



# AURORA WATER

## Prairie Waters Project

*Frequently  
Asked  
Questions*

A Key Element of Aurora's Plan for a High Quality, Plentiful Water Supply



### Why does Aurora need more water?

The combination of Colorado's dry climate and the recent droughts have stressed Aurora's existing water supply. Even though Aurora's residents have done an amazing job of conserving water during the droughts, and Aurora has been able to lease additional water, our reservoirs were badly depleted in 2003. In fact, the city's reservoirs were just months from being dry. This is not an acceptable level of service. We need more water now, to provide acceptable service to Aurora's residents, to our children and grandchildren, as well as businesses and others who choose to come to Aurora in the future.



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### If Aurora's current water supply isn't enough, why does the city continue to grow?

A significant part of Aurora's population growth is "natural" increase from our children and grandchildren growing up and raising their own families here, not from people moving to Aurora. The city needs more water regardless of whether anyone else moves here.

### How was the Prairie Waters Project chosen?

After evaluating 54 possible projects, Aurora Water selected the Prairie Waters Project as the recommended strategy for providing a reliable, high quality water supply to the city. The project emerged as the most cost-effective, environmentally friendly and immediate way to meet the city's water needs. Further, the project can be expanded in the future, if necessary.

### How is the Prairie Waters Project the most cost-effective project?

Conservation is the least expensive way to make water resources go further, but Aurora is pushing conservation to its maximum benefit already. The next best thing is to bring water the city already owns to its residents. The Prairie Waters Project does that. Engineering studies have identified the Prairie Waters Project as the most cost-effective, most reliable water supply option the city can pursue.

### Why can't Aurora get more water from the mountains?

Mountain water is not readily available and it is more expensive. Aurora already owns water in the South Platte River, and it can be used as a high quality, reliable, affordable water resource.

### How can water from the lower South Platte be the same as mountain water?

Regardless of the source, all drinking water undergoes a purification process before being delivered to customers, and that water must meet or exceed state and federal drinking water standards. Aurora Water has a 50-year track record of delivering clean, safe water to customers, no matter the source.



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continued

## What if Aurora does nothing to increase its water supply?

If Aurora doesn't take steps to increase its water supply now, residents and businesses will see more severe water restrictions in the future than we saw during the last drought. Things like watering outdoors, installing new landscaping, using swimming pools, running fountains and decorative ponds, washing cars, and using the Aurora Reservoir swim beach could be severely limited. Ultimately, the lack of water will hamper Aurora's ability to attract and retain businesses, which will adversely affect the local economy, property values and our quality of life.



## As an Aurora Water customer, what is my benefit from the project?

The Prairie Waters Project will initially increase Aurora's water supply by 3.3 billion gallons, which is a 20 percent increase in the city's water supply. This new water supply will enhance our water system's reliability. Communities without a reliable water supply can suffer when it comes to economic development and property values.

## Will customers pay the entire cost of the Prairie Waters Project?

No. Customers will pay for that portion of the project that benefits them. Because the project will someday carry additional water for future residents, the pipes, pumps and water purification facilities are being designed to handle that anticipated water capacity. Tap fees, paid by new development, will fund the cost of this additional infrastructure and any new water supplies that are required to meet future water demands.

## Is the East Cherry Creek Pipeline related to the Prairie Waters Project?

No. Although both projects will take water from the South Platte River for purification and delivery to customers, the projects are not related. The East Cherry Creek Pipeline Project is being built by the East Cherry Creek Valley Water and Sanitation District, not Aurora Water. It will transport water from the South Platte River's Beebe Draw and serve approximately 50,000 residents in eastern portions of the city of Centennial and unincorporated Arapahoe County.

## How can I learn more?

For more information you can call the project information line at 303.739.7477 or 866.262.0715, e-mail us at [cpd\\_info@auroragov.org](mailto:cpd_info@auroragov.org) or check the project Web site at [www.aurorawater.org](http://www.aurorawater.org).