

DROUGHT WARNING FOR OKANAGAN RESIDENTS



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Despite cooler temperatures and predicted rain in the Okanagan this week, the B.C. government has escalated the Okanagan to a Drought Level 3 rating.

Dave Campbell from the B.C Forecast Centre reports the Valley is experiencing concerning water levels for this time of year.

“When we get into Level 4 we really are starting to get into those acute levels of potential water shortage. There'd be much more ramping up on our messaging around conservation and there could be, for certain water uses, regulatory actions taken to level out the water uses.”

A bit of rain here and there helps but the Valley would need steady, prolonged rainfall to make up for some of the gap, Campbell clarified.

Environment Canada is reporting up to a 70 per cent chance of rain all week.

According to Corinne Jackson, with the Okanagan Basin Water Board, what counts is how much rain actually ends up falling.

“We had a low snow pack and then we had the early melt. We know we already have less water in our valley than normal so it really depends on how much we get in the next little while as to whether or not it makes a difference,” said Jackson.

She said if residents in the Okanagan don't conserve water now we could end up in a more difficult situation later in the summer and fall when water is needed for food crops and possible wildfires.

The City is suggesting residents reduce their water use by 30 per cent.