

Area councils pledge to Make Water Work

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Local, Okanagan governments are putting water to work.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has paired with area mayors and councillors, from Armstrong to Osoyoos, in an effort to encourage residents to stop letting water slack off in summer months, and instead work the resource to its best ability. Okanagan summers are hot, particularly this one, and while no one is complaining, water conservation is being encouraged throughout the next couple months when the most water is used.

A number of valley council representatives gathered July 9 to take the pledge to Make Water Work, including Armstrong Coun. Shirley Fowler, while inviting area residents to join them in that.

To encourage residents to join in that pledge, those who do so are entered in for a chance to win \$5,000 in WaterWise yard upgrades, with the contest's partners being KelownaGardens.com, Bylands and ProSource Irrigation, all known for their commitment to water conservation practices. Elected officials are also encouraging their constituents to participate in the pledge to better the community's chance at earning the Make Water Work champion title.

"We're having fun with this contest, but the message behind it is serious," OBWB chair and West Kelowna Mayor Doug Findlater explained. "Some residents use less water, especially if they're on a meter, but we area still using more than what is sustainable. It's for this reason we launched Make Water Work, to show that there are simple ways to save water and make it work more effectively and efficiently."

The city of Armstrong has dedicated itself to that for the past few years with a residential water meter project, which is very near 100 percent complete after having run into some glitches. Okanagan statistics, however, show that more work on conservation is needed. While the average Canadian uses 329 litres of water each day, in the Okanagan that jumps to 675 averaged out over a year, with the summer average hovering around 1,000 litres. Approximately 24 percent of that is used outside on lawns and gardens and, despite being blessed with an abundance of lakes, there is less water available per person in the Okanagan than anywhere else in Canada.

Make Water Work provides residents with tips to get the most from their water, such as watering between dusk and dawn and putting it where it is needed—on plants, not pavement. To take the pledge, go online to www.MakeWaterWork.ca.

- See more at: <http://www.okanaganadvertiser.com/index.php/blog/armstrong-spallumcheen/area-councils-pledge-make-water-work/#sthash.1799aYOc.dpuf>