

# News

## Water flows for growing farm

**RICHARD ROLKE**  
Morning Star Staff

An expanding agriculture business will be able to tap into much-needed water.

The Greater Vernon Advisory Committee board has gone against a staff recommendation and will provide two hectares of water allocation to a property on Highway 97 in Spallumcheen so fruit can be grown.

"We're here to help our businesses grow," said director Akbal Mund.



Akbal Mund

The applicant has planted about 80,000 apple trees.

Staff had recommended against providing additional water to the property because water is not available due to the terms of an agreement between GVAC and the Township of Spallumcheen.

The property currently has 6.17 hectares of water allocation assigned to it and it would cost \$12,000 to purchase an additional two hectares of allocation.

Opposition to providing the extra allocation came from directors Gyula Kiss, Jim Garlick and Bob Spiers.

"If it wasn't treated water I would have no problem with them having all of the water they need. But when we have expensive (treated) water, someone has to sub-

sistize it when it's sold at a lower cost," said Kiss of the financial impact on domestic customers.

The gap between agricultural and domestic fees is also a concern for Garlick. "I can see us having a lot of problems in the future because of agriculture and domestic," he said.

However, other committee members pointed out that the applicant is an existing farm operation and local agriculture must be supported economically and for food sustainability.

"This is an area we've historically given water to," said director Ted Osborn.

The water allocation must still be ratified by the Regional District of North Okanagan board.

## Provincial mussels strategy draws criticism

**RICHARD ROLKE**  
Morning Star Staff

Victoria's plan to fight invasive mussels doesn't impress one local official.

The provincial government will provide \$1.3 million over two years for early detection and rapid response for quagga and zebra mussels.

"It wasn't what we put forward," said Juliette Cunningham, a Vernon councillor and Okanagan Basin Water Board director.

"We were looking for actual border stations but it's a start."

The invasive mussel defence program includes three mobile decontamination units, six trained auxiliary conservation officers, highway signage throughout the

province, expanded monitoring for zebra and quagga mussels and increasing public awareness.

Teams will inspect boats entering B.C. from Alberta and if needed, decontaminate them to ensure mussels aren't brought into the province.

They also will respond to boats from the U.S. identified as a concern by the Canadian Border Services Agency, as well as agencies.

But Cunningham doesn't believe the provincial government's efforts are sufficient.

"Alberta is doing a tremendous amount of work and I hope they're not just hoping that will be our buffer zone," she said.

Zebra and quagga

mussels are native to eastern Europe and they have spread across North America since the 1980s.

They clog water intake pipes, pumps and boat motors.

They also deplete food sources for fish and produce toxins that kill fish and birds and contaminate drinking water.

Mike Macnabb, BX-Silver Star director, says communities will have to spend large sums of dollars to prevent mussels from damaging water pipes and other infrastructure if they move into the valley.

"They (Victoria) are off-loading that cost on to local governments," he said.

"With the provincial government, it's almost

a token what they are throwing at it."

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has estimated the direct cost

and lost revenue if the mussels take hold in the Okanagan Valley is about \$42 million annually.



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## Tax News

from  
**Dean Chapple at H&R Block**

Moving expenses can be a big tax deduction. To qualify you must move at least 40kms closer to your new job or 40 kms closer to a new work location with an existing company. Your move must be considered to be a permanent move - not just a job that is a short contract and then you plan to return home. If your move qualifies here are some of the expenses you can claim: Moving van costs, travel & meal costs for yourself and family, cost of selling your home i.e. legal fees and real estate commission among others. You must have all receipts for hotels, moving vans and house sale etc. Receipts for meals and travel are not necessary as CRA provide a simplified calculation for this purpose. Most important is a letter from your employer stating that whether or not you were reimbursed for your move - if "yes" then the \$ amount must be stated and also the date you started work.

Moving expenses can also be allowed for self-employed people. Moving expenses can only be deducted against income earned in the new work location, but can be carried forward to be applied to a future year if they cannot all be used in 2014.

Come in and see our tax specialists and they can advise you on this and other deductions.

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