

Dear Resident,

We have a few things to update you on:

- System #1 Water Quality Violation (see enclosed)
- System #2 Water Quality Violation (see enclosed)
- Burgess Lake Level in 2026 (see below)

## Burgess Lake Level in 2026

As you're probably aware, the water level of Burgess Lake is current very low.

Unfortunately, unless Colorado receives some serious rain/snow, it will stay that way throughout 2026. Here's why:

1. Per the Colorado Division of Water Sources (CDWS) decree of 1993, Spring Valley's augmentation plan dictates that:
  - 8 groundwater wells can be pumped year-round for reliable residential supply
  - Valley Maintenance Corporation (VMC) must offset this year-round pumping by releasing water from Burgess Lake. **10% of all water used from the wells is released from Burgess Lake**

Without this augmentation plan, water from the wells would be curtailed when their rights are "out of priority" as determined by the state.

2. Per the CDWS decree of 1993, Spring Valley's water rights dictate that water running into Burgess Lake (from natural sources like snow melt) can only be stored if the lake's water rights are "in priority". In wet years, these rights can be "in priority" for several months during the year, meaning VMC does not have to release any water from the lake. **In dry years (like this year), the lake is not in priority at all, meaning water cannot be stored.**

There were natural inflows into Burgess Lake over Fall 2025, Winter 2025/26 and early Spring 2026 that were not released due to freezing. These amounts are not allowed to be stored per the CDWS since we are currently out of priority. Because of this, the CDWS has directed VMC to bring the water level down to "zero" on the staff gauge at the dam. As of 4/20/2026, we have another 3 inches to go to get to this level. **Because of Colorado's drought, we expect the lake to stay at this level throughout the year.**

Why now?

- Since the decree in 1993, the CDWS essentially “ignored” VMC's augmentation plan and water rights
- Since pressure for water has increased in recent years, the State is now paying attention and requires all water users to report water usage and operate in a way that is equitable to all CO water rights owners
- This change in enforcement has been anticipated since 1993 but was only put in place recently

Here's the good news:

- VMC has enough water stored in Burgess Lake to satisfy the first requirement in 2026 and beyond
  - Only Burgess Lake is affected by this decree. All other lakes and springs in Spring Valley will remain untouched
  - We can positively affect the level of Burgess Lake by minimizing water use! The less water we use, the less we have to release to satisfy the first requirement
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If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact the VMC board at [vmcdivide@gmail.com](mailto:vmcdivide@gmail.com).

If you are interested in making a difference in your community and affecting the decisions made regarding issues like these, please join the VMC board, we currently have two open positions and would love your help!

Kind Regards,  
Valley Maintenance Corporation

Board of Directors:  
Bill Burton, Greg Koetter, Leonard Miller, Jay Oliver, Sarah Gooding