

Don't be a drain on the water supply



Tara Bowie

To build awareness for the need for water consumption reduction local leaders jumped in the Keremeos Fire Department shower Monday. No effort to save water is too small said the group of Jim Murphy, deputy fire chief, Forrest Nelson, Fairview Irrigation District, Doug Boulton, past-president Keremeos-Cawston Sportsmen Association, Brian Barber, Keremeos Irrigation District and Kathaleen Gibbs, vice-president Keremeos-Cawston Sportsmen Association.

Migrant worker's family members killed in tragic accident in Mexico

In the blink of an eye four members of his family including his wife were killed in a car accident and several others were injured while he worked more than 4,000 kilometres away.

About two weeks ago Francisco Aguilar Jaimez received the devastating call that his wife, mother-in-law and two of his sister's in law, had been killed and his two daughters were in hospital in Mexico.

A few days after the accident he was able to get a flight back to Mexico to be with his family.

In addition to his indescribable grief, Jaimez is facing additional financial hardship as medical costs are not covered in Mexico. The govern-

ment is also charging him for damage caused to the road during the accident.

Jaimez is one of the first migrant workers to work in the Similkameen. He has worked on a variety of farms over the last 10 years.

He is expected to return to work before the end of August.

The El Faro Society for Migrant Workers is holding a bake sale fundraiser for Jaimez and his family to help with the unexpected expenses. The bake sale is being held July 31 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Donations can also be made by deposit directly to Jaimez's account at the Valley First Credit Union Keremeos account #621672.

Tara Bowie
Review Staff

Reduce water consumption anyway you can is the message several community leaders hope to shower on the public.

after it was announced the area is now considered to be in a level four drought condition.

Members of the Keremeos-Cawston Sportsmen Association along with staff at several irrigation district's and the deputy chief of the Keremeos Fire department hopped in a shower - fully clothed but with rubber ducky in hand - at the fire department Monday.

The group wanted to emphasize their point that any amount of water saved is better than none and there is always room for fun - even when talking about water conservation.

"It's something we don't always think of here. Here we don't even seem to think we have water problems. We have a reservoir but as we've heard, and what we know, at the Sportsmen's Association is that if we can save water here it's going to have a positive impact on ecosystems downstream," Kathaleen Gibbs, vice president of the K-CSA said.

Gibbs along with Doug Boulton, past president of the K-CSA thought it was important to remind the public of their role in conservation after recent fish kills caused by climbing water temperatures were spurred on by low water levels.

The fish kills prompted the ministry to stop angling along all rivers and streams in the area to help fish survive.

"I've been saying for quite awhile the water is too low to fish. It puts the fish under too much stress and they can't survive," Gibbs said.

Forrest Nelson from Fairview Irrigation said all residents have a responsibility to help conserve water.

He said one of the largest impacts residents can make is to report broken irrigation lines.

"That's a big one here. I mean, irrigation can pump out a lot of water quickly. If something's broken and we don't know there's going to be a lot of wasted water," he said.

Schorb back at helm of Branding Iron

Longtime owner of the Branding Iron Karl Schorb has retaken the reigns as operator of the downtown restaurant.

Ongoing disputes between Schorb and Shane Dayman, who took over the business July 1 became very public over the last few weeks as RCMP officers were seen in the parking lot several times.

As told to the Review by Schorb and Dayman the agreement was that Schorb and partner Suzanne Siemens were to stay employed at the restaurant.

By the time it closed at the end of day July 21 neither worked there anymore.

Dayman admitted to the Review none of the checks he wrote to buy the business went through.

Joining in the shower for a jovial photo-op Monday was Gibbs, Boulton, Nelson, Jim Murphy, deputy chief of Keremeos Fire Department, and Brian Barber of the Keremeos Irrigation District.

Drought ratings for the South Thompson, Similkameen, Kettle and Skagit areas were updated to Level 3 on July 10.

The Level 4 drought gives regional water managers the right to suspend water licenses or short-term water approvals in affected areas, dependent on stream conditions.

Earlier this month when Level 3 drought conditions were declared, the ministry also imposed a two month fishing ban in the Similkameen and its tributaries and requested all users, including municipalities, voluntarily reduce water consumption by 20 per cent.

Last week the RDOS issued a statement asking regional water users to reduce water consumption by 30 per cent, and announced it had already made those adjustments at its own parks and recreation facilities.

Residential outdoor watering accounts for the second highest use of all water in the area at 24%.

"Considering most of the residential water used outdoors is used on lawns - which are mostly for cosmetic use - this is where residents can make a difference and Make Water Work," an email from the Okanagan Basin Water Board said.

Some tips:

- Water plants. Not pavement.
- Put water on the nightshift. Water between dusk and dawn.
- Don't mow. Let it grow. Leave lawn 5-8 cm (2-3 inches) tall.
- Leave grass clippings as mulch.
- Top dress with compost; and
- Change out some lawn for drought-tolerant turf and/or native and low-water variety plants.

Residents can find more information, as well as local water restrictions for their community by visiting the Make Water Work website at <http://www.makewaterwork.ca/tips>.

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