

NEWS

Grants for water conservation or improvement projects

The Okanagan Basin Water Board is now accepting applications to its 2012 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program.

The program, in its seventh year, has \$300,000 available for projects that conserve water or improve its quality.

Eligible recipients include non-profit community groups, local governments (regional districts or municipalities), and irrigation or improvement districts. Successful applicants can receive up to a maximum of \$30,000 for their project.

The focus of the program is to support projects that benefit the entire Okanagan Valley.

"Everyone who lives in the Okanagan—whether you live in Armstrong or in Osoyoos, is connected to each other by water—this includes the waters in our streams, lakes and in the ground. What happens to water quality in the north affects the water in the south," explained grants administrator Genevieve Dunbar.

"We also live in a dry climate and have less fresh

water available per person in the Okanagan, yet, homeowners use more than twice the Canadian average—this affects quantity."

This program funds projects that tackle these important issues, added Dunbar.

Another important element of this program is its focus on collaboration.

Several of these grants have resulted in ongoing partnerships.

"Since the grant program began, we've seen networks of expertise form around valley-wide projects," Dunbar noted. "And, ultimately, we've seen water conserved and quality improved."

For example, an OBWB grant last year helped the District of Peachland reestablish a stream flow monitoring station on Peachland Creek to gather water quantity information which will contribute to valley-wide data.

Another project was an example of water quality improvement is District of West Kelowna's completion of their Water Systems Master

Plan, helping ensure safe clean water to their resi-

dents and protecting water quality valley-wide.

This year's application deadline is 4 p.m. Friday,

Feb. 24, 2012. For more information see the web-

site www.obwb.ca/wcqi.



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Left to right: Darcy Curtis, Area Manager A&W;
Jody Birnie, President, local chapter, Cystic Fibrosis Canada;
Tyler Shkrabuk, Winfield A&W;
Claude Uzelman, Kelowna A&W - Leathead Location.
Inset: Jonathon McMurray, A&W Franchise, North Okanagan

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