



Photo by Connie Kruger



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: May 5, 2011

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District of Central Okanagan

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of BC

The next regular meeting of the OBWB is 10 a.m. June 7, 2011 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, Penticton.

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights*

Okanagan celebrates Drinking Water Week, May 1 to 7, with events: A number of Okanagan communities are celebrating Drinking Water Week, throwing open the doors on their water treatment plants to give public tours. The awareness week is intended to recognize the people who help ensure we have safe tap water and encourage residents to “Get to Know their H₂O,” and learn what they can do to help keep our waters clean. For details on DWW events and other materials, visit www.okwaterwise.ca and click on the Drinking Water Week poster.

Board holds strategy session to plan future work of OBWB: The board held a Strategic Planning Session this week to determine priorities to address water issues during the next three years. Issues that were discussed include the upgrading of stormwater systems to improve water quality in the valley, use and reuse of stormwater and wastewater to meet water demands, understanding the impacts of climate change on our water supply, as well as the importance of public outreach in helping protect and conserve Okanagan water.

Okanagan WaterWise print and radio series launches: The Water Board's Okanagan WaterWise program has launched a monthly print and radio series in a number of Okanagan newspapers and on AM1150's The Early Edition. The series will look at various water issues in the Okanagan, including how to keep our water clean when in the backcountry, how to conserve with xeriscaping, and WaterWise irrigation practices. The series will run April to October, during the period when water use is greatest in the Okanagan.

Okanagan water the big winner with WaterWise Challenge: The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise Challenge is finished and the winners have been declared. Victoria, 9, from Armstrong; Avery, 10, from Peachland, and Caitlyn, 11, from Penticton were our randomly selected winners. Each has won a pool and pizza party for themselves and nine friends. However, the big winner may be Okanagan water. More than 200 young people (five to 15 year olds) completed the online scavenger hunt with most kids spending about 15 minutes on the survey, learning about Okanagan water, and how to care for it. Nearly 100 more people took the challenge without entering to win a prize, some of them adults.

Milfoil control work changing gears for season: Rototilling work is continuing on Osoyoos Lake but has ended elsewhere in the Okanagan to prevent disturbance to fish. Staff are now working with B.C. Ministry of Environment to develop a work plan to harvest, or mow, the aquatic weed in Okanagan lakes this summer.

* The OBWB held an abbreviated meeting May 3 to conduct its Strategic Planning Session.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca