

MOST COMMONLY VIOLATED WATER STATUTES

37-84-101. Maintenance of embankments and tail ditch

The owners of any ditch for irrigation or other purposes shall carefully maintain the embankments thereof so that the waters of such ditch may not flood or damage the premises of others, and shall make a tail ditch so as to return the water in such ditch with as little waste as possible into the stream from which it was taken.

37-84-108. Running excess of water forbidden

During the summer season it shall not be lawful for any person to run through his irrigating ditch any greater quantity of water than is absolutely necessary for irrigating his land, and for domestic and stock purposes, it being the intent and meaning of this section to prevent the wasting and useless discharge and running away of water.

37-84-112. Headgates - specifications - failure to maintain - penalty

(1) The owners of any irrigation ditch, canal, flume, or reservoir in this state, taking water from any stream, shall erect where necessary and maintain in good repair, at the point of intake of such ditch, canal, flume, or reservoir, a suitable and proper headgate of height and strength and with embankments sufficient to control the water at all ordinary stages and suitable and proper measuring flumes, weirs, and devices and shall also erect and maintain in good repair suitable wastegates where necessary in connection with such ditch, canal, flume, or reservoir intake. The framework of such headgate shall be constructed of timber not less than four inches square, and the bottom, sides, and gate shall be of plank not less than two inches in thickness, or said gate may be made of other material of equal strength and durability or may be made and constructed upon plans and specifications approved by the state engineer. No such headgate shall be deemed complete until provided with suitable locks and fastenings (except when the division engineer deems such locks and fastenings unnecessary therefor) and keys therefor are delivered to the division engineer of the division who has control thereof during the seasons of the distribution of water.

(2) If the owners of any such irrigation ditch, canal, flume, or reservoir fail or neglect to erect or maintain in good repair said headgate, measuring flume, weir, or devices, in the manner and form provided in this section, then the state engineer or division engineer,

or his appointed agent the right of ascertaining the quantity of water being diverted by any canal or impounded in or delivered from any reservoir without his being required to assign any reason for making such observations. Noncompliance with the provisions of sections 37-84-112 to 37-84-117 shall, during such noncompliance, forfeit the right to divert water into any canal or to impound water in or deliver water from any reservoir.

37-84-119. Ditches to be kept in repair

The owners, or persons in control, of any canal or ditch used for irrigating purposes shall maintain the same in good order and repair, ready to receive water by April 1 in each year, so far as can be accomplished by the exercise of reasonable care and diligence, and shall construct the necessary outlets in the banks of the canal or ditch for a proper delivery of the water to persons having paid-up shares or who have rights to the use of water. A multiplicity of outlets in the canal or ditch shall at all times be avoided, so far as the same shall be reasonably practicable, and the location of the same shall be under the control of and shall be at the most convenient and practicable points consistent with the protection and safety of the ditch for the distribution of water among the various claimants thereof; and such location shall be under the control of a superintendent

37-84-121. Penalty for refusal to deliver water

Any superintendent or any person having charge of said ditch who willfully neglects or refuses to deliver water, as provided in sections 37-84-118 to 37-84-123, or any person who prevents or interferes with the proper delivery of water to the persons having the right thereto is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten dollars nor more than one hundred dollars for each offense, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one month, or by both such fine and imprisonment. The money thus collected shall be paid into the general fund of the county in which the misdemeanor has been committed. The owners of such ditches shall be liable in damages to the persons deprived of the use of the water to which they were entitled as provided in sections 37-84-118 to 37-84-123.

37-84-124. Amount of water taken

It is the duty of every person who is entitled to take water for irrigation purposes from any ditch, canal, or reservoir to see that he receives no more water from such ditch, canal, or reservoir through his headgate, or by any ways or means whatsoever, than the amount to

which he is entitled. At all times, such person shall take every precaution to prevent more water than the amount to which he is entitled from such ditch, canal, or reservoir from coming upon his land.

37-87-109. Complaint that reservoir is unsafe

Upon complaint being made to the state engineer by one or more persons residing or having property in such a location that their homes or property would be in danger of destruction or damage in the event of a flood occurring on account of the breaking of the embankment of any reservoir within the state, that said reservoir is in an unsafe condition, or that it is being filled with water to such an extent as to render it unsafe, it is the duty of the state engineer to forthwith examine said reservoir and determine the amount of water it is safe to impound therein. If, upon such examination, the state engineer finds that said reservoir is unsafe, or is being filled with water to such an extent as to render it unsafe, it is his duty to immediately cause said water to be drawn from said reservoir to such an extent as will, in his judgment, render the same safe. If water is then flowing into said reservoir, he shall cause it to be discontinued.

37-87-125. Notice of intent to construct impoundment structure

Any person proposing to construct a reservoir for the purpose of storing water, other than a reservoir specified in section 37-87-105 (1) or a livestock water tank as described in section 35-49-103, C.R.S., shall submit notice thereof to the state engineer prior to the beginning of any construction. Such notice shall include the location of such proposed reservoir with reference to section, township, and range and the dimensions of the reservoir, the dam, and the spillway. If any reservoir is constructed without the notice required by this section, the state engineer may prohibit the storage of water in such reservoir or direct the withdrawal of water from such reservoir. The provisions of this section shall not apply to structures listed in section 37-87-114.5.

37-89-101. Penalty for cutting or breaking gate, bank, flume

Any person who knowingly and willfully cuts, digs, breaks down, or opens any gate, bank, embankment, or side of any ditch, canal, flume, feeder, or reservoir, or who knowingly and willfully breaks, cuts, checks, or otherwise interferes with the flow of water in any drainage

ditch, box drain, or tile drain, or any manhole, or other opening in any box drain or tile drain, in which such person may be a joint owner, or which may be the property of another, or in the lawful possession of another and used for the purpose of drainage, irrigation, manufacturing, mining, or domestic purposes, with intent to injure any person, association, or corporation, or for personal gain, unlawfully, with intent of stealing, taking, or causing to run or pour out of or into such ditch, canal, reservoir, feeder, flume, drainage ditch, box drain, or tile drain any water for personal profit, benefit, or advantage, or with intent to check or change the flow in any such ditch, canal, feeder, flume, drainage ditch, box drain, or tile drain, to the injury of any other person, association, or corporation, lawfully in the use of such water or of such ditch, canal, reservoir, feeder, flume, drainage ditch, box drain, or tile drain, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than seven hundred fifty dollars or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than ninety days. The court shall further order that such person make full restitution to the victim of his or her conduct for the actual damages that were sustained. The amount of such restitution shall be equal to the actual pecuniary damages sustained by the victim. The court shall fix the manner and time in which such restitution shall be made.

37-89-103. Penalty for interfering with adjusted headgates

(1) Every person who willfully and without authority opens, closes, changes, or interferes with any headgate of any ditch, or any water box or measuring device of any ditch for the receiving or delivery of water, after the headgate of the ditch has been adjusted by and is in the control of the division engineer, or after such water box or measuring device has been adopted by the ditch officer in charge, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than sixty days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

(2) Any person who is found using water taken through any such headgate, water box, or measuring device so unlawfully interfered with shall prima facie be deemed guilty of a violation of this section.