



## Turning rain into a resource

Barry McDivitt, CHBC News: Friday, October 29, 2010



Water experts from across the province gathered in Kelowna on Thursday and Friday for a conference on how to turn rain into a resource.

**Photo Credit:** Travis Lowe, CHBC News

Climate change is prompting many cities to re-think the way they handle storm water.

Water experts from across the province were in the Okanagan on Thursday and Friday for a conference on how to turn rain into a resource.

Extreme weather patterns appear to be on the increase in the Okanagan, and there are indications the valley has been getting more rainfall than in the past.

Rob Dickinson from the City of Vernon says, in the last three years, the city has seen two 100-year storms.

These storms historically happen once every 100 years.

However, instead of being stored for future use, most rain water goes into ditches and storm drainage systems, picking up pesticides and heavy metals along the way before funnelling into a nearby stream or lake.

The heavy rains are also causing massive erosion problems and damaging urban infrastructure as well as the environment.

Some methods of controlling rain water that were discussed during the conference include allowing creeks to follow their natural course instead of encasing them in concrete pipes and letting it fall and absorb naturally into the ground.