

NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Arapahoe County and Centennial approve stormwater authority

Littleton, Colo. - The Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners passed a proposal today to create an independent stormwater authority to address an estimated \$75 million in unmet stormwater drainage needs. The new authority will help protect people and property from flooding and will comply with Federal regulations. The approval comes just one day after the City of Centennial Council approved the same proposal.

Three special districts are also considering joining the stormwater authority: Arapahoe County Water and Wastewater Authority (ACWWA), East Cherry Creek Valley Water and Sanitation District and Inverness Water and Sanitation District.

There are impending Federal regulations (NPDES) regarding stormwater quality that the City and County must comply with, or they will be subject to fines. The current funding does not provide the resources to initiate all the new stormwater programs and activities required by these federal regulations.

The stormwater authority will be responsible for local compliance with federal clean water standards. Local jurisdictions are increasingly bearing the considerable costs of compliance with strict federal clean water requirements. Unlike tap water, stormwater runoff is not treated to filter pollution picked up as it runs back into the nation's waterways. Cities and Counties with substantial populations across the country have been required in recent years to formulate plans and programs to protect the quality of stormwater runoff. The next phase of these federal requirements will institute fines on local jurisdictions that are out of compliance.

The City of Centennial City Council will appoint three Council members to the authority's board of directors and Arapahoe County will have two appointments.

In order to address the backlog of stormwater needs, the authority will institute a stormwater service fee. The projected fee for the average homeowner in the authority area will be approximately \$5 to \$6.25 per month. The stormwater authority will finalize the fee after public comment and feedback. Residents currently paying a monthly stormwater fee to ACWWA would not be levied twice. The new fee is targeted to go into effect in January of 2007.

The revenues from this fee would be used to build new stormwater drainage structures in areas that need them, to upgrade and maintain aging and inadequate structures, and to comply with state and federal water quality regulations.

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