

Action urged to cope with climate change

By [John Arendt - Summerland Review](#)

Published: **April 04, 2012 3:00 PM**

Updated: **April 04, 2012 3:59 PM**

Okanagan residents will be affected by global climate change, experts at the Climate Action Exchange in Kelowna said.

The one-day exchange on March 29 brought together elected officials, business and community leaders and researchers from around the region to discuss ways to address climate change in the area.

Angela Reid-Nagy of The Climate Reality Project said the 10 hottest years on record worldwide have all occurred since 2000. "This is a problem we all have to solve," she said.

Trevor Murdock of the Pacific Climate Impact Consortium said it is important to understand the long-term implications of a changing climate.

The worst-case scenario calls for an average increase of four degrees in British Columbia by the end of the century. Even the most optimistic projections call for a rise of one degree.

"The past is not the future," he said. "We will likely get warmer in the Okanagan."

Anna Warwick Sears of the Okanagan Basin Water Board said the wildfires of 2003 have already served to alert Okanagan residents that the climate is changing.

According to the climate models she has studied, the warming temperatures could result in 30 more frost-free days each year. This would affect the Okanagan's snow-driven watershed, she said.

While the growing season would be extended, summer water levels would drop.

"The pattern is one of summer storage problems," she said.

She added that the region is not facing a water crisis but rather a long-term planning challenge.

"We have to assume the climate will continue to change," she said. "We're in an era of uncertainty."