar Hotchkiss
in 1968

