

## No federal aid

# Storm flooded Niver Canal to near 100-year level

By Joe Peifer

Most of Adams County escaped serious damage in Sunday's sudden storm,

according to Bill Wilson, county public works director.

"And it is a good thing

after what happened to us a week ago," Wilson said.

"That flood, as far as the Niver is concerned,

approached the 100-year level."

County crews are still

assessing damage to the Niver Canal basin resulting from the storm July 14.

Sunday's storm was the third within a week to bring widespread but localized flooding to the metropolitan area.

"We in the county suffered worse damage from Monday's storm than from the one on Wednesday," Wilson said.

"People do not think in terms of 100-year flood levels unless it affects the Platte River," he observed. "We had no problems with the Platte. It would take a pretty wide storm affecting all the sub-drainage basins of the Platte. But the Platte gets all the publicity.

"For example, in 1973 we suffered \$200,000 damages on the Niver but it went virtually unnoticed."

Assistance for the 1973 flood came from federal, state, urban drainage district as well as county funds, he said.

The first phase of improving the Niver has been done with \$160,000 in federal assistance.

"Actually we should have done the detention pond first," Wilson said, "but we were in danger of losing the federal monies if they were not used in time. Rip-rap was laid along the banks."

Last week's damage struck upstream from the new improvements, Wilson said.

Adams County and Thornton are working up "firm dollar costs" at present for a large detention facility on the west side of I-25 at 88th Ave., according to Adams County Commissioner Jerry Grant, chairman of the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.

Cost estimates are in the \$800,000 range, Grant said, with 50 pct. of the funds expected from federal sources and the other 50 pct. shared by Thornton and the county on a proportionate basis.

It is hoped that the project can be budgeted in the next calendar year.

"Normal rainfall we can handle," Grant said. "But something like this torrent we had, the only way we could handle so much rain in such a short time is if we can find a way to make water run up hill"

"The East has its tornadoes, the west its earthquakes," Grant said. "Last week's flood is an act of God that no one can control and no one can be accountable for."

Apparently there is no federal money available for repairing damages on the Niver resulting from the past week's flooding, Wilson said, and the county will have to foot the bill.

Though all figures are not in, he estimates the damage to be \$43,500.

## Mobile homes evacuated

# \$40,000 in damage caused by heavy rains

Damage caused by last week's heavy rains in Federal Heights, during which 51 mobile homes in Holiday Hills were evacuated, will cost an estimated \$40,000 to repair, according to Bob Manka, town engineer.

The unofficial estimate would include replacing sidewalks, repairing traffic signals, excavations, cost of electricity turn-off in Holi-

day Hills, repairing storm sewers and undermined sanitary sewers, repairing eroded streets, general cleaning up, and equipment and materials for the project.

Manka said the town's street projects had not been set back, although the storms cost construction crews three to five working days. He added that gutters and curbs washed out by the

storms had already been replaced.

The Federal Heights Police and Fire Depts. evacuated the 51 mobile homes in the southwest corner of Holiday Hills July 16 after a retaining wall gave way to the rushing water. Other areas in the park were also evacuated because of potential danger from submerged electric wiring and gas lines.

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FEDERAL HEIGHTS

# Adams County Still Counting Flood Losses

By JIM KIRKSEY  
Denver Post Staff Writer

An Adams County official said Wednesday that flooding along Niver Creek south of Thornton earlier this week may have been a 100-year flood. It caused \$43,500 damage to public property and untold private property damage.

William E. Wilson, county surveyor and director of public works, said that although the U.S. Weather Service apparently doesn't have any gauges in that area he estimates that about three inches of rain fell there in a short time Monday evening.

"It looks like the 100-year event," he added.

He said there was general flooding throughout the western, urbanized part of the county, but the area just north and south of the Niver appeared to be hardest hit.

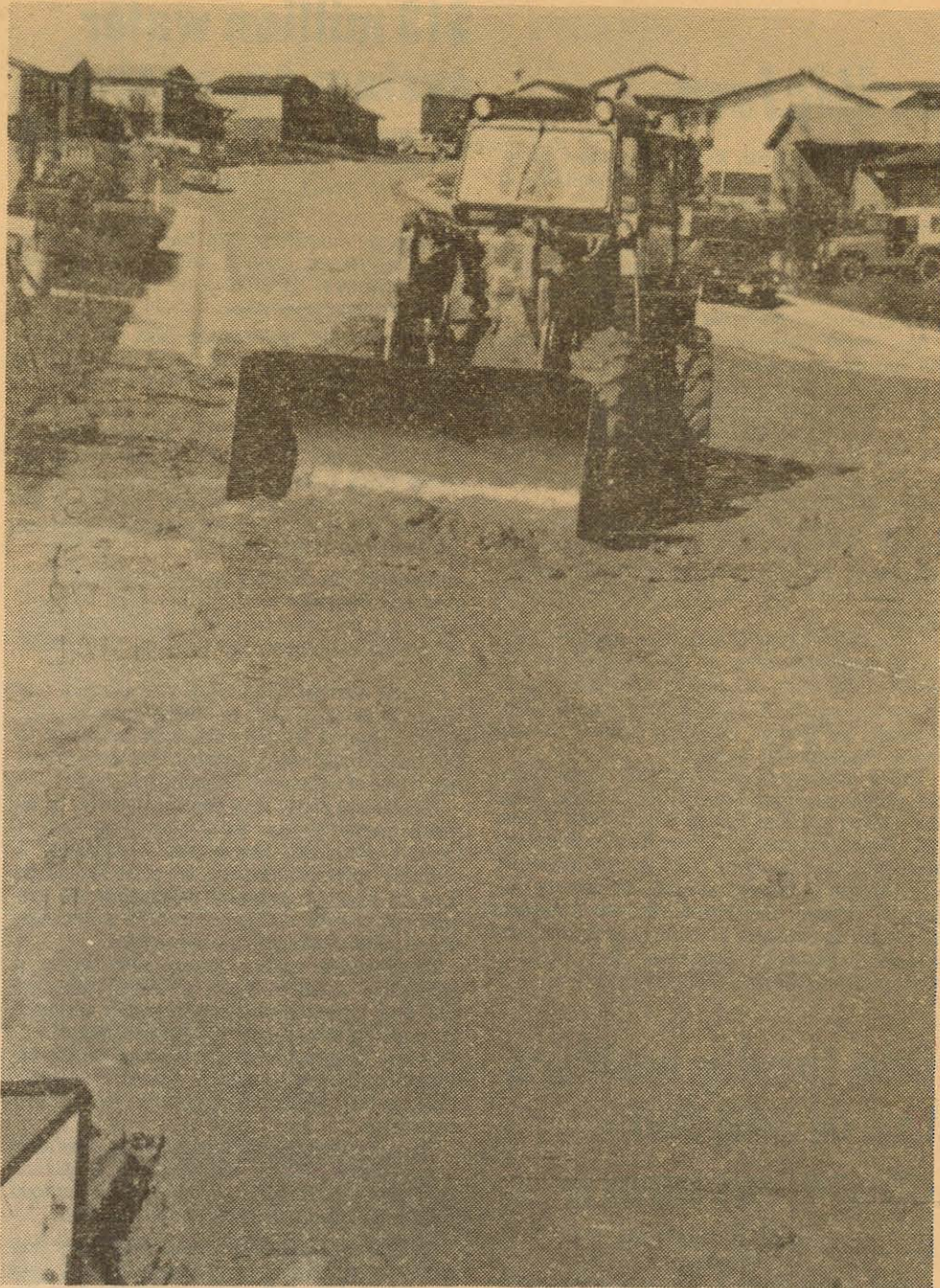
The damage, Wilson said, included undermining of a bridge across the creek on Explorador Calle at Coronado Parkway.

The bridge remains open, he explained, because engineers from his department have inspected it and determined there "is no immediate damage."

The county has received "numerous" telephone calls from residents complaining of washed-out lawns, retaining walls and flooded basements, Wilson reported.

The drainage problems in the county are compounded by the recent development there in recent years, according to Wilson. "Anytime you have development, it contributes to flooding," he said.

He said a storm drainage master plan is the only way the widespread drainage problems can be dealt with effectively. He added that he is in discussion with the cities of Arvada, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton and Westminster about putting together such a plan.



## **Rains leave a sea of mud**

The intersection of Explorador Calle Avenue and Coronado Parkway in Adams County was a sea of mud Tues-

day. Heavy rains Monday night caused some flooding north of Denver, with the excess moisture filling low spots.