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October 9, 2015 6:04 pm

# Experts predict more B.C. droughts



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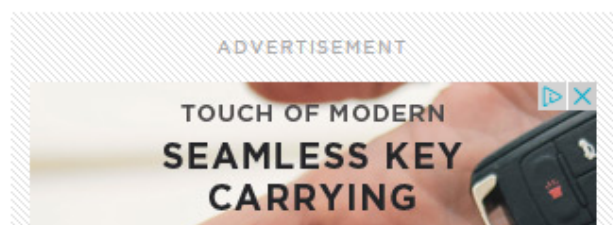
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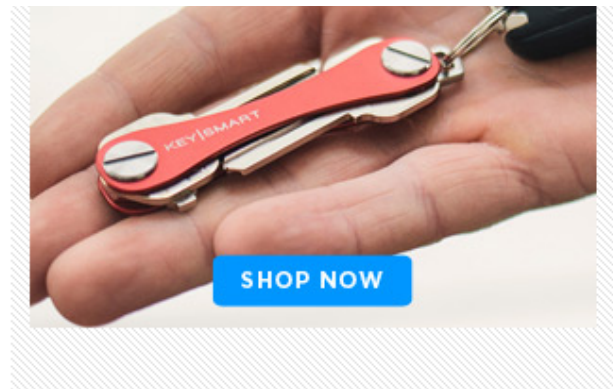
OSOYOOS — It was just a short time ago that the Okanagan was put under a Level 4 drought warning — that's the highest there is. And it appears it may not be the last. The summer of 2015 isn't that far behind us, and already, experts are forecasting the province could experience another dry summer next year.

"If you can't handle 2015, you need to get your act together because we're going to see more of these and worse ones," says Glen Davidson, a director and comptroller of water rights with the



Ministry of Forests, Lands and Resource Operations.

At the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum on Friday, officials from B.C. and their American counterparts shared how they responded to the recent drought. Both representatives admit they were slow in their responses.



“We knew that we had very low snow packs on the coast. It took us a little longer to ramp up our drought response,” says Anna Warwick Sears, the executive director of the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB).

“We did not jump on the predictions of low snowpacks, we thought that we would get a late rainfall,” says Kelsey Collins, a trust water coordinator with the state’s department of ecology.

But precipitation did not come for B.C. and Washington when they needed it the most. Experts say the drought created a dire situation for tourism, fish return and wildfires.

“The drought really affected the fires. We just saw it so close up this year when it got really bad in that period in August. It just killed tourism in the Town of Osoyoos,” says Stu Wells, the chair of the Osoyoos Water Quality Society.

History does not need to repeat itself if communities start planning early. There’s a big push for this at the forum.

“That was a dress rehearsal for what might potentially be another year of drought. There’s a very large El Niño building in the Pacific Ocean, and often when that happens, it means a warm winter, low snow packs, and a warm summer next year,” says Warwick Sears.

The OBWB is hoping to create a valley-wide drought response strategy, continue to do public outreach programs and encourage people to [Make Water Work](#).

Video link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2269684/experts-predict-more-b-c-droughts/>