



MEDIA RELEASE
July 7, 2017

West Kootenays sees above seasonal hot and dry conditions; Watering restricted to two days per week effective immediately

Following water shortages in 2015, Council, anticipating more long hot dry summers, amended its water bylaw to set normal watering periods as mornings and evenings every second day, depending on your street address. This is the new normal watering period and restrictions are applied to this base.

Above seasonal hot and dry conditions are forecasted to continue through the next two weeks or longer. The Province is also in a state of emergency in regards to wildfires. In response to the current hot and dry conditions, the City of Nelson has implemented a Level 1 Mandatory Water Conservation for all users serviced by the municipal drinking water system. This means watering only two times per week.

Thunderstorms and rainfall help in the short term to temporarily replenish our source water, but this season's historically deep snow pack is rapidly diminishing. This snowpack is the key to maintaining baseflow in our creeks which are the only source of our municipal water. The hot weather will reduce the creek flows and impact water availability to the public and for fire protection.

During the summer domestic water usage in Nelson peaks and can increase by as much as 50 percent compared to cooler months, but water restrictions and conservation have historically had a big impact and help us through this time. In 2015 we faced a similar extended period of dry and hot weather, which strained our water supplies. By implementing water restrictions; progressively moving from Level 1 to 3, residents complied and the City saw water use decline by 50 percent despite 6 weeks of hot temperatures and little rain.

The City's main water source — Five Mile Creek — is currently experiencing heavy water demand and, in response, the City is tapping into its secondary water sources to augment supply. Anderson Creek is now online, and Selous Creek is also being prepared and will be online shortly.

What is the City doing to conserve its own water? Replacing water mains has greatly reduced water loss in our water system. Many of the largest parks and public spaces in Nelson, including Lakeside Park, Lakeside sport fields, Davies Park and Nelson Memorial Park Cemetery are irrigated using non-potable lake water. Flower beds and hanging baskets are hand-watered to ensure just the right amount of water is used so water is not wasted. A water conservation program has been implemented which includes hiring a water ambassador to work directly with citizens. City flush trucks also use non-potable water. Despite growth, the community has reduced its water usage on average, by 10% from 2009 levels.

For residents, conserving water under the Level 1 Water Restrictions is simple - if you have an even # address you are permitted to water via sprinkler or irrigation system ONLY on Wednesdays and Saturdays during the hours of 4:00am-9:00am and 7:00pm-10:00pm.

If you have an odd # address you can water via sprinkler or irrigation system ONLY on Thursday and Sunday during the hours of 4:00am-9:00am and 7:00pm-10:00pm.

There are no restrictions on hand watering if you use a shut-off nozzle. If you have new sod or plantings and wish to water outside of these hours, you require a permit and can contact the City of Nelson Public Works Department via email publicworks@nelson.ca.

Mayor Kozak states "We were able to manage through a long dry summer in 2015 and when called upon the community reduced its summer water use by 50% and I am confident that we can do this again." Kozak goes on to say "With the wildfires burning throughout the interior I know we all will do our part in protecting our water supply."

For general information on Water Conservation in Nelson visit the City's Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/thecityofnelson/>

For full details on Water Restrictions visit <http://www.nelson.ca/EN/main/services/operations/water/water-restrictions.html>

For more information on Water Conservation visit <http://www.nelson.ca/EN/main/services/operations/water/water-conservation-.html>

Nelson

Media Contacts:

Mayor Deb Kozak – (250) 352-8236

Kevin Cormack, City Manager – (250) 352-8203

Chris Gainham, Manager of Municipal Services – (250) 551-8103