

Land Use In Saguache County

Information about departments of Saguache County Government can be found on the Internet
<http://www.slv.org/saguache/>

The Saguache County Land Use Code, in its entirety, is available on the Internet:
<http://www.slv.org/saguache/landuse.html>

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Land Use Topics of Interest

Building Permits

A Building Permit is required in order to build or remodel any structure in the unincorporated area of Saguache County. This includes any mobile home whether the mobile home is to be used for a residence or for storage. Please be aware that no structure older than 20 years may be brought into Saguache County. The building permit application and most recent fee schedule may be obtained at the Land Use Department.

Sewage Disposal

All residences in the unincorporated areas of Saguache County must have individual sewage disposal systems or be connected to a central sewage system. This regulation is both a Colorado State law and a Saguache County regulation. If you are residing in a home that does not have a sewage disposal system you are in violation of both of these regulations, and you may be ordered to move from your residence until a system is installed.

Doing Business in Saguache County

The uses by right in Saguache County are agricultural and one single family residence per parcel. Any other use must be given County approval before the use can begin.

A Home Occupation or Conditional Use permit is required when any business is conducted out of a home. You can obtain applications for Home Occupations and Conditional Use, and copies of these and other regulations from the Saguache County Land Use Office.

Landowning, Colorado Style

An excellent booklet, available through either the State Water Department or Cooperative Extension in Alamosa, which discusses: Being a Good Neighbor to Public Lands, Respecting the Code of the West, Soils, Water, Weeds, Water Quality and Riparian Areas, Grazing, Trees and Forests, Wildlife, Home site Planning, and Additional Contacts.

Additional Sources of Information

State Water Resources (Division of), District 20 Water Commissioner	719 589-6683
422 4th Street, Alamosa	
CSU-Cooperative Extension, 401 Sante Fe, PO Box 329, Alamosa	719 589-2271
US Forest Service & BLM, 46525 Hwy 114, Saguache	719 655-2547
State Forest Service, 7980 W. US Hwy 50, Salida	719 539-2579
Soil Conservation Service, 550 Worth, Center	719 754-3400

Saguache County Master Planning Survey

Summary of Results

Saguache County covers the northern end of the fertile San Luis Valley in south-central Colorado, with a land area of 3,146 square miles and an estimated population of 6,046. The county enjoys a rural, agricultural atmosphere that attracts tourists, retirees and urban refugees.

Over the last decade, Saguache County has been experiencing an increasingly rapid growth rate, and is currently the eighth fastest growing county in the United States (on a percent increase basis). The pressures of such rapid growth present challenges to County leadership.

In the Winter of 2000, the County Planning Commission prepared a survey to provide an opportunity for Saguache County voters to express their views to County government. This will help in development of the Saguache County Master Plan. Surveys were mailed to 1,386 registered voters. There were 1060 surveys completed and tallied for a return rate of 57%, indicating a high level of interest in Saguache County regarding land use and growth issues.

Who answered the survey?

95% of the completed surveys came from full time residents of Saguache County. 17% were from lifelong residents, 39% from folks who've lived here more than 10 years. 11 % reported having lived here less than 2 years.

90% stated they owned their residence/property here. 57% owned property less than 35 acres; 35 % indicating ownership of 35 acres or more. For 85% of the respondents, this is a primary residence. 3% were seasonal residents, and 8% have retired here.

11% identified their property use as Farm, 17% as Ranch, and Non-Agricultural Business and Investment Property were 6 % and 7 %, respectively. The rest would presumably be residential.

What did they tell us?

On the question of a Building Code, 52% indicated opposition, though only 25% marked it as important. 48% responded in support of Building Codes, 35% identifying it as important. Of those answering on types of Building Code preferred:

Standard 22% Alternative 29% Minimal 23% 23% indicated none of the above..

In a section about Saguache County life, citizens reported their levels of satisfaction with various elements of daily life here, and how important they felt these to be. There were a number of other questions about specific land use issues, for which people indicated support or opposition, and again importance of the issue. The survey allowed for participants to indicate gradations of importance. In the following summary of survey results, all levels of importance were totaled, as were all levels of unimportant, and the total percentages are shown.

NOTE: Where the percentages do not total 100%, the difference is people who did not complete the question. Where percentages total more than 100%, people had the option of choosing several answers (all that applied).

These numbers paint a picture of some of the trends of thought, sentiment and experience of Saguache County voters.

Elements of Life in Saguache

Rank ordered by % of those identifying items as important.

	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Important	Unimportant
Water Preservation	69	19	89	
Private Property Rights	63	26	88	
Water Quality	78	13	85	
Soil Quality	73	15	85	
County Roads	69	25	85	
Air Quality	81	10	83	
Emergency Services	79	12	83	
Fire Protection	79	13	81	
County Appearance	58	39	80	
Community Appearance	61	32	80	
Medical Services	56	30	80	
Rural Life Style	70	21	79	
Public Schools	56	30	79	
Law Enforcement	66	25	77	
Shopping Selection	42	48	77	7
Highways	83	10	75	
Agriculture Life Style	71	18	74	
Shopping Prices	51	39	73	33
Wildlife Preservation	73	18	72	
Wetland Areas Preservation	70	18	70	
Open Space Preservation	62	28	70	
Shopping Convenience	52	38	68	12
Scenic View Preservation	73	15	67	
Wilderness Settings	78	13	66	
Parks-Community Equipped	73	16	62	
Development Controls	51	37	61	

Land Use Items

Rank ordered, by % indicating support for items.

	Supported	Opposed	Important	Unimportant
Historical/Archeology Protection Regs	80	13	67	26
Minimum sub-division lot size 1 acre	75	25	67	30
Flood Plain Protection Regs	72	23	64	31
Private Conservation Incentives	65	28	66	28
Creation of preservation subdivisions	65	29	66	28
Road Sign Regulaions	64	33	60	37
Keep commercial uses near towns	62	33	64	31
Combining of small lots	60	32	63	29
Licensing of Contractors	53	43	63	33
Restricting New Lots	52	43	62	33
Creation of land use districts	48	48	63	33
> 80 acres to be sub-division exempt	33	62	62	35