



CANADA

Okanagan Valley upgraded to level 3 drought conditions



By **Darrian Matassa-Fung** · Global News

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B.C. government declares level 3 drought for the Okanagan – Jul 16, 2021

VIDEO LINK: <https://globalnews.ca/news/8035576/okanagan-valley-level-3-drought-conditions/>

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The entire [Okanagan Valley](#) is in the midst of a record-breaking summer, with high temperatures and extremely low precipitation levels, which has led to the B.C. government to declare a level three drought for the region.

“We’re in level three drought. That is a declaration from the province of B.C., looking at water levels,” said Corinne Jackson, Okanagan Basin Water Board’s communications director.

“We had warmer temperatures this spring without the precipitation that we would normally have. As a result we have low water levels and the hot temperatures are also driving this drought.”

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Low water supply levels in the Okanagan have led to water restrictions in surrounding communities.

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Currently, the City of Penticton is at stage two of water restrictions. Residents can only water their landscapes two days a week with no watering on Mondays.

The Regional District of North Okanagan is currently at stage one water restrictions, which is the same stage as the City of Kelowna, where restrictions were implemented about a week ago.

“Our seven-day average has been decreasing slightly, but it still is pretty high,” said Andy Weremy, City of Kelowna’s water operations manager.

“Our staff are working very hard to keep the water moving, meeting customers’ demands.”

However, the City of Kelowna is quick to admit that with the heat seemingly sticking around for the foreseeable future, things could get worse.

“We are managing, but water consumption for outdoor use because of the hot weather and dry hot conditions is a concern,” said Weremy.

“We will be looking at the demands over the last month and with the projected hot weather to continue, we will be meeting with our senior leadership team early next week to see what our next steps are.”

READ MORE: [Watering restrictions en route for Okanagan communities](#)

Looking ahead at the region’s forecast, Environment Canada says it doesn’t look like any significant rain will be on the way.

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“I don’t see anything that would show widespread precipitation across the B.C.’s Interior in incoming forecast,” said Lisa Erven, an Environment and Climate Change Canada meteorologist.

“As we get into next week, we might see some isolated showers but really we need substantial rainfall and the short-term forecast doesn’t hold that.”

Currently, the agriculture industry in the Okanagan is not being impacted by the water restrictions, but re-evaluations of the water restrictions could change that.



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