

# At the Water Trough

## Indian Mountain Metropolitan District Water Service Program

December 2023



### Special Interest Articles:

- Water Augmentation Explained
- What is a Fen?
- Welcome Transferees
- WSP Operations Manual
- 2024 IMWSP Fees
- Meter Certifiers Needed!
- Water History
- Top Meter Reporting Errors
- Settlement with Bar Star Water
- Selling Your Home

### Augmentation Plans

*Augmentation plans are court approved plans allowing you to take water from your well in exchange for providing a percentage of that water to a river or stream at another point (from a holding pond or reservoir) that satisfies senior water rights.*

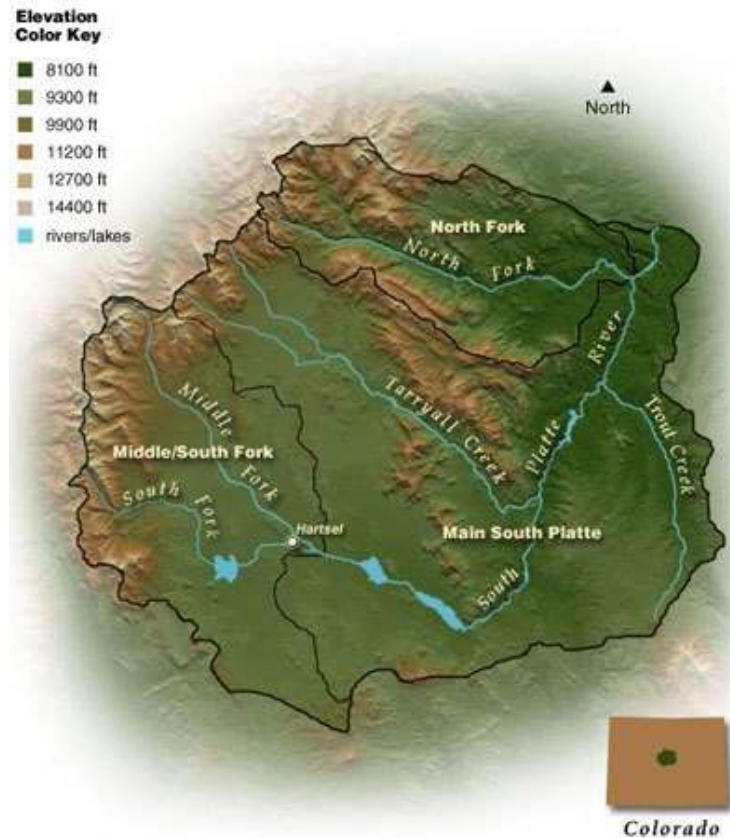
*Augmentation plans allow for the use of water without causing injury to other downstream water users.*



South Platte River near Deckers, CO

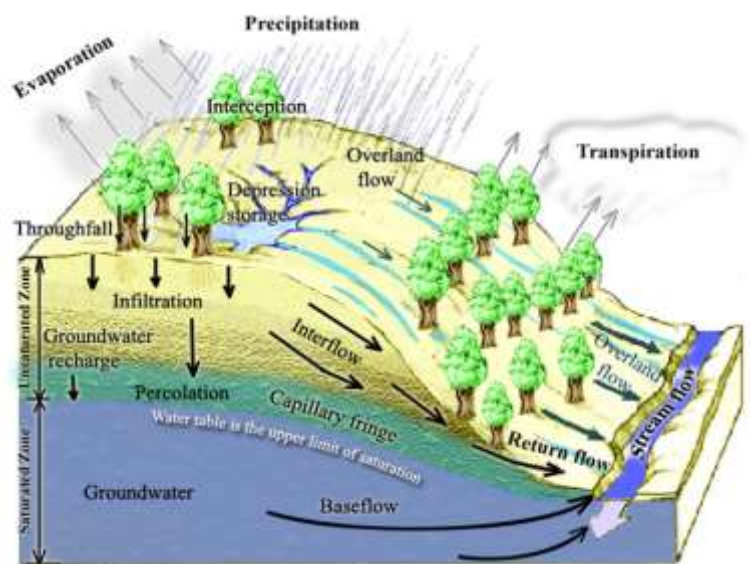
# Water Augmentation Explained

When the developer of Indian Mountain wanted to plan a subdivision in Colorado where a shortage of water during part or all of the year is a common occurrence, our well permits could only be obtained with an augmentation plan. The developer was considered a new water user. In other words, his water rights were “junior” to certain other water rights which were “senior” downstream the South Platte River.



What do our wells have to do with the South Platte River? Well, as you can see from the picture to the left, all our streams flow into the South Platte River.

This means that our ground water is also intimately connected to the South Platte River. How? Look at the picture below:



For us, that means that in order to be able to draw and use water out of the ground by way of our wells, 10% of that water has to be put back into the South Platte River. The rest (90%) flows back by way of our leach fields. HASP (Headwater Authority of the South Platte) puts back the 10% for the IMWSP. They require us to measure the water that we take out of the ground by way of Certified Water Meters because they need to know how much we used in order for them to be able to put the right amount back into the South Platte. HASP has different ways by which they can put back the water.



Most of our wells in Indian Mountain are for household use only, which means that we are only supposed to use the well water for ordinary household purposes and that we are not allowed to use the water outside or for livestock watering. Domestic or Livestock wells can only be obtained on parcels over 35 acres.

Water and water rights are a very big deal in Colorado and the rest of the Western US, because water is becoming scarcer every year, and more and more people want to use it. Whether it is for livestock, agriculture, gardening, cleaning, flushing toilets, or drinking, people all need water and a lot of it. Unfortunately, water is not an unlimited resource.

We foresee that in the future, the Colorado Division of Water Resources will require all augmented wells to be metered and reported.



## What is a – Fen?

Fens are high-altitude peat-producing wetlands, typically found from 9,000 to 12,000 feet. Wetlands are ecosystems where the water table is at or near the ground surface for most of the growing season on most years. There are several types of wetlands: swamps, marshes, bogs, and fens.

Fen soil is poorly aerated, and the dominant plants are those that can exist in wet and reducing conditions. The long duration of

these conditions limits the decomposition of plant roots, leaves, and stems, and over time this organic matter accumulates to form peat soil.

The High Creek Fen Preserve is right here in Park County, and is one of a very few 'extreme rich fens' in the United States. High Creek is home to fourteen state-rare plant species.

<https://coloradobirdingtrail.com/site/high-creek-fen/>



*High Creek Fen – Park County*

## WSP: Welcome Transferees

Please welcome this year's many new transferees into the IMWSP program.

They purchased a property from an IMWSP member and have taken over as members in good standing by transferring the property into their name.

As you may recall, there is no transfer fee, they simply completed our transfer form.

They now follow the directions in the Operations Manual to include timely monthly meter reporting and paying the annual fee. Easy!

If you sell your IMWSP property, remember to have your realtor provide the buyers with the IMWSP Transfer Form found under the "Water" tab on the Indian Mountain website at: <https://indianmountain.info>

This is just another way in which the IMWSP protects the legacy of having your augmentation water taken care of in perpetuity.

IMWSP continues to be 451 members strong.

## WSP Operations Manual

Many thanks to everyone who reports their monthly meter reading and pays the annual administrative fee on time.

We have rules in place due to HASP (Headwater Authority of the South Platte) and State of Colorado Division of Water Resources requirements. We did not make these rules, but we must enforce them to prevent jeopardizing our program.

As a group, we have come a long way. In the beginning there were over 50 members who did not report meter readings every month. Now we average around 5 per month. We have not yet had to dismiss anyone from the program although some have come close.

Since the IMWSP is a non-profit program, meaning that all costs get divided evenly between the participants, fines are unfortunately necessary to make the violators reimburse the added administrative costs for the extra work they cause, so that everyone else does not have to pay for their indiscretions.

Please review the WSP Operations Manual on our website under the WATER tab at: <https://indianmountain.info>. Some minor changes and updates to the Operations Manual will be approved at the December 9th Board Meeting.



*Tarryall Creek at Breton Park – Indian Mountain*

*“The Indian Mountain Metropolitan District is responsible for the operation of the IMWSP in accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement between IMMD and HASP and HASP regulations.”*

- IMWSP Operations Manual

## 2024 - IMWSP Administrative Fee

The IMMD Board of Directors has approved the IMWSP annual administrative fee for 2024 to be \$75.

The \$75 annual IMWSP administrative fee for 2024 is the same as it was for 2023 and 2022. (Reduced from \$80 in 2021 and \$100 in 2020).

We will email you an invoice the first week in January and you will have 30 days to submit payment. Only checks please with remittance to:

IMWSP, PO Box 25, Como, CO 80432

Or you can drop off your cash or check payment at the Community Center's office or drop box. We are trying to keep overall costs down, so we are not set up to take credit cards at this time.

Additionally, there is no way to pay online.

**Please let us know how we can help you!**

If you run into a bind with something to do with the WSP, please let us know how we can help.

We will do our best to accommodate monthly reporting in family emergencies or set up a payment plan with you for the annual fee.

We wish everyone in the program to know that we are part of this wonderful community and are WSP members ourselves.

Communication is the key!

In 2016, geologists studying a Canadian mine made an incredible discovery. At a depth of about 3 kilometers (1.8 miles), they found flowing water, which tests revealed to be between 1.5 and 2.64 billion years old. Having been isolated for all this time, it was the oldest water found on Earth!

*lflscience.com*

# Certified Meter Testers Needed!

We are still looking for Water Meter Testers. Out of all the meter testers in the state, there is only one who will come to Indian Mountain for less than \$1,200 a meter.

Luckily, our one available water meter tester is only charging \$310 a meter right now. If something happens to him, there are no reasonable alternatives.

There are currently 451 properties in the IMWSP. When meters break, replacements must be

certified. Additionally, when a new group joins the WSP in the future, there will be dozens of meters to certify.

On top of that, all meters in the WSP will need to be recertified on their tenth year in service, so starting in 2027.

Your investment of time getting trained, certifying Indian Mountain meters, and eventually expanding to other neighborhoods for certifications

could be a great new local career!

**We need Certified Meter Testers that live in the area!**

To become a State Certified Meter Tester, please look at this page: [Meter Tester](#) and refer to the links at the bottom left corner and at the bottom. We are in Division 1 – South Platte.

Please let us know if you are interested.

## Water History:

The **Woodingdean Water Well** is the deepest hand-dug well in the world, at 390 meters (1285 feet) deep and a little more than a meter wide. Work on the well started in 1858, and was finished four years later, on March 16, 1862. It is located just outside of Nuffield Hospital in Woodingdean, near Brighton, UK.

The well was originally dug to provide water for a workhouse at the top of Elm Grove and a school for juveniles at Warren Farm. The workhouse was a place people would go if they were poor, couldn't find work, or unfortunately, if children became orphans. In exchange for their food and bed, they were expected to work. In true Dickensian style, the well was hand dug by members of the local workhouse, and work was apparently carried out for 24 hours a day with candlelight as the only source of light. They had to scale up and down the shaft in complete darkness on a series of rickety ladders. Surprisingly, only one of the workers died in the process.

Excavation work at the well continued for several more years, until one day at a change of shifts, something unusual was noticed. One of the workers realized that the earth he was standing on, at the bottom of the shaft, was beginning to heave upwards like a massive piston. All the workers scrambled upward as fast as they could go to the Winchman's platforms to get out of the way of the water that they had finally struck. The water rose to 400 feet in the first hour, with the men nearly escaping death.

*Rigmars.com*



# Top Meter Reporting Errors

- Please get your reading in between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> of every month. If you report after that, your meter reading will not get counted.
- If your reading is reported way too early, your reading will not get counted (before the 28<sup>th</sup>).
- Please enter the correct month in the field. The correct month is the month prior to the one that we report in. From January 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>, we report for water use in December.
- Please enter your correct ID#. The ID is **5 characters long**. The first character is the first (capital) letter of your last name. The following four characters are numbers. Type 0 for Zero. **PLEASE do not use the letter O for zero.**
- Please do not transpose numbers in your ID number. **You can digitally copy your number from your reminder email and paste it in the field for your ID number.**
- Reminders are sent out every month to everyone on the 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup>, and on the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> if you have not reported by then. Please check your junk mail folder if you are not receiving reminders.

## Reading your Meter

There are 13 different water meters in Indian Mountain and most members are reporting properly per the instructions.

As a reminder, we need the 7 whole numbers of gallons to be reported. Please do not report any partial gallons or decimal numbers. The last 2 numbers on **Sensus** meters are decimals. Please do not report them.

The reading should look something like 0012345.

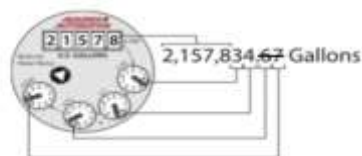
There are several brands of mechanical meters that have dials. Please only use the whole number dials on the right and not the

decimal dials on the left when reporting. If you are unsure of how to report your meter reading, please contact us, email us a picture, and we will help you.

Report the reading below as 2157834

### READING THE DIAL

Sizes 1/2", 3/4", & 1":



1. To read the meter, start with the register dials (21578).
2. Then add a single digit from each of the dials going in a clockwise direction and rounding each down (3, 4, ~~6~~, ~~7~~).

**Thanks to everyone who reports meter readings properly! Great job!**

**If you have any questions on how to report your meter, please contact us.**



# Settlement with Bar Star Water

*In June of 2022, a settlement was reached between Bar Star Water and a group of Indian Mountain property owners called DLOU “Don’t Lean on Us” who were joined by the Indian Mountain Metropolitan District (IMMD) and the Indian Mountain Property Owners Association (IMPOA).*

***The following are some important points in the settlement:***

- Bar Star agreed that it will not invoice nor seek to collect from any WSP (or DLOU) member the Water Storage Fee or other similar fee to offset the cost of operating the W-7389 Plan (Bar Star plan) while such member’s well or wells are enrolled in the WSP.
- Bar Star agreed that it will not assess a Vacant Lot Water Availability Fee or other similar fee to offset the cost of operating the W-7389 Plan on any lot in the Indian Mountain Subdivision that currently does not have a well (“Vacant Lot”) unless the lot owner of the Vacant Lot has entered into a contract with Bar Star that includes such Vacant Lot Water Availability Fee or other similar fee.
- If the well or wells of a current or future member of the WSP (including the DLOU Members) are disenrolled or otherwise removed from the WSP and such member does not obtain augmentation water for such well or wells from another source for any reason, with the result that the well or wells owned by such member revert back to the W-7389 Plan and Bar Star must provide augmentation water for such well or wells as required by the Division Engineer or State Engineer, DLOU, IMMD, IMPOA agree not to contest any fees and charges for initiation, application, enrollment, annual operations, or other associated fees and charges imposed by Bar Star upon such member, or participate or interfere in any legal proceeding challenging those fees, charges, or value of services provided, or any legal proceeding in which Bar Star seeks to recover such fees, charges or value of services provided by Bar Star. Currently Bar Star charges \$2,500 for re-enrollment of such a well or \$1,500 for enrollment of a new well. Bar Star currently charges a \$300 annual fee. (As an aside, HASP on an individual basis charges \$2,200 to enroll and a \$230 annual fee and requires monthly water meter readings.)
- If after the date of this settlement a lot owner for whom Bar Star is providing augmentation services pursuant to the W-7389 Plan - either under a contract or as required by the Division Engineer or State Engineer if such owner has refused to enter into a contract - joins the WSP, Bar Star shall have the right to seek to recover any unpaid fees and/or recover the value of the services it provided during the time period before the lot owner joined the WSP.
- IMMD agrees not to purchase any additional water from the Headwater Authority of the South Platte until January 1, 2026, and agrees to limit the total number of wells enrolled into the WSP to 500, until January 1, 2026. *(No new wells can be added until this time)*
- IMMD agrees to inform Bar Star whenever a well is enrolled into, or disenrolled from, the WSP.

*Please read the settlement in its entirety as posted on our website (<https://indianmountain.info> under the WATER Tab / Legal / Litigation) as there are several more points that you may be interested in.*

# Don't Forget: WSP Membership is a Valuable Property Asset

## If you are Planning on Selling your Property:

**\* Notify your Realtor of WSP Membership & the WSP Administrator \***

We have heard of instances when an IM WSP property owner does not inform their realtor or interested home buyers that they belong to the IMWSP and that their water augmentation is assured.

There are also instances when members do not include in their "for sale" property information that they belong to IMWSP, that they have a certified water meter, and that future water augmentation for this property is assured. This is a mistake---you are undervaluing your property.

Remember, by joining the community-managed non-profit IMWSP you have effectively bought water augmentation which "stays with the property" from new owner to new owner (unless you opt-out or do not comply with WSP policies). Given the growing scarcity of water and increasing costs, to be able to say that water augmentation is included as part of your property means a great deal.

Also remember that you have been provided an IMWSP Water Augmentation Certificate. This is a valuable document and copies should

be given to your realtor and interested home buyers. Be sure to also inform them that you have a certified water meter-----your water meter is an investment and a value-added amenity to your home. We recently were told by a HASP water lawyer that "it is likely that the District Engineer (Colorado Division of Water Resources) will require metering for all augmented wells in the future." So, the WSP/HASP requirement for a water meter and monthly reporting is ahead of its time. Be sure to tell an interested property owner that your property already has a certified water meter.

- Article by Glenn Haas

## Contact: IMWSP

**Jackie Middelhoek and Patrick Smith**  
**IMWSP Administrators**

**PO Box 25**  
**Como, CO 80432**

**E-MAIL:**  
**[IndianMountainMetroDist@gmail.com](mailto:IndianMountainMetroDist@gmail.com)**

**PHONE:**  
**(719) 836-9043**

**IMWSP: See us under the WATER tab at:**

<http://www.indianmountain.info>

**HASP: [www.haspwater.com](http://www.haspwater.com)**

### **COLORADO DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES:**

- Well Permit Search: [Well Permits](#)
- Water Rights (Decrees) Search: [Water Rights](#)
- Change of Owner/Address: [Guide to Change Owner Name and Change Owner Name eForm](#)
- To File a Well Permit Application: scroll down to Form GWS-44: [GWS-44 Well Permit App](#) and check out [Well Permitting](#) and [Beginner's Guide to Well Permits](#)

**IMPOA: [IMPOA](#)**