

Read more below



ACTIONFEST IS BACK!

- Slow-Pitch Tournament
- Beverage Garden
- Entertainment
- NEW! Summerland's Got Talent Contest
- Family Zone
- Food Trucks
- Fireworks

June
3-5



The Okanagan Basin Water Board has launched its Make Water Work campaign for 2022. (Black Press file photo)

Okanagan residents encouraged to get the most out of their water use

The Okanagan Basin Water Board's 'Make Water Work' campaign is back ahead of the 2022 summer season

BRENDAN SHYKORA / May. 21, 2022 1:10 p.m. / LOCAL NEWS / NEWS



The May long weekend marks the unofficial start to summer, which means it's a good time for Okanagan residents to start thinking about their water use.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) is encouraging residents to take the 'Make Water Work' pledge. Okanagan mayors have been promoting the annual campaign on social media with tips for getting the most out of your water.

"Although it's been unseasonably cold in our desert community and throughout the valley this spring, we're launching the Make Water Work campaign recognizing that people are getting their irrigation ready, garden centres are busy, people are in their gardens, and it's always better to set things up right in the first place than to have to go back and fix things," said Sue McKortoff, OBWB chair and mayor of Osoyoos.

McKortoff said this spring's cool weather has been a relief after what the valley saw in 2021.

"Given last year's drought and wildfires, and that the Okanagan's snowpack has improved but is still below normal, I'll be happy to see a slow snow melt," she said. "In fact, with Okanagan Lake still below full pool, cooler weather and a little more rain would help us bounce back from last year's drought."

It's too early to be able to forecast what the Okanagan's summer will look like this year, so it's best to be prepared, said OBWB Communications Director Corinne Jackson.

"The fact is that the Okanagan has one of the highest rates of water use in Canada, with less available per person, and our population continues to grow," Jackson said.

"Drought or no drought, that's good enough reason to consider our water use," Jackson added. "Make Water Work is aimed at tackling the second largest use of water in the Okanagan, residential outdoor use, and creating healthier and more resilient neighbourhoods."

Residents can make their pledge at makewaterwork.ca and invite family and friends to join them. The website has plenty of tips. Pledges include:

- Water lawn between dusk and dawn.
- Water plants, not pavement.
- Never mow low. Let it grow.
- Choose plants suitable to our dry climate.
- Tune up my irrigation.
- Aerate my lawn and top dress with compost.

As an added incentive, residents who make a pledge will be entered to win one of two \$500 WaterWise yard upgrades.

Pledges also go towards helping the community earn the title of Make Water Work Champions for 2022.

This year's campaign features the native plants in its Make Water Work Plant Collection, recognizing the increased interest in local plants that naturally thrive in the valley's climate, and providing benefits to local pollinators and other wildlife.

"As part of a 'pandemic project,' our family transformed part of our yard from neglected lawn to xeriscape using the Make Water Work Plant Collection, and it held up great through last year's heat dome and drought," Jackson said.

The campaign has partnered with garden centres throughout the valley to carry the plant collection.