City of Loveland

Dateline: LOVELAND

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# Water source both east and west

"From snowy caps to Loveland taps." Yes, it's a bit corny, but the slogan is as accurate today as it was decades ago when it was coined by the City's Water Division. Loveland's primary water source is snow pack from the Big Thompson and Colorado River basins on both sides of the Continental Divide west of the city.

The Water Division's responsibility is to keep quality water flowing to the Loveland community. Constant attention is required to environmental, engineering and financial considerations.

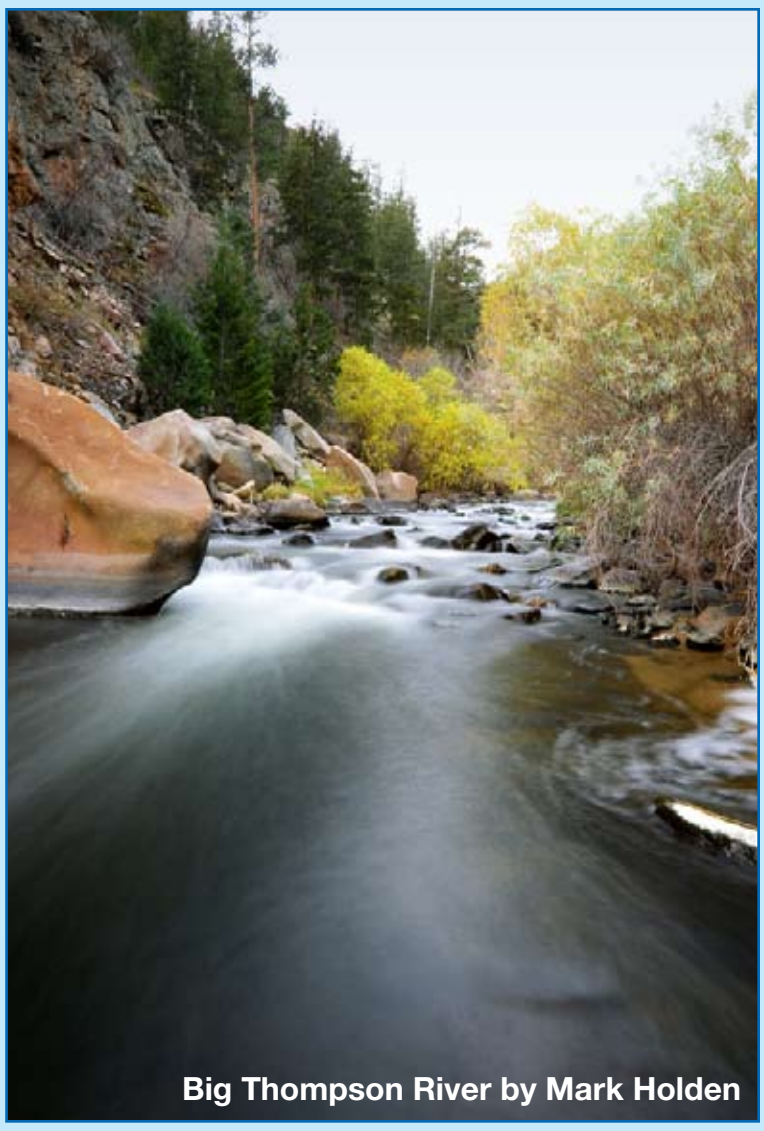
The water folks are taking care of business, for today's water meets the City's requirements for both quantity and quality, and at very low cost to customers.

The physical source of Loveland's water is both obvious and remarkable. Much of the city's supply comes from the snow pack on the eastern side of the mountains west of the city. It flows into the Big Thompson River where it then meets the Water Treatment Plant and then enters pipelines for use in Loveland.

However, except for the big clue provided by the large brown pipe above Hwy. 34 at the mouth of the Big Thompson Canyon, many area folks don't realize that about half of Loveland's water comes from the Western Slope. It flows through pipes and tunnels from beyond Rocky Mountain National Park into the Big Thompson River here on the eastern side of the Continental Divide.

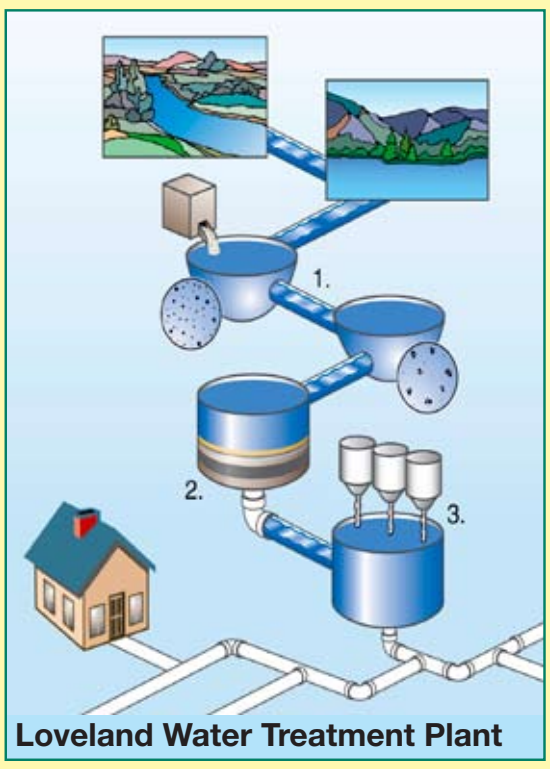
The Colorado-Big Thompson (C-BT) Project began operation in 1957, capturing water from mountain runoff in Lake Granby. The water flows through the mountains in a large tunnel to the eastern side, supplying Loveland and many other municipalities--north and south from Wellington to Broomfield and benefitting communities as far east as Sterling and Julesburg.

Loveland's share of the C-BT Project is only three percent. It should be remembered that the physical existence of water and the rights of ownership are not at all the same. For example, Loveland doesn't own and can't use all the water in the Big Thompson River. And the water in Lake Loveland belongs to Greeley. Acquiring water rights for the growing community of Loveland is a continuing process that City water staffer's take pride in.



Big Thompson River by Mark Holden

# Treatment plant ensures water quality




Loveland Water Treatment Plant

Since its origin in the 1920s, the City's Water Treatment Plant along the Big Thompson River and northwest of Devil's Backbone has been supplying quality drinking water to Loveland. Today the plant can provide up to 30 million gallons a day of low cost, high quality water to the community.

Quality, efficiency and safety are the objectives the plant achieves on a daily basis.

Loveland's water quality meets or exceeds numerous tests and requirements as it flows down into town through hundreds of miles of pipelines to homeowner's faucets. Ensuring the safety of operational personnel and maintaining among the very lowest usage fees in Colorado are also accomplished. During the past two years, about $8 million was spent to increase the plant's capacity by about 25 percent. Planning continues for further capacity increases, up to about 38 million gallons a day in 2025, after which a second treatment plant could be constructed. The increases have been and would continue to be funded primarily through fees paid as new development occurs.

The actual treatment of the raw water is a three-stage process that takes a few hours at the plant. A sedimentation stage settles out the larger particles, followed by a filtration state that removes the smaller, microscopic-size impurities. Lastly, a disinfection process using chlorine kills off all pathogens, resulting in clean, good-tasting water for our homes and businesses.

The City's water staff happily point out that the fact that Loveland's supply begins with clean, Rocky Mountain water helps make the quality and taste the envy of consumers from other cities and states. And the 500 ft. elevation difference from the plant to town means that gravity, not pumps, provides the delivery.

# Wise water users deserve praise

Loveland's water staff suggests that residents take their right hand, reach over their left shoulder and give themselves a well deserved pat on the back. That's because for the past several years, local citizens and businesses have done a fine job of conserving the city's water.

And as a result, there have been no significant water-use restrictions in Loveland since 1981. (Restrictions existed briefly in 2003, then quickly rescinded.) Levels of water supply resulting from winter mountain snow and seasonal local precipitation have varied, yet thanks to wiser use by Loveland locals, restrictions and "water cops" have been unnecessary and will not be needed again this summer.

Expansion of the Green Ridge Glade Reservoir, the Water Treatment Plant and construction of three large water tanks around town have also smoothed supply, but smart use by Loveland's water customers deserves the most credit.

Summertime irrigation of lawns and gardens causes the greatest increase in demand. During an average day in the winter, Loveland consumes about 6 million gallons a day. That can increase to 25 million gallons a day during July and August. Attention to proper watering frequency, techniques and other conservation efforts has been beneficial.

One of the easiest ways to determine lawn watering needs is the "footprint test," City water staffers explained. Simply walk across a dry lawn. If the grass springs back and leaves no footprint, water is not needed. If the footprint remains, some moisture is needed.

For more conservation tips, contact the Water Division at 962-3717 or visit the Water and Power section of *www.cityofloveland.org.*

# Faucet or bottle; you make the call

More or less, it makes sense and cents to drink Loveland tap water rather than bottled water:

- More—The quality of the water from the Loveland faucet is much more regulated than bottled water, ensuring very high quality when the spigot is opened. Loveland's water must pass numerous tests by the EPA and state health department, and its source is Rocky Mountain snowpack. Bottled water is regulated only by the FDA—if at all—and its source is rarely disclosed.
- Less—Loveland's water requires no packaging, meaning there's less (none, actually) trash to discard, collect, recycle or fill up the landfill.
- Less—Energy is not used to create the packaging or transport the finished product. There are no bottles and gravity is the transporter.
- Less—The cost is less, far less. A quart of bottled water can cost a buck, while 150 gallons of Loveland's finest costs about a nickel.

# Top 10 Water Saving Tips

1. Water lawn only when needed (Saves 750-1,500 gals/month)
2. Fix leaky faucets and plumbing joints (Saves 600 gals/month/leak)
3. Don't let the hose run when washing the car (Saves 150 gals/wash)
4. Install water-saving shower heads or flow restrictors (Saves 500-800 gals/month)
5. Run only full loads in clothes washer, dishwasher (Saves 300-800 gals/month)
6. Shorten showers by a minute or two (Saves 500-700gals/month)
7. Don't clean walks and driveways with hose (Saves 150 gals/use)
8. Don't use toilet as ashtray or wastebasket (Saves 400-600 gals/month)
9. Capture and reuse tap water while waiting for hot water (Saves 200-300 gals/month)
10. Sprinkle the lawn, not the driveway (Saves 500 gals/month)