

## Oliver Daily News

Today's NEWS Today

### Be water wise

Posted on [September 20, 2012](#) by [Publisher](#)

The newly xeriscaped yard of Pat and Doug Maxwell was the setting for a garden party today organized by the Okanagan Basin Water Board and its outreach program Okanagan WaterWise, recognizing efforts by local residents of the Okanagan, businesses and municipalities to conserve water and energy.

“What a wonderful setting to hold this event,” noted OBWB Chair Stu Wells (shown left). “The Maxwell’s are a great example of what people can do in their own yards to make a difference, not just lowering their own water and energy bills, but helping to keep a sustainable supply of these resources for everyone in the valley.”



The Maxwells were one of at least 1,500 South Okanagan-Similkameen residents who picked up a Tap by Tap water and energy saving kit this spring, containing an energy efficient showerhead, faucet aerator and shower timer. The kits were distributed in partnership between City Green Solutions, FortisBC, Environment Canada, Okanagan WaterWise and local governments in the South Okanagan. As part of the kit, residents were also invited to take the Make Water Work pledge and be entered to win WaterWise yard improvements. The Maxwells entered and won!

The bridging of the Tap by Tap initiative with OkWaterWise’s Make Water Work outdoor water conservation campaign was a natural fit, added Wells. On average, each Okanagan resident uses 675 litres of water per day compared to 329 in Canada, yet we have less freshwater available than almost anywhere in Canada. And, of all the water we use in the Okanagan, 24% is used by residents outdoors – mostly on our lawns. That is the 2nd highest use, right after agriculture.

“We need to ask ourselves,” added Wells, “are we going to continue to pour drinking water on our lawns –

water that has gone through costly treatment to meet drinking quality standards, or are we going to make some changes in our homes and to our landscaping.

“This contest in the South Okanagan was part of a much larger valley-wide Make Water Work campaign aimed at offering simple solutions to Okanagan residents to help save water. We’re not saying you can’t have lawns or you can’t water. We’re saying make water work – make it work more efficiently and more effectively! A lot of our water is just wasted. It’s important that residents of this valley recognize we aren’t the only ones who need water. We also need water for food crops, for the salmon that are returning to spawn, and for firefighting.”

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### 3 Responses to *Be water wise*

**Paula Rodriguez de la Vega** says:

September 20, 2012 at 10:00 am

Excellent. May I remind residents of the booklet recently completed and available for free download online: The Waterwise Gardening for Home and Small Acreage Owners of the Oliver Area.

Download at: <https://oliver.civicweb.net/Documents/DocumentList.aspx?ID=28370>

Happy gardening. Autumn is a great time to xeriscape, as it gives plants a headstart during spring melt!

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**jim** says:

September 20, 2012 at 8:31 am

what is the address of this waterwise winning yard so we can drive by and admire?

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**Mike H** says:

September 20, 2012 at 8:26 am

This is great to see!! Nothing wrong with dry lawns – we live in a desert! Hopefully more and more people will get on board. Let’s not be like Arizona or California who will be completely dry in 20 years.

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