

Lawn watering must go



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Okanagan residents must stop watering lawns says Chris Wood, an author who has written frequently about the critical role water plays in the economy.

"The water used on Okanagan lawns could support the indoor water needs of three times the valley's current population," he explained.

In order to "get the best bang per drop," Wood says we need a better return on our water investment. We need to capture the value of Nature.

"You're familiar with National Security; but now you need to be concerned about Natural Security," he told the politicians and others attending the Okanagan Basin Water Board's annual meeting in Kelowna Friday.

"The value of natural systems (on a global basis) has gone up," he said.

Until 1980, we had more water than we knew what to do with, but today the trend is to us using more than Nature can supply, he explained.

He called it an "eco-overdraft. Climate change is a reflection of us over-loading the earth's ability to metabolize the carbon dioxide we're producing."

Although the Okanagan is way ahead on many fronts, not enough is being done to capture the value of Nature, he said.

It's important that the valley gather data on its water: what is being used and what is being lost, for instance, in order that its management better reflect its value, he said.

"Value your water and your landscapes," he advised.

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