

CHAPTER 26

WATER AND IRRIGATION

SENATE BILL 24-005

BY SENATOR(S) Roberts and Simpson, Bridges, Hinrichsen, Buckner, Cutter, Exum, Fields, Jaquez Lewis, Marchman, Michaelson Jenet, Priola, Winter F., Fenberg;
 also REPRESENTATIVE(S) McCormick and McLachlan, Amabile, Bacon, Bird, Boesenecker, Brown, Daugherty, deGruy Kennedy, Duran, Epps, Froelich, Garcia, Herod, Jodeh, Joseph, Kipp, Lieder, Lindsay, Lukens, Mabrey, Martinez, Marvin, Mauro, Ortiz, Parenti, Rutinel, Sirota, Snyder, Story, Titone, Valdez, Velasco, Weissman, Willford, McCluskie.

AN ACT

CONCERNING THE CONSERVATION OF WATER IN THE STATE THROUGH THE PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN LANDSCAPING PRACTICES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** article 99 to title 37 as follows:

ARTICLE 99
**Prohibition of Nonfunctional Turf,
 Artificial Turf, and Invasive Plant Species**

37-99-101. Legislative declaration. (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT:

(a) AS COLORADO CONTINUES TO GRAPPLE WITH THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, GREEN URBAN SPACES, SUCH AS URBAN TREE CANOPIES, ARE A VITAL ADAPTATION TOOL FOR MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ESPECIALLY FOR MITIGATING THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT, WHICH CAN INCREASE ENERGY COSTS, AIR POLLUTION, AND HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES AND DEATHS;

(b) HOWEVER, WATER SUPPLY IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES IS UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND INCREASING DEMAND;

(c) MANY COMMUNITIES IN THE STATE OVERUSE NONNATIVE GRASS FOR LANDSCAPING PURPOSES, WHICH REQUIRES LARGE AMOUNTS OF WATER TO MAINTAIN;

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

(d) WHILE THERE ARE APPROPRIATE AND IMPORTANT USES FOR TURF, INCLUDING FOR CIVIC, COMMUNITY, OR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES SUCH AS USE IN PARKS, SPORTS FIELDS, AND PLAYGROUNDS, MUCH OF THE TURF IN THE STATE IS NONFUNCTIONAL, LOCATED IN AREAS THAT RECEIVE LITTLE, IF ANY, USE, AND COULD BE REPLACED WITH LANDSCAPING THAT ADHERES TO WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES WITHOUT ADVERSELY IMPACTING QUALITY OF LIFE OR LANDSCAPE FUNCTIONALITY;

(e) PROHIBITING THE INSTALLATION, PLANTING, OR PLACEMENT OF NONFUNCTIONAL TURF IN APPLICABLE PROPERTY IN THE STATE CAN HELP CONSERVE THE STATE'S WATER RESOURCES;

(f) INSTALLED VEGETATION THAT ADHERES TO WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES CAN HELP REDUCE OUTDOOR DEMAND OF WATER; AND

(g) ADDITIONALLY, ARTIFICIAL TURF CAN CAUSE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, SUCH AS EXACERBATING HEAT ISLAND EFFECTS IN URBAN AREAS AND RELEASING HARMFUL CHEMICALS, INCLUDING PLASTICS, MICROPLASTICS, AND PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL CHEMICALS, INTO THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATERSHEDS.

(2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEREFORE DECLARES THAT PREVENTING THE INSTALLATION, PLANTING, OR PLACEMENT OF NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, AND INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES IN APPLICABLE PROPERTY IN THE STATE IS:

(a) A MATTER OF STATEWIDE CONCERN; AND

(b) IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

37-99-102. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE 99, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(1) (a) "APPLICABLE PROPERTY" MEANS:

(I) COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL, OR INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY;

(II) COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITY PROPERTY; OR

(III) A STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY, PARKING LOT, MEDIAN, OR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR.

(b) "APPLICABLE PROPERTY" DOES NOT INCLUDE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY.

(2) "ARTIFICIAL TURF" MEANS AN INSTALLATION OF SYNTHETIC MATERIALS DEVELOPED TO RESEMBLE NATURAL GRASS.

(3) "COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL, OR INDUSTRIAL" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 37-60-135 (2)(b).

(4) "COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITY" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 38-33.3-103 (8).

(5) "COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITY PROPERTY" MEANS PROPERTY WITHIN A COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITY THAT IS OWNED AND MAINTAINED BY A UNIT OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, SUCH AS ENTRYWAYS, PARKS, AND OTHER COMMON ELEMENTS AS DEFINED IN SECTION 38-33.3-103 (5).

(6) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL CREATED IN SECTION 24-1-128 (1).

(7) "FUNCTIONAL TURF" MEANS TURF THAT IS LOCATED IN A RECREATIONAL USE AREA OR OTHER SPACE THAT IS REGULARLY USED FOR CIVIC, COMMUNITY, OR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES, WHICH MAY INCLUDE PLAYGROUNDS; SPORTS FIELDS; PICNIC GROUNDS; AMPHITHEATERS; PORTIONS OF PARKS; AND THE PLAYING AREAS OF GOLF COURSES, SUCH AS DRIVING RANGES, CHIPPING AND PUTTING GREENS, TEE BOXES, GREENS, FAIRWAYS, AND ROUGHS.

(8) "INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 37-60-135 (2)(e).

(9) "LOCAL ENTITY" MEANS A:

(a) HOME RULE OR STATUTORY CITY, COUNTY, CITY AND COUNTY, TERRITORIAL CHARTER CITY, OR TOWN;

(b) SPECIAL DISTRICT; AND

(c) METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

(10) "MAINTAIN" OR "MAINTAINING" MEANS AN ACTION TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING STATE OF NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR AN INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN INSTALLED, PLANTED, OR PLACED.

(11) "NATIVE PLANT" MEANS A PLANT SPECIES THAT IS INDIGENOUS TO THE STATE OF COLORADO.

(12) "NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECT" MEANS A NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECT THAT REQUIRES A BUILDING OR LANDSCAPING PERMIT, PLAN CHECK, OR DESIGN REVIEW.

(13) (a) "NONFUNCTIONAL TURF" MEANS TURF THAT IS NOT FUNCTIONAL TURF.

(b) "NONFUNCTIONAL TURF" INCLUDES TURF LOCATED IN A STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY, PARKING LOT, MEDIAN, OR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR.

(c) "NONFUNCTIONAL TURF" DOES NOT INCLUDE TURF THAT IS DESIGNATED TO BE PART OF A WATER QUALITY TREATMENT SOLUTION REQUIRED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL AGENCY WATER QUALITY PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS THAT IS NOT IRRIGATED AND DOES NOT HAVE HERBICIDES APPLIED.

(14) "REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT" MEANS A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT THAT:

(a) REQUIRES A BUILDING OR LANDSCAPING PERMIT, PLAN CHECK, OR DESIGN REVIEW; AND

(b) RESULTS IN A DISTURBANCE OF MORE THAN FIFTY PERCENT OF THE AGGREGATE LANDSCAPE AREA.

(15) "SPECIAL DISTRICT" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 32-1-103 (20).

(16) "TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR" MEANS A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES ALL MODES AND FACILITIES WITHIN A DESCRIBED GEOGRAPHIC AREA, HAVING LENGTH AND WIDTH.

(17) "TURF" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 37-60-135 (2)(i).

(18) "UNIT OWNERS' ASSOCIATION" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 38-33.3-103 (3).

(19) "WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 37-60-135 (2)(l).

37-99-103. Prohibition of nonfunctional turf, artificial turf, and invasive plant species - local entities - construction or renovation of state facilities.

(1) ON AND AFTER JANUARY 1, 2026, A LOCAL ENTITY SHALL NOT INSTALL, PLANT, OR PLACE, OR ALLOW ANY PERSON TO INSTALL, PLANT, OR PLACE, ANY NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES, AS PART OF A NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, ON ANY PORTION OF APPLICABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE LOCAL ENTITY'S JURISDICTION.

(2) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2026, A LOCAL ENTITY SHALL ENACT OR AMEND ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, REGULATIONS, OR OTHER LAWS REGULATING NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON APPLICABLE PROPERTY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT INSTALL, PLANT, OR PLACE, OR ALLOW ANY PERSON TO INSTALL, PLANT, OR PLACE, ANY NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES AS PART OF A PROJECT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION OF A STATE FACILITY, WHICH PROJECT DESIGN COMMENCES ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2025.

(4) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION PROHIBITS:

(a) A LOCAL ENTITY FROM MAINTAINING, OR ALLOWING ANY PERSON TO MAINTAIN, ANY NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES INSTALLED, PLANTED, OR PLACED BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2026;

(b) THE DEPARTMENT FROM MAINTAINING, OR ALLOWING ANY PERSON TO MAINTAIN, ANY NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES INSTALLED, PLANTED, OR PLACED AT A STATE FACILITY BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2025;

(c) A LOCAL ENTITY OR THE DEPARTMENT FROM INSTALLING, OR ALLOWING ANY PERSON TO INSTALL, GRASS SEED OR SOD THAT IS A NATIVE PLANT OR HAS BEEN HYBRIDIZED FOR ARID CONDITIONS;

(d) A LOCAL ENTITY OR THE DEPARTMENT FROM ESTABLISHING PROHIBITIONS ON, OR REQUIREMENTS FOR, NONFUNCTIONAL TURF, ARTIFICIAL TURF, OR INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES THAT ARE MORE STRINGENT THAN THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION; OR

(e) A LOCAL ENTITY OR THE DEPARTMENT FROM INSTALLING, OR ALLOWING ANY PERSON TO INSTALL, ARTIFICIAL TURF ON ATHLETIC FIELDS OF PLAY.

SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date - applicability. (1) This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2024 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

(2) This act does not apply to projects approved by the department of personnel or a local entity before the effective date of this act.

Approved: March 15, 2024