



# ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

**Increased Population** Boulder's population is projected to increase from 111,500 in 2004 to 124,400 by 2030. More residents generally means an increase in traffic congestion and vehicle accidents, as well as more fire and medical emergencies.

**Urban Densification** As Boulder continues to mature, most growth will take place in infill sites that currently may not be zoned for housing, office, and retail use. Redevelopment in the city will be denser - with multiple-story buildings and more people living and working per block. This will present challenges in responding quickly to emergencies.

**Older Buildings and Facilities** Older buildings do not have sprinkler systems, and older electrical systems and materials are not up to current code, creating fire hazards.

**Natural Environment Risks** Wildland fire risks always increase in hot dry summers. Recent pine-beetle infestations across Colorado have made pine trees more susceptible to fire. Boulder is overdue for the "100-year flood" of Boulder Creek, which is the state's No. 1 flooding hazard. Blizzards, tornadoes, and high winds can cause emergencies such as vehicle accidents and medical emergencies from traffic-light outages, downed power lines, and hazardous roads.

**Hazardous Materials Releases** With numerous chemical and biochemical manufacturing companies in Boulder, accidental hazardous materials spills on site or during transport by trucks or railroad cars can require the department's services for medical emergencies and clean-up. Domestic terrorism and crime pose the risks of potential releases of toxic fumes, chemicals, and biological agents.

