

HB 17-1273 – Water Conservation for New Development

What does this bill do?

HB 17-1273 removes a legal loophole that allows new developments to waste water. The bill requires new developments to present their water conservation and demand management plans as part of gaining permit approval from local governments to move forward. The bill does not alter any local government authority – it does provide more data for improved decision-making.

Why is it needed?

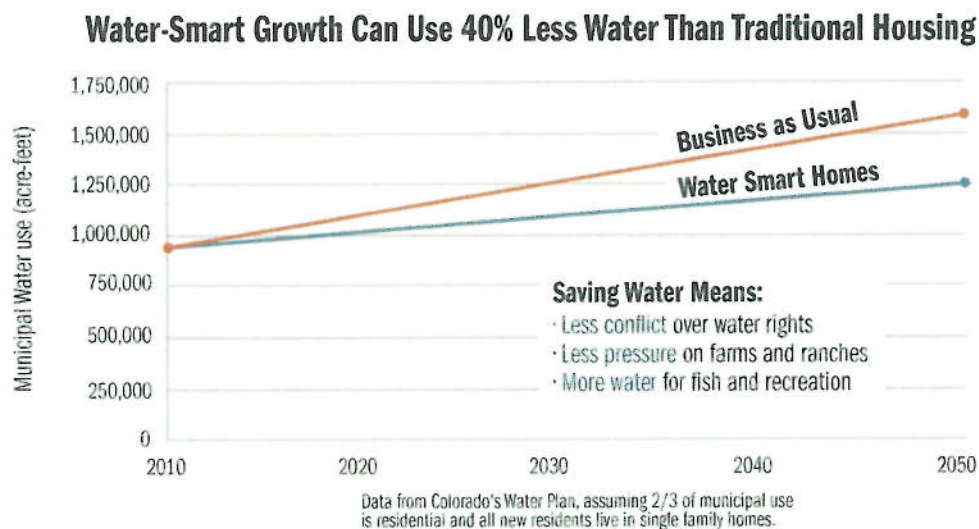
Due to major population growth, Colorado faces an impending water supply gap where our communities will need more water than they currently have. This gap will stifle economic development if not properly addressed. Reducing future water needs through conservation can lessen conflict between new growth and existing water users, decrease the pressure to transfer water from farms and ranches, and keep more water in rivers for recreation and tourism. Building new homes water-smart from the start is one of the easiest, cheapest, and most politically viable ways to reduce water needs – yet current law does not require new developments to even list the water-wise actions that are planned to reduce use.

How much will it cost?

The upfront planning cost for including conservation and demand management strategies in new development is minimal. Importantly, developers using water-smart planning can save money on the cost of water they are required to purchase from the local water provider or obtain from other sources – and residents living in water-smart homes will pay less on their water bills.

What are potential conservation and demand management strategies?

There are a multitude of common-sense and affordable conservation strategies available to new home developers, including high-efficiency indoor fixtures like toilets and shower heads, efficient outdoor irrigation systems, and Colorado-friendly landscaping choices. Local governments are the ones best positioned to determine which strategies for new development are appropriate in their community.



For Additional Information - Please Contact:

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SUPPORTERS OF HB 17-1273

- Conservation Colorado
- National Young Farmers Coalition
- Northwest CO Council of Governments - Water Quality/Quantity Committee
- Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
- The Nature Conservancy
- Western Resource Advocates

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