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Water study sounds alarm

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A study into the Okanagan's water supply confirmed what many suspected – there's already a shortage and it looks like it's only going to get worse.

Records show there's only been two out of the last 10 years when the Aberdeen Plateau snowpack was above average, which, when you do the math, means 80 per cent of the time it's been below average.

If that trend continues, and most predict it will, if not get worse, then all Okanagan residents have to take up the cause of water conservation.

Although the adoption of water meters in Greater Vernon has helped the local situation of supply and demand, all communities in the valley should also have them in place.

There's nothing like paying extra for something you used to get for the same price, no matter how much of the resource you used, to get people's attention.

The fact that we live in a semi-desert with a finite amount of water likely should have hit home decades ago, but the situation has only gotten worse due to growth and climate change.

That makes it incumbent on all of us to do our part to do more with less. Be conscious of your use of water, inside and outside the home.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board is using the information from the study to adapt to the realities of climate change.

"We know that the water of the Okanagan basin is at risk," states Anna Warwick Sears, OBWB executive director.

And now we all know and government, agriculture, industry and citizens alike must do all they can to protect this vital resource. The alarm bell has sounded and if we ignore it we are all in trouble.

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