

## A Message from the District of Summerland . . .



# Responsible Water Use is Needed Now More Than Ever

### An Unusual Fall/Winter

- The winter of 2008/2009 has been exceptional, with a low snow pack, a very dry fall, and low runoff from the hills.
- Inflows to Okanagan Lake are expected to be only 43% of the long term average, so the lake level is significantly lower than most years. Ground water levels in general are also lower than normal.
- For the first time ever, we had to release water from our upper reservoirs to meet our winter demand for water.
- Thirsk Dam spilled very late this year, which means it filled later in the year and it is anticipated it will only spill for two weeks, a shorter time than usual. After that time we will be using stored water and need to use this stored water responsibly so that we have adequate supply for later in the season.
- All of our reservoirs are filled, except Garnet Lake. Other Okanagan water purveyors did not see their reservoirs fill and some have already imposed Stage 2 Water Restrictions.
- A dry summer is predicted which means we will see a faster decline of our reserves and could have difficulty filling our reservoirs for 2010.

### How You Can Help

- Use water responsibly now so we don't have to go to more restrictive stages in future.
- Treating water with our new water treatment plant costs you money. Conserving water is cost-effective and makes sense. Don't use treated water to wash sidewalks and driveways!
- The water system has a supplemental line which is used whenever the system demand exceeds the treatment plant's capacity. Reducing water use reduces the frequency and duration of the use of this supplemental line and thereby reduces the time we may need a Water Quality Advisory.
- Bylaw Enforcement will be a part of our effort to reduce unnecessary water consumption. Those who violate our Water Restriction Bylaw, including those who water roadways or use sprinklers in the hottest part of the day (9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) will be subject to a fine.
- In 2003 we had a very positive response from Summerlanders when we asked you to use water responsibly, and practicing good water conservation measures again this year just makes sense.

**Effective Immediately, we are in  
Stage 2 Water Use Restrictions which are as follows:**

### **STAGE 2 WATER USE RESTRICTIONS**

#### **Odd Numbered Addresses:**

may water before 9:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and Tuesday

#### **Even Numbered Addresses:**

may water before 9:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. on Sunday and Thursday

Micro-Irrigation, Drip-Irrigation or a hose equipped with a shut-off nozzle  
may be used to water trees, shrubs, flowers or vegetables on any day.

*Don't water roadways or water during the hottest part of the day—this water is effectively being wasted!*



## **IRRIGATORS ARE MAJOR USERS OF SUMMERLAND'S WATER, AND MUST DO THEIR PART TO USE WATER RESPONSIBLY**

- During the peak irrigation season, as much as 80% of Summerland's water is used by the agricultural community and therefore it is critical that irrigators use water responsibly.
- We are asking that all users conserve water now so that we have adequate supplies for later in the growing season.
- Until we have separated the irrigation water system from the domestic system, irrigators are in part using treated water. Treating water costs money so it is cost-effective to use the right amount of water at the right time for irrigation. Abuse of irrigation water costs us all money.
- The District has statistics that show at least 19 high agricultural water users utilized a total of 272 million litres above the water allotment recommended in Summerland's Master Water Plan. This amount of water satisfies the entire community's winter water requirement for 39 days! It is enough water to risk putting the entire District into a Water Quality Advisory due to the use of the supplemental water line when the system demand exceeds the water treatment plant's capacity.
- The District will be contacting high end users/abusers to advise them of their water usage and to ask them to change their practices or risk sanctions, including paying the metered rate for irrigation water used.
- Fixing leaks, using irrigation scheduling to ensure you use the right amount of water at the right time, and checking your irrigation system to ensure it is working properly will prepare you for the future when agricultural meters and volume based user fees come into effect in 2010. The work you do now to ensure you are using water responsibly in 2009 will help you get ready for paying metered rates and will save you money in the long run.

### **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Check out our Water Web Pages—[www.summerland.ca/department/works/](http://www.summerland.ca/department/works/)

Contact the Water Treatment Plant, Engineering and Public Works Department, 494-9747

To report overuse of water, call Bylaw Services at 494-6451 or stop in at the Municipal Hall.

*Please use water wisely!*