



Possible water restrictions in Vernon

RDNO staff will be monitoring weather conditions, reservoir levels, and customer water demand on a weekly basis to assess whether higher water restrictions are necessary

MORNING STAR STAFF / Jun. 15, 2019 9:48 a.m. / LOCAL NEWS / NEWS



Forecasts for a hot summer, combined with a low snowpack and a low precipitation forecast for June may lead to a change in water restrictions for the Greater Vernon Water (GVW) system.

While the Duteau Creek water reservoirs are currently at average levels, a low snowpack and a dry spring has reduced the inflow of water into the storage reservoirs, while warm weather in the valley has increased the water demand from the water users. The water utility relies on good water storage levels to get through to the next spring. The reservoirs have not filled for the first time since 2009-2010.

The Duteau Creek Watershed is the source of water for many households, businesses, and farms in Vernon, Coldstream, and Electoral Areas B and C. The Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) is working to minimize the amount of water drawn from the Duteau Creek reservoirs by drawing more water from Kalamalka Lake. Efforts to interconnect water sources and improve infrastructure over the past decade have helped to manage drought impacts on the community.

"While it is early in the season, we want to alert people that water restrictions may be on the horizon, especially if we do not get the usual June rains," said Renee Clark, water quality manager, RDNO.

"We all need to work together and use water efficiently since there are early warning signs heading into the summer with low water storage. Efforts to conserve now will put us into a better position for the summer."

GVW operates with "Normal" water restrictions in place all year. Restrictions help our infrastructure by spreading out water demand, reducing the strain on pumps and other equipment. Watering three (3) days a week or less is also a good gardening practice to help promote healthy roots and adapt plants to our arid climate.

RDNO staff will be monitoring weather conditions, reservoir levels, and customer water demand on a weekly basis to assess whether higher water restrictions are necessary.

Province of BC Drought Declaration

"The Province of British Columbia is expected to declare that the Okanagan Valley is in a Level 3 drought; we want to clarify that the situation for Greater Vernon Water is different and we set Restriction Stages using the GVW Drought Management Plan," said Zee Marcolin, General Manager of Utilities, RDNO.

"The Province generally determines drought levels by looking at the water levels in streams. The RDNO considers Restriction Stages based on a number of factors including how much water we have in storage in our reservoirs, how much water customers are using and the precipitation forecast. The main difference is that we can store a lot of water in the Duteau Creek Reservoirs and Kalamalka Lake while streams are reliant on a continuous flow."

How to Help by being WaterWise

Residents and businesses can help by being waterwise now, so we can avoid greater restrictions. Take this opportunity to remember that waterwise or xeriscape landscaping is well suited to our dry climate and many colourful plants are xeriscape-friendly.

Outdoor spaces could be converted to xeriscape with colourful shrubs, mulched flower beds, or other permeable surfaces like paving bricks and Woolly Thyme that require less maintenance than lawn.

Pledge to be waterwise at www.MakeWaterWork.ca and you could win waterwise prizes to help makeover your yard.

Other ways to be waterwise include:

Using a broom to clean driveways and other outdoor surfaces instead of a hose.

Putting a spring-loaded nozzle on your hose with an automatic shut-off.

Using a bucket and sponge to clean your vehicle or visit a carwash that recycles its water.

Avoid draining and re-filling pools or hot tubs – just top up as needed and use a pool cover to reduce evaporation. If you must drain be sure to drain over grass to avoid dumping chemically contaminated water into storm drains.

Running a sprinkler for a maximum of 20 minutes in any one spot is a good rule of thumb to give water time to absorb into the soil.

More details on the restrictions, reservoir storage levels, along with waterwise gardening tips, can be found at www.rdno.ca/water

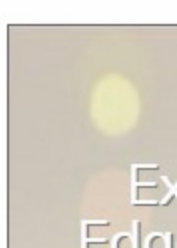
KEEP
COM



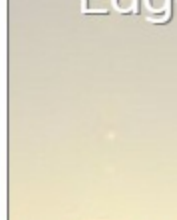
Pro
keep



L



Ex
Edg



EX
HAIR
Art | Cultu



CLICK N



O

You May Lik



If You're Ov

This Game I

Throne: Free Onl



Kelownians

for self-love



These SUVs

Crop. Resea

SUV Deals

Luxury Crossove



Vernon boil

Vernon Mor