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Workshop on managing stormwater seeks new ideas

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The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) and the B.C. Water & Waste Association (BCWWA) will co-host From Rain to Resource: Managing Stormwater in a Changing Climate on Oct. 28 and 29 at the Best Western Inn in Kelowna.

The goal of the workshop is to share positive and innovative developments in managing rainwater and discuss how barriers to change are being overcome in communities in B.C. and beyond.

A tradeshow will also be held to allow innovative companies to share the latest developments in rainwater management technologies.

"I've had a few people ask about the title of the conference," remarked Anna Warwick Sears, executive director of the OBWB.

"In the old days, we used to try to get the stormwater into the storm sewers as fast as possible, and run it into the lake to prevent flooding. But rain really is a resource if you handle it properly.

"To have a healthy and sustainable water supply we need more emphasis on keeping pollution out of our lakes and streams, with less runoff during storms," Sears continued.

"We can also use the water to recharge the aquifers under our neighbourhoods. This workshop is about how to do these things by following the example of other communities that are doing it successfully. Plus, the long-term benefits to the environment and the tax savings can be huge."

The workshop will feature keynote speaker, Brock Dolman.

Dolman is the director of the California-based WATER Institute. He has been featured on many radio programs and in award-winning films, including *The 11th Hour* by Leonardo DiCaprio, and has published numerous articles on sustainable watershed management.

The workshop is designed for people whose work touches on stormwater management, including planners, engineers, and landscape architects from government and private industry, as well as those who develop stormwater policy, such as elected officials and senior municipal staff. The public are also welcome to attend.

Best practices and tools to deal with various situations, such as steep slopes, parking lots, and commercial developments, will be showcased on Oct. 28 through case studies.

The presentations on Oct.29 will integrate the perspectives of the people working on the ground and those developing and adopting policy.

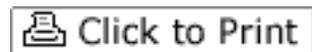
Two tracks that focus on similar topics but with a "technical" or "policy" angle will be provided in the morning. In the afternoon, delegates are invited to attend the keynote speaker presentation and participate in a plenary session to stimulate further discussion and shared understanding.

For more see bcwwa.org/seminars/RtoR.htm.

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