



# Your Water

Winter 2004

Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District is governed by a five-member elected Board of Directors. The Board meets at the District office, 8739 W. Coal Mine Avenue at 8:30 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Citizens are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## TABOR election successful

On November 4, 2003, Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District held an election to seek approval to retain and spend all revenues received by the District without regard to limitations imposed by the TABOR Amendment. The ballot question was drafted to specifically prevent the District from increasing its property tax mill levy without a further vote of the electorate.

The ballot issue was approved by District electors by a 63 percent to 37 percent margin with 3,796 votes cast in favor and 2,190 votes cast in opposition.

The District will now be allowed to retain all revenue received from property taxes, water and sewer tap fees, investments and contract operations and use the funds for operations and infrastructure rehabilitation and replacement. The ballot issue will help the District stabilize property tax assessments and greatly reduce the potential for seeking a property tax increase in the future.

The Platte Canyon Board of Directors extends their appreciation to the citizens who took the time and effort to familiarize themselves with the ballot measure and vote during the election.

See related topics inside:  
 2004 Budget on page 2  
 Capital Improvement Plan on page 3

## No drought declaration

## Low snowpack: Denver Water implements Spring Watch Program

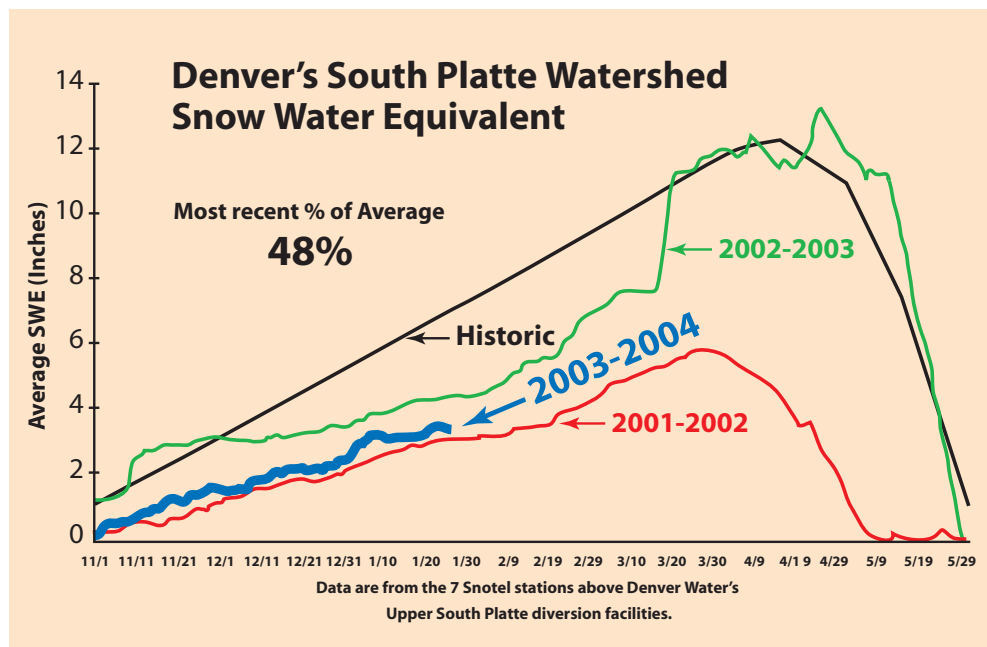
Denver Water has announced that a decision on issuing a drought declaration and imposing restrictions on water use will be made in mid-April.

Currently, the watersheds above Denver Water's reservoirs are experiencing below normal snowpack. At the end of January, the snowpack was only 49 percent of normal in the upper South Platte basin and 76 percent of normal in the Colorado basin. Storage in Denver reservoirs is 10 percent less than normal for this time of year.

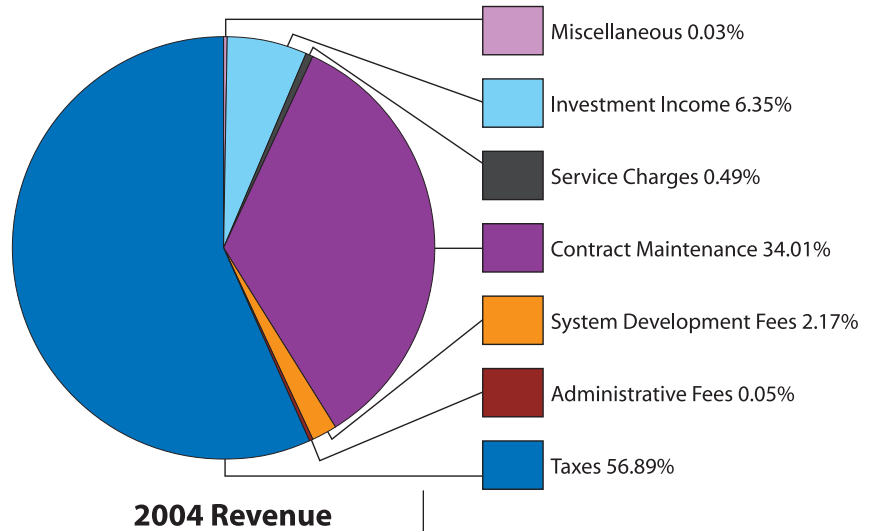
While a drought declaration is not being made at this time, Denver Water

is implementing a Spring Watch program. The program encourages customers to continue with the water conservation practices adopted during the drought. Specifically, the Water Department requests that customers water trees and shrubs as needed, but withhold watering lawns until May 1. Lawns do not require water at this time of year, and refraining from irrigation will conserve water in storage.

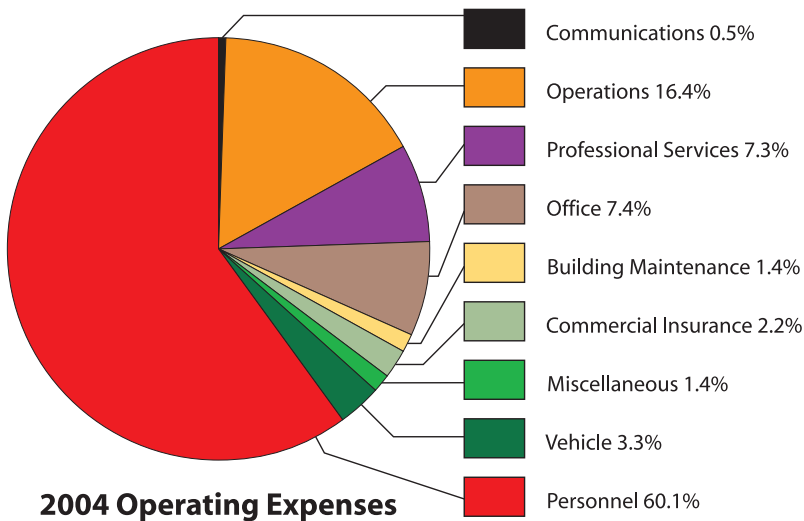
Platte Canyon customers should continue to monitor media outlets and the Denver Water Web site, [www.denverwater.org](http://www.denverwater.org) for updates on the water supply situation.



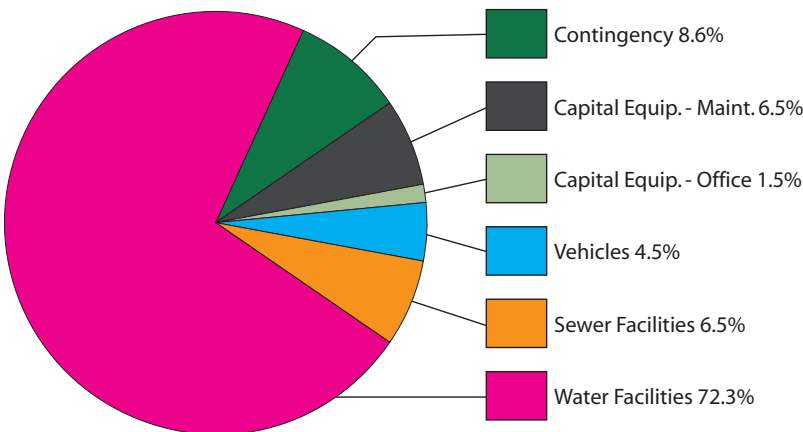
# Platte Canyon Board of Directors adopts 2004 budget



2004 Revenue



2004 Operating Expenses



2004 Capital Expenses

The Platte Canyon Board of Directors has adopted a budget calling for a 3.7 percent reduction in expenditures from the 2003 budget.

Highlights from the adopted budget include the following:

**Revenue is projected to be \$2.2 million allocated between the following sources.**

- Property taxes \$1.1 million
- Contract maintenance revenue \$.7 million
- Investment income and other sources \$.4 million

**Expenditures are budgeted at \$2.7 million; \$1.5 million for operations and \$1.2 million for capital expenses.**

- Personnel costs which represent 60 percent of all operating costs are budgeted at \$901,000, less than a one percent increase over 2003 budgeted expenses.
- Water and sewer facility operating and maintenance costs are budgeted at \$245,300, a reduction of \$128,000 from the 2003 budget.
- Administrative costs are budgeted at \$110,425, 8 percent less than the amount budgeted in 2003.
- Capital expenses for 2004 are projected to be \$1.2 million; \$845,000 for water main replacements and \$355,000 for sewer main rehabilitation and equipment purchases. (See article on Capital Improvement Plan on page 3.)

# Construction projects for 2004 part of new five-year Capital Improvement Plan

Upon approval of the 2004 budget, the Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors approved a Capital Improvement Plan for the years 2004 through 2008. The plan calls for expenditure of \$1.0 million in 2004 and \$3.2 million over the five-year period.

Projects approved for construction in 2004 include the following:

➤ Replacement of 830 feet of 6-inch water pipe in **W. Elmhurst Dr. between W. Clifton Pl. and 6127-6128 W. Elmhurst Dr.** This project is scheduled for construction in late spring 2004. Estimated cost: \$130,000.

➤ Replacement of 18 fire hydrants at various locations throughout the District. Construction will begin in March. Projected cost: \$65,000.

➤ Replacement of 1,600 feet of 12-inch water pipe in **W. Bowles Ave. between S. Eaton Ln. and S. Jay Ct.** Platte Canyon is pursuing an agreement with Denver Water which would allow the District to transfer water taps from its pipe to a parallel pipe owned by Denver Water. If negotiations are not successful, this project will proceed in late summer. Estimated cost: \$303,000.

➤ Replacement of 1,025 feet of 18-inch steel water pipe in **Sheridan Blvd. between W. Coal Mine Ave. and Dutch Creek.** Construction is expected to begin in June and take approximately one month to complete. Estimated cost: \$183,000.

➤ Rehabilitation of 800 feet of sewer pipe in **W. Roxbury Dr. between S. Pierce St. and S. Newland St.** For this project, the District will use a pipeline rehabilitation technique that calls for insertion of a flexible pipe into the existing sewer main. The line is

then inflated and cured into a hardened pipeline. The technique allows the District to avoid excavation and minimize construction time and inconvenience to customers. Estimated cost: \$43,800.

➤ Replacement of 240 feet of 8-inch sewer pipe in **W. Frost Dr. between S. Yarrow Wy. and S. Zepher Wy.** The cured-in-place rehabilitation process referenced above is not a viable option for this project. Therefore, the existing pipe will be replaced using the standard excavation and installation of new pipe method. Estimated cost: \$33,000.

As with all District construction projects, our staff will work closely with residents and business owners to minimize inconvenience as much as possible. Questions or comments regarding the projects should be referred to Dennis Morse, construction coordinator, at 303-979-2333.

## Jefferson County closes Bowles Ave. due to December water main break

A water main break on December 5, 2003 prompted Jefferson County to close Bowles Ave. between Pierce St. and Eaton Lane due to icy road conditions.

The break occurred at 5:32 a.m. on a Platte Canyon-owned 12-inch cast iron pipe which was installed in 1959. District staff suspects the cause of the break was due to electrolysis.

Electrolysis is caused by stray electrical currents which cause unprotected metallic pipe to corrode and, eventually, fail. Today, metallic pipes are wrapped in plastic to prevent electrolysis.

Although a large excavation in W. Bowles Ave. was necessary to complete repairs, work was completed, water service restored, and the road reopened

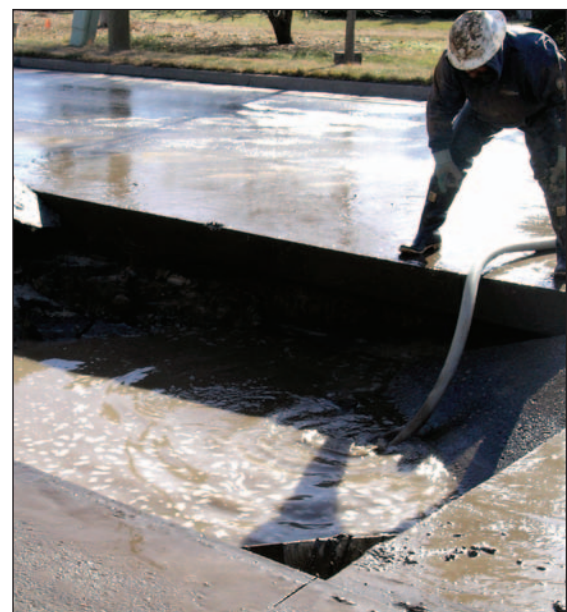
within a matter of hours.

Multiple Jefferson County departments responded and worked in cooperation with the District to resolve the situation in a timely manner. Total repair costs are expected to be \$40,000.

The District is negotiating with the Denver Water Department to abandon this water main transferring existing service pipes to a parallel 16-inch water main that Denver owns.

### Possible water main breaks

If you notice water “percolating” up through the asphalt in the street or sidewalk, call the District office immediately at 303-979-2333. Not all water breaks are geysers or sinkholes.



# U.S. Forest Service releases South Platte Wild and Scenic River Study

**F**ollowing 10 years of analysis, the U.S. Forest Service has released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the South Platte Wild and Scenic River Study. The Forest Service has selected Alternative A.2, The South Platte Protection Plan (SPPP), as the study's preferred alternative. The SPPP was cooperatively composed by a group of stakeholders consisting of water providers, local general purpose governments, state agencies, recreationists, conservationists, environmentalists, and property owners.

The purpose of the SPPP is to protect resource values and preserve water supply functions along a 72.3 mile segment of the South Platte and North Fork of the South Platte Rivers without designating the rivers under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Water providers strenuously objected to designation under the federal act due to the restrictions that would be imposed on conveyance of water for municipal water supplies.

Environmental interests, on the

other hand, demanded protection for river resource values. To avoid confrontation and stalemate, interested parties agreed to seek a compromise solution that would protect river values without negatively impacting current and future water supply operations. The resulting SPPP contains the following major components.

**1. Protect Canyons** — Water providers agree not to build water works facilities in Cheesman or Elevenmile Canyons.

**2. Streamflow Management** — Water providers agree to modify water facility operations to protect and enhance fisheries.

**3. Partnership to Manage, Protect and Enhance Recreation, Wildlife, Scenery and Other Values** — Denver Water, the Forest Service and local general purpose governments agree to jointly manage recreation along the river corridors.



**4. Cooperative Water Quality Initiatives** — The Coalition for the Upper South Platte will coordinate efforts to protect water quality.

**5. Endowment** — Water providers and local governments agree to contribute at least \$1.0 million to be spent on values identified by the Forest Service.

**6. Enhancement Board** — A coordinating forum, the Friends of the South Platte River, Inc. will monitor and comment on land use and land management issues as well as make decisions regarding expenditures from the endowment fund.

**7. Withdrawal of Applications for Conditional Water Rights** — Denver Water and suburban water providers agree to withdraw applications for rights to 780,000 acre feet of water storage at the Two Forks reservoir site.

**8. Denver Water's Right-of-Way for Water Storage** — Denver Water agrees to not pursue use of a right-of-way for water storage at the Two Forks site for 20 years, and to abandon the right-of-way if alternative projects are developed to use the water that would be stored at that location.

**9. Provision for Limited Development** — Water providers continue to have access to the river for operational and maintenance purposes.

The U.S. Forest Service is soliciting comments on the FEIS through April 2, 2004. Additional information can be obtained from U.S. Forest Service representative John Hill at 719-553-1414 or by e-mail at [jjhill01@fs.fed.us](mailto:jjhill01@fs.fed.us).

## Focus on Employees

### Pedro Chihuahua

**T**he Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest maintenance employee, Pedro Chihuahua. Pedro was born in El Paso, Texas and moved to Colorado in 1992. He graduated from Adams City High School in Commerce City and is currently attending Metropolitan State University majoring in Behavioral Science. He joins the Platte Canyon staff after being employed by Alpine Lumber.

Pedro's duties include responding to customer service calls, problem solving,



and performing maintenance on the District's water and sanitary sewer lines, and pumping stations.

He enjoys interacting with people and considers being a quick learner an important job strength. His family, including four sisters, all reside in Colorado. During his free time, Pedro enjoys spending time with friends. This summer he will play semiprofessional football with the Metropolitan Wolverines.

# Xeriscape classes start March 11

Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District will again be hosting exciting Xeriscape classes this spring. These programs are designed to teach you how to save water and money. Information regarding the Xeriscape classes follows:

## ■ XeriClinics

The Xericlinic seminar has two sections — an Introduction to Xeriscape and a One-on-One session with a professional landscape designer.

### Introduction To Xeriscape

Free with reservation

Thursday, March 11, 2004

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

District office, 8739 W. Coal Mine Ave.

### One-on-One Sessions

\$60 for District residents

April 2, 2004 and April 17, 2004

1-hour sessions to be scheduled throughout the day.

The introduction class will be presented by Denver Water Department's Xeriscape expert David Winger. The introduction will describe the basics of Xeriscape and includes a slide show. The introduction is free and anyone is welcome to attend. A reservation is necessary!

The second section is a one-on-one session with a renowned landscape architect who will assist you in introducing Xeriscape into your particular landscape, but a person or couple wishing to attend the one-on-one session must first attend the free two-hour introduction class. You pay one-half of the landscape architect's fee, and the District picks up the rest. This session is a great opportunity to have a landscape architect help you design your Xeriscape at half the cost! Space is limited, a reservation is required.

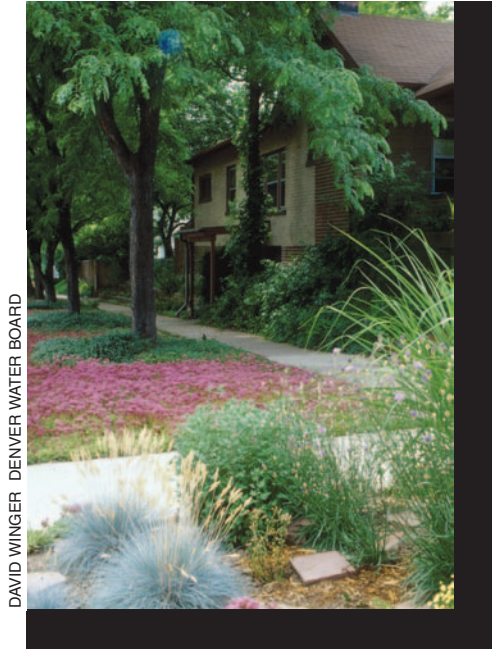
## ■ Shrub Roses: Paradise in Bloom Seminar

Free with reservation

Saturday, May 1, 2004

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

District office, 8739 W. Coal Mine Ave.



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Marilyn Raff, author of *The Intuitive Gardener: Finding Creative Freedom in the Garden* and owner of Gardens by Raff, will be presenting "Shrub Roses: Paradise in Bloom." Raff will present the history and varieties of shrub roses that perform beautifully under Colorado's harsh growing conditions. In addition, learn how to incorporate these roses into your existing landscape or plant them among new perennials, annuals and shrubs. Easy maintenance techniques will also be discussed. This is a free seminar. Please call to make a reservation.

## ■ Keeping Your Lawn Green With Less Water

Free with reservation

Saturday, May 8, 2004

9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

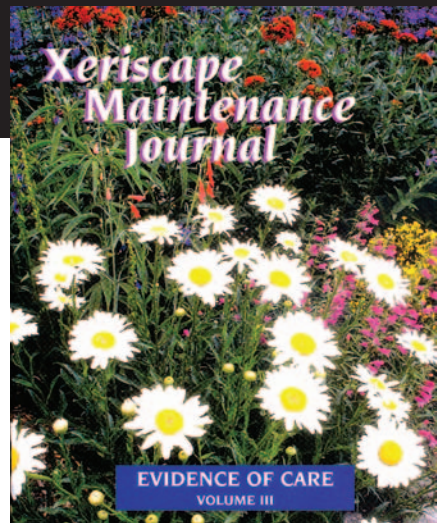
District office, 8739 W. Coal Mine Ave.

This popular seminar will be presented by Larry Keesen, president of Keesen Water Management, one of the metro area's leading experts on lawn irrigation efficiency. Keesen will describe how a few minor changes to your irrigation system or your lawn watering habits can result in large dollar savings. This is a free seminar. Please call to make a reservation.

To make reservations, or if you have



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questions or comments for the 2004 Xeriscape seminar program, or would like to suggest a particular topic, please contact Alyssa Quinn at 303-979-2333.

## ■ Xeriscape Maintenance Journal – Volume III

The third volume of the popular *Xeriscape Maintenance Journal* has just been released. The *Xeriscape Maintenance Journal – Evidence of Care* is a full-color booklet that provides a wealth of information on Xeriscape plant materials and Xeriscape landscaping techniques and practices.

Platte Canyon Water & Sanitation has a limited number of all three volumes available for \$6 each at the District office, 8739 W. Coal Mine Ave. If you would like a free copy, sign up and attend one of the seminars.

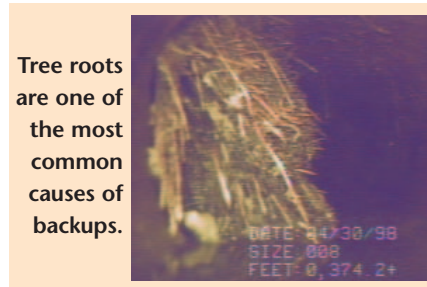
# Protect your property from sewer backups

Occasionally, District maintenance staff responds to sewer backup reports from distressed homeowners who have lost valuable property stored on a basement floor near a floor drain. If a sewer service pipe or sewer main becomes clogged, wastewater drained from the house backs up in the pipe and usually surfaces through basement floor drains. If not detected and corrected immediately the backup can spread and contact items which have been boxed and stored in a seemingly remote area of the basement.

The majority of sewer backups occur in customer-owned service lines and not the District's sewer main. One of the most common causes of service line backups is tree roots which infiltrate the customer's service line. Trees are frequently planted directly over or adjacent to the sewer pipe. Roots from fast-growing trees can infiltrate the pipe joints in a matter of a few years. Once the hairlike roots enter the sewer pipe, they grow exceedingly fast and can completely clog the pipe in a matter of months.

Other causes for sewer service line backups include grease buildup and foreign objects which become lodged in the pipe (toys and diapers).

On rare occasions, District-owned sewer mains become clogged and cause backups. Blockages in the sewer mains are caused by tree roots entering the mains through individual service line connections, grease buildup from commercial properties, structural deficiencies, and vandalism. To prevent sewer main backups from occurring, the District inspects each main with television cameras every four years, or more



often in known trouble areas. Any obstructions observed are removed immediately by District maintenance staff.

It is generally determined by insurance companies and courts that sewer service providers cannot be held responsible for sewer backups if they have a proactive sewer maintenance program. Because many homeowners insurance policies exclude coverage for sewer

backups, property owners can be left without recourse for recovery of damages (see sidebar).

In order to avoid the distress caused by loss of personal property, District staff recommends that sewer service pipes be roto-rooted occasionally, that homeowners refrain from "dumping" cooking grease down sinks, and that personal property not be stored directly on the floor, if possible.

If you are experiencing a sewer backup, please contact the District office at 303-979-2333 for assistance.

## Check your home insurance policy

Platte Canyon Water and Sanitation District would like to remind property owners that many homeowner insurance policies exclude coverage for damage caused by sewer backups and water pipe breaks.

Although the coverage for such situations is frequently excluded, it usually can be purchased by homeowners for a nominal amount. We encourage you to contact your insurance representative to determine the status of your coverage.



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