

Water budget 'steady'

By Vernon Morning Star

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JUDIE STEEVES

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In keeping with its aims to run a lean organization providing the best value, the Okanagan Basin Water Board's budget for the coming year is a "steady as she goes budget."

Executive-director Anna Warwick Sears says the plan is to continue with the board's projects and programs, but do it efficiently.

Overall, the \$3.4 million budget features a net reduction of 0.15 per cent from the previous year, but the amount to be levied on taxpayers will be just the same as last year, at 5.7 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The board approved the budget recently, including an increased emphasis on the WaterWise education and outreach program, building a hydrometric program to monitor stream flows, developing new water quality projects, working with utilities on water use reporting and continuing work on valley-wide drought management.

The OBWB is made up of representatives of the valley's three regional districts.

"There's not the political climate for expansion. There's lots to be done without going big," said Warwick Sears.

Staff are focussing their work on using the tools at hand better, she said.

"People are more hungry for information and education so we're putting more money toward our WaterWise program and putting on workshops to get information about water to people," said Warwick Sears.

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