

# Water matters

## What is Water to the User?

**We drink it, we cook with it, we grow our food with it, and we bathe in it. Water is essential to human survival; without it we would live less than a week.**

For thousands of years we have found it necessary to control water—in order to have it where we want it, when we want it. Nonetheless, some areas still suffer from drought, and some from flood. This is due partly to the natural variability of climate and partly to inappropriate land and water use. Now climate seems to be changing beyond that natural variability, and this is likely to impact on the availability and distribution of water.

We devour it as though there were an everlasting supply. We saturate our lawns with it, endlessly run it through our dishwashers and washing machines, and use it to keep our cars and driveways sparkling clean. With an average person using over 350 litres of water a day, there is seemingly no end in sight to the demand for fresh, clean water.

Experts are again warning that our wasteful ways need to change—fast. Mild winters and a lack of snow cover in the watersheds have left some mountaintops bare and dry, sparking fears of drought and a shortage of drinking water. Some reservoirs throughout the Okanagan are becoming dangerously low and they are dependant on this winter's snow to fill them, ready for the demands of the people during the summer.

The Okanagan valley can continue to expect warmer winters, higher overnight temperatures, and warmer summers as this weather phenomenon continues. The solution is straight-forward—water conservation. Simply stated, water conservation means doing the same with less, by using water more efficiently or reducing where appropriate, in order to protect the resource now, and for the future. And so, let's do our part, and report those who don't.

## 10 Things You Can Do To Save Water Outside:

1. **Water your lawn only when it needs it.**
2. **Deep-soak your lawn.**
3. **Water during the cool parts of the day.**
4. **Don't water the gutter, or sidewalks.**
5. **Plant drought-resistant trees and plants.**
6. **Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants to avoid evaporation and discourage weeds.**
7. **Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.**
8. **Don't run the hose while washing your car.**
9. **Consider installing underground irrigation, as it is more efficient and effective.**
10. **Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, faucets and couplings.**



*Benjamin Franklin once said,  
“When wells run dry, we know the worth of water.”*

### Water Wastage:

BMID has been reminded by other authorities that water spraying onto roadways from irrigation systems is unacceptable. In addition to the waste issue, a sudden shower of water onto a windshield or a cyclist can be dangerous, and could cause legal problems if an accident occurs.

### DID YOU KNOW...

BMID customers wishing to irrigate may not:

- Use more than 5 US gallons per minute per acre of land being irrigated for agricultural purposes;
- Use more than one outlet at a time for sprinkling lawns and gardens;
- Use excess water for sprinkling;
- Sprinkle with an open hose or pipe.

## Be Responsible When Playing In Our Watersheds

Canadians have traditionally valued opportunities for outdoor recreation and in recent years have sought the outdoors as never before. Activities such as swimming, boating, canoeing, fishing, ATVing, Four-wheeling, and camping allow us to experience the beauty of our mountains, lakes and rivers.

While not all outdoor recreation requires water, the presence of water tends to enhance the experience. That is why, we need to take on stewardship and protect our precious watersheds.

- Recognize that you are in a community watershed and that water is a priority resource.
- Stay on designated roads to avoid damaging soft ground such as meadow lands and creeks.
- Pack out what you pack in.
- Go to the bathroom away from streams and lakes.



**OBSERVE, RECORD, and REPORT** questionable activities to **BMID** at **765-5169**.

### Toll Rates for 2003

Rates for domestic water use have been increased from \$21.00 per month to \$22.00. Comparable increases for commercial and industrial properties will also apply.

Discounts will be available again for domestic customers who wish to pay for the year prior to the end of March 2003.

For more details on rate changes, go to BMID's website at [bmid.org](http://bmid.org) or contact the office.

*Water flows  
humbly to the  
lowest level.  
Nothing is weaker  
than water,  
Yet for overcoming  
what is hard  
and strong,  
Nothing surpasses  
it.*

- Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

### Excess Water Use Penalized

The prescribed penalty for violating water use restrictions under the district's irrigation bylaw is shutting off the water service and be subject to a penalty of \$30 for each offence under the sprinkling regulations.

Further, every person who disobeys or fails to comply with any provision of this bylaw shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2000 other than that shown under Section 11b of Bylaw 610 (Domestic Water Distribution Regulation Bylaw), or to imprisonment not exceeding 60 days, or both.

## Crown Corporation to Sell Off Waterfront Lots on Reservoirs

Land and Water BC (LAWBC) is the crown corporation that looks after all crown lands in the province., and has recently announced that they propose to sell off crown land, including some waterfront lots along the shoreline of our drinking water reservoirs.

According to a study done by the Ministry of Environment in 2000, about two-thirds of the e-coli in our source water supply comes from humans and domestic animals, including cattle, and the district believes the sale of these properties will only make matters worse.

Despite opposition, LAWBC has indicated they will proceed with the sale of these lots located on the drinking sources of several Okanagan water suppliers. More information on this issue is available on the Water Supply Association of B.C. website at [www.wsabc.com](http://www.wsabc.com) Anyone opposed to this proposal is encouraged to write Rick Thorpe ([rick.thorpe.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:rick.thorpe.mla@leg.bc.ca)), Stan Hagen ([stan.hagen.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:stan.hagen.mla@leg.bc.ca)) or your MLA and register your complaint.