



Glossary of Terms

Acre foot	A unit of volume commonly used in reference to large-scale water resources. One acre foot of water is equivalent to one foot in depth covering an area of one acre, or approximately 326,000 gallons of water. An acre-foot of water can supply approximately three single family households in Highlands Ranch.
Aquifer	An aquifer is an underground layer of water-bearing geologic formation such as rock, gravel, sand or silt, from which groundwater can be extracted using a well. Much of the water in deep bedrock aquifers has been trapped for thousands of years. While this water is relatively clean and often needs little treatment before drinking use, the resource is finite and can be depleted over time.
Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)	ASR is the process of storing treated surface water in an underground aquifer for later recovery. This occurs when there is an abundance of surface water and there is no need to supplement the water supply with water from an aquifer.
Conjunctive Use	Utilizing both surface water and groundwater. Centennial Water operates a conjunctive use system by combining water supplies from the South Platte River basin, and a group of massive aquifers underlying the region.
Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB)	A division of the State of Colorado's Department of Natural Resources. The CWCB's responsibilities range from protecting Colorado's streams and lakes to water conservation, flood mitigation, watershed protection, stream restoration, drought planning, water supply planning and water project financing.
Confluence	A flowing together of two or more streams.
Erosion	When the earth gets worn away through the breakdown of soil by such things as water, wind or gravity.
Groundwater	Water found below the earth's surface, such as in an aquifer.
Groundwater Recharge or Replenishment	Addition of water into an aquifer to replenish its supplies. Includes precipitation seeping through soils, infiltration from surface waters, or pumping from surface supply for injection into an aquifer.
MGD	Million gallons per day. MGD is a measurement of water flow frequently used for water treatment plants.
Multipurpose Water	Water supply used for a variety of uses, such as municipal, industrial, agricultural and/or recreational uses, or for maintaining fisheries and wildlife habitat.
Non-renewable Water	Water resources from a deep underground aquifer which have been trapped for thousands of years. This resource is not replenished by rainfall or melt-off, so the finite supply can be depleted and becomes more costly to extract water over time as the aquifer level drops.

Pipeline	Carries water to homes and businesses. Pipelines can be above or underground.
Potable	Water safe to drink or cook with.
Recharge	Replenishing an aquifer with stormwater or imported water.
Reclaimed Water	Wastewater that has been cleaned so it can be reused for most purposes such as irrigating landscape. It is not used for drinking water.
Renewable Water	Surface water resources that are replenished by seasonal rains and melting snowfall, such as rivers, streams and lakes.
Reservoir	An impoundment of collected water controlled by a dam.
Return Flows	The unused portion of water that returns to a stream or river after a beneficial use.
Reuse	To use again, to intercept for subsequent beneficial use, either directly or by exchange, water that would otherwise return to the stream system.
Stormwater	Water that originates during precipitation events such as rain or snowfall.
Surface Runoff	Water flowing along the ground into rivers, lakes and oceans.
Surface Water	Water that collects in a river, stream, lake, wetland or ocean. It is naturally replenished by precipitation and lost to evaporation.
Wastewater	Water that contains waste material.
Water Budget	An allocation of water for a household or a commercial customer. Water budgets are calculated for both indoor and outdoor uses.
Water Efficiency	The smart use of water resources and/or not wasting water; using water more efficiently both inside and outside your home.
Water Reclamation	Treating wastewater so it can be used again.
Watershed	A geographic area from which water drains into a river, river system, or other body of water.
Water Yield	The amount of water obtained from raw water sources of a given water supply system.
Wetlands	Areas with standing water or a high water table, either permanently or for some significant period each year. Generally includes swamps, marshes, bogs and areas with water-loving vegetation that grows in or around water.
Xeriscape	A set of principles that when implemented properly result in a landscape that uses water efficiently.