

Douglas County Water Alternatives Program

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Douglas County Water Alternatives Program (Program) was developed based on requests received from neighborhood and small domestic water providers currently experiencing declines in well productivity and water quality. Based on these requests, the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners created the Program as part of their 2013 initiatives to provide water alternatives to existing non-renewable water supplies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Program is to assist homeowners and small domestic water providers in developing renewable water supply alternatives.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

If the Program process is met, the County will provide a feasibility analysis evaluating various renewable water supply options, infrastructure pre-design, and estimated project costs. In addition, the County will research potential financing mechanisms and offer recommendations to move the project forward.

CONTACT

If you are interested in participating in this Program, please contact Douglas County's Department of Community Development at 303-660-7460.



PROGRAM PROCESS

Those interested in seeking sustainable water alternatives should go through the following process:

1. Neighborhood residents must successfully demonstrate a need for an alternative water supply. Need is to be demonstrated through a written survey of well owners within the neighborhood. Survey questions asked should, at a minimum, include the following:

- Where would you rate your current domestic well water supply? Please circle the most appropriate response(s) to your current water situation.
 - Good (flow consistent, good quality)
 - Intermittent (sometimes good, sometimes poor)
 - Poor (either or both quality and quantity issues)

- Do you support the concept of transitioning away from your domestic well to a renewable community water system (central service)?

- Douglas County is considering providing resources through their Water Alternatives Program. Successful Program admission would, through a feasibility study, identify a range of project costs, necessary process, water supply, and funding options associated with the development of a renewable community water system. Do you support your community's involvement in the development of such a study?

- The average cost for existing Program participants to hook up to a water utility (infrastructure, water supply, tap fees, district inclusion) hovers around \$50,000 per home. Though each neighborhood is different, is this a cost you would be willing to finance over a 20-30 year timeframe for a reliable supply?

- Besides Program costs, what other concerns, if any, do you have with your community participating in the Water Alternatives Program?

2. A neighborhood spokesperson must submit a letter to the County requesting assistance through the Program. The letter must: include community survey results, state the nature of the water problem; provide a history of conversations with adjoining providers; and include research and options for acquiring renewable water supplies, if any.

3. Once a letter is received, County staff will schedule a meeting with neighborhood representatives.

4. If steps one through three are met, and funds are available, the County will negotiate and enter into a contract with a qualified water engineering firm to complete a water supply and infrastructure feasibility study.

5. A feasibility study will be conducted based on the most local, cost effective, and permanent water supply alternatives available to the neighborhood at the time. The study will provide preliminary system engineering, a water supply alternative analysis, and estimated project costs.

6. County staff will assist in managing the Program including an analysis of the best funding alternatives (both grants and loans), contract management, meeting facilitation and facility use, and negotiations with adjoining water provider districts, if applicable.

7. Upon successful connection to an alternative water supply system, residents are encouraged to cap their individual domestic wells.