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## **DISADVANTAGED BUSINESSES GET MORE ORDERS FROM METRO IN 2004**

DENVER, March 8 — Almost 19 percent, or \$4,040,705, of the \$21.3 million the Metro Wastewater Reclamation District spent on goods and services (excluding engineering services) in 2004 went to disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs), according to a report presented to the Metro District's Board of Directors recently.

The report said purchases from DBEs in 2004 were \$241,049 more than in 2003, but that the Metro District's total purchases of \$21.3 million in 2004 were less than the \$22.6 the Metro District spent in 2003.

Marsha Casteel, head of Metro's Purchasing Division, said comparing DBE purchases on a year-to-year basis is difficult because things such as the overall state of the economy cloud the issue. She also said other variables such as the award of a very large contract in a given year or fluctuations in the total number of contracts can change the figures.

The report noted that the Metro District participates in a number of activities designed to increase its visibility as a purchaser of goods and services in the DBE community. Casteel said Metro uses DBE directories and participates in organizations such as the Rocky Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council and participates in a conference called *Growth Through Partnership*.

The Metro Wastewater Reclamation District treats about 150 million gallons of wastewater a day and is the largest wastewater treatment authority in the Rocky Mountain West. The Metro District provides wastewater treatment services for about 1.5 million people in metropolitan Denver, including the residents of Denver, Arvada, Aurora, Lakewood, Thornton, part of Westminster, and more than 40 metro area sanitation and water and sanitation districts.

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