

NEWS RELEASE

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Water Conservation gets Boost of State Funding

Governor signs legislation providing \$1.5 million over next three years to help cities implement conservation programs

Denver, CO — Tuesday night Governor Owens signed into law House Bill 1254, legislation that will provide \$1.5 million over the next three years to help urban water providers implement existing conservation programs. Conservation organizations, mayors, water utilities, and individuals around the state hail HB 1254 for the help it will provide to cities as they continue progress toward long-term water conservation.

“This is great news for cities and citizens all across the state,” said Bart Miller, water program director at Western Resource Advocates. “It will help push water conservation to the forefront of state and local water policy.”

“Conservation is an essential tool for securing the state’s water future,” said Amy Livingston, with Colorado Environmental Coalition. “HB 1254 will help many cities achieve conservation savings that are quicker, less-expensive, and less-controversial than many other water supply options.”

“I am very encouraged that more funding will now be available for communities to implement their water conservation plans,” said Chris Berry, mayor of Lafayette and Co-Chair of the Metro Mayor’s Water Committee. “I greatly appreciate the hard by legislators, the Governor, and many others that made this happen.”

"These grants will continue what was begun several years ago in order to allow creative solutions to how we use water. Since we are not going to have more water, the importance of stretching our water supply through conservation is absolutely critical to the long term economic and environmental health of Colorado," said Sara Duncan, from Denver Water.

Despite budget difficulties, Representative Tom Plant of Nederland, who also co-chairs the Joint Budget Committee, identified a source of funding in the Severance Tax Trust Fund that has grown recently due to the dramatic increase in energy development. “The funding source for water conservation makes sense,” said Miller. “Energy development, especially at the pace we’ve seen recently, can have tremendous impacts on local land, water, and environmental resources. It just makes sense to have some of the revenue generated be funneled back into programs what will help balance human water needs with the importance of protecting Colorado’s precious water resources.”

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