

Water Waste Ordinance Examples from Colorado

These examples, all from Colorado, come from the *Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado* published by Colorado WaterWise in 2010.

Several examples of water waste ordinances with varying levels of detail and specificity are presented below. They also are from utilities of varying sizes.

DENVER WATER

Denver Water prohibits water waste, carefully defines what waste is, and enforces the ordinance with seasonal staff.

From *Chapter 14 Water Conservation*

14.01 Water Waste Prohibited. Water shall be used only for beneficial purposes and shall not be wasted.

14.01.1 Water Waste Defined. Prohibited water waste includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Applying more water than is reasonably necessary to establish and maintain a healthy landscape. Routine watering of turf shall be limited to three days per week, except for watering for up to 21 days to establish new turf from sod or seed; and except for syringing golf course greens when necessitated by weather conditions.
- b. Watering with spray irrigation between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. during the period from May 1 to October 1, except for the following uses:
 - (1) Watering for up to 21 days to establish turf from seed or sod.
 - (2) Watering new plant material such as flowers, trees and shrubs on the day of planting.
 - (3) Watering essential to preserve turf subject to heavy public use.
 - (4) Operating an irrigation system for installation, repair or reasonable maintenance, so long as the system is attended throughout the period of operation.
- c. Watering landscaped areas during rain or high wind.
- d. Applying water intended for irrigation to an impervious surface, such as a street, parking lot, alley, sidewalk or driveway.

- e. Using water instead of a broom or mop to clean outdoor impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, driveways and patios, except when cleaning with water is necessary for public health or safety reasons or when other cleaning methods are impractical.
- f. Allowing water to pool or flow across the ground or into any drainage way, such as gutters, streets, alleys or storm drains.
- g. Failing to repair, for a period of more than ten business days after notice, leaking or damaged irrigation components, service lines or other plumbing fixtures.
- h. Washing vehicles with a hose that lacks an automatic shut-off valve.

14.01.2 “Water Use Restriction” Distinguished. These prohibitions on water waste are not related to drought response, insufficient water supply or system emergency and therefore do not constitute water use restrictions within the meaning of Denver Water’s various water supply agreements and environmental permits.

CITY OF AURORA

The City of Aurora Waste of Water ordinance prohibits water from pooling on or running across impervious surfaces and into the street gutter. This ordinance can also be applied during times of drought restrictions to enforce wrong day watering or watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Sec. 138-190. Waste of water.

- (a) *Waste of water prohibited.* Waste of water shall be defined as noncompliance with the city's water management plan as defined in section 138-223(b). Notwithstanding the enforcement provisions set forth in subsection (b) of this section, the director may order the installation of a flow restrictor or the shut off of water service to a property if the director reasonably finds that an extreme waste of water is occurring on the premises.
- (b) *Enforcement.* The director is hereby authorized to enforce this section. The person billed for water service to a property, whether owner or occupant, shall be responsible for compliance with subsection (a) of this section and shall be subject to the following actions and penalties:
 - (1) Upon a first violation, the person billed will be issued a warning.
 - (2) Upon any further violations at the same property within a 12-month period, from the date of the warning notice, the person billed will be issued a written

violation and the following penalty (see Table 4-12) will be added to the water bill for the property as a civil penalty.

- (3) Any penalty imposed pursuant to this section may be appealed to the director of water pursuant to the appeal procedure set forth in section 138-226.
- (4) Upon any notice(s) of violation of this section, a copy of such notice(s) shall also be mailed to the owner(s) of the real property served, if the owner(s) address differs from the subject property address.

(Code 1979, § 39-78; Ord. No. 2000-132, § 3, 12-11-2000; Ord. No. 2002-29, § 1, 6-3-2002; Ord. No. 2003-08, § 1, 3-24-2003; Ord. No. 2005-74, § 1, 10-10-2005)

AURORA WATER WASTE VIOLATION PENALTIES (2010)

Customer Category and Meter Size	Second Violation	All Additional Violations
Single-Family		
All (5/8" - 1")	\$250	\$500
Non Single-Family		
5/8"	\$250	\$500
3/4"	\$300	\$600
1"	\$400	\$800
1 1/2"	\$600	\$1,200
Large Commercial		
2"	\$800	\$1,600
3"	\$1,200	\$2,400
4"	\$1,600	\$3,200
6"	\$2,400	\$4,800
8"	\$3,200	\$6,400
Irrigation Only		
2"	\$1,000	\$2,000
3"	\$1,500	\$3,000
4"	\$2,000	\$4,000
6"	\$3,000	\$6,000
8"	\$4,000	\$8,000

CITY OF DURANGO

Water waste. The intentional or unintentional use of water for a non-beneficial use. Non-beneficial uses include, but are not restricted to:

- (1) Landscape water applied in such a manner, rate and/or quantity that it overflows the landscaped area being watered and runs onto adjacent property, public rights-of-way or into drainage ways, including gutters and storm sewers.
- (2) Landscape water which leaves a sprinkler, sprinkler system, or other application device in such a manner or direction as to spray onto adjacent property or public rights-of-way.
- (3) Failing to repair any irrigation system that is broken or leaking.
- (4) Applying water to hard surfaces such as parking lots, aprons, pads, driveways, or other surfaced areas, such as wood or gravel, when water is supplied in sufficient quantity to flow from that surface onto adjacent property or public rights-of-way.

(Ord. No. O-2007-30, § 1, 9-4-07)

CITY OF LONGMONT

Waste of water prohibited. Customers shall not cause or permit water furnished by the city to run to waste in any gutter or other impervious surface, or other application. Waste, for purposes of this section, shall constitute the use of water serving no beneficial use, and not constituting an unavoidable consequence of the beneficial usage of water. Waste of water does not include incidental and occasional over spraying. For the purposes of this section, the term customer shall include homeowners associations or other entities obligated to maintain irrigation systems along city streets.