

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

# Grants available for Okanagan water conservation projects

By [Judie Steeves - Kelowna Capital News](#)

Published: **December 16, 2010 6:00 PM**

Updated: **December 16, 2010 6:20 PM**

Looking for a few thousand dollars?

If it's for a worthy project that would enhance water quality or conserve water in the Okanagan Valley, the Okanagan Basin Water Board invites you to make application for their annual grant program.

Non-profit groups and local governments are eligible, but each must get the approval of their local government before submitting the project funding application to the OBWB.

There's a total of \$300,000 available, but the board received 37 submissions with requests for nearly \$754,000 for that pot of money last year. A total of 18 projects were funded.

The money comes from a taxpayer levy of pennies per household through the regional districts which make up the OBWB and the goal is to encourage innovative ideas, including ones which can have an impact on the whole valley.

Executive director Anna Warwick Sears says the grant program exemplifies the board's slogan 'One Valley. One Water.'

"Everyone who lives in the Okanagan, whether you live in Armstrong or in Osoyoos, is interconnected through our one water supply. What happens to the water in the north affects water quality in the south. We also live in a dry climate and have less fresh water available per person than in many areas. Yet, homeowners use more than twice the Canadian average and that affects quantity."

The program funds projects that tackle such important issues, she noted.

For example, Penticton's environmental audit pilot project this year helped business owners reduce water and energy consumption, and it's a project that could be repeated in other communities.

Another example is the Okanagan Xeriscape Association's UnH2O Demonstration Garden at the H2O Aquatic Centre on Gordon Drive, which provides examples of landscaping that require less water and is more appropriate for the region's dry climate.

The Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program's update of foreshore inventory mapping and aquatic habitat index for Okanagan Lake will now make it possible to create a single file of data for the whole lake.

This was a collaboration of communities and regional districts all around the lake, as well as the environment ministry, the Community Mapping Network and Ecoscape Environmental Consultants. The result will be a tool for comparing habitat values for the lake's shoreline for assistance in formulating shoreline policy, and permitting development as well as in directing restoration.

The deadline for applications is Friday, Feb. 21. Applications are available on the website at: [www.obwb.ca](http://www.obwb.ca).



Click to Print