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Water contest to cut down on water waste

By Shannon Quesnel

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PENTICTON - A water contest might cut down on Okanagan's high water consumption.

Okanagan residents use 675 litres of water per person per day, twice the Canadian average, the Okanagan Basin Water board stated. Residents tend to drink more water and dump more water on their lawns and gardens. Outdoor Okanagan water consumption accounts for 24% of household usage. Some have been seen using their garden hoses to clean their driveways.

The Okanagan Water Wise program wants everyone to realize how precious the wet stuff is through its 2013 Make Water Work Challenge. It offers up to \$5,000 in yard renovations for a few lucky residents who make water conservation pledges at www.makewaterwork.ca. There are six pledges to choose from and names and email addresses are required to participate.

Participants can expect to water landscapes, gardens and agricultural crops at or between dusk and dawn, leave grass two or three inches long and change out conventional lawn for drought tolerant turf. In the fall it's recommended to aerate and cover the lawn with an inch of compost.

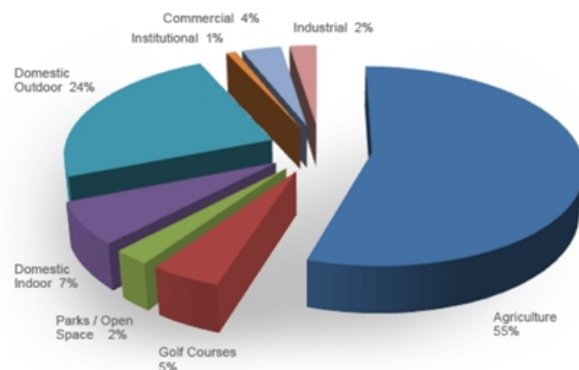
The Okanagan Basin Water Board and local municipalities came up with the Water Wise program to get people to tighten their taps. Every year the water board sees slow increases in volume usage beginning late April and into May. This year a cool, wet spring helped to ease the pressure on the water utilities pumping and treating infrastructure. When it got hotter in June and then July residents cranked up the air conditioner and turned on the sprinklers. That can be hard on water utility infrastructure; intake, pumping and treatment plants.

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Okanagan Basin Water Board hopes a contest will encourage residents to tighten their taps and conserve water.
(SHANNON QUESNEL /InfoTel Multimedia)



The Okanagan Basin Water Board states a quarter of water is used by residents on their outdoor property.
Image Credit: Source/Okanagan Basin Water Board

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