

March 10, 2017

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **OKANAGAN CELEBRATES CANADA WATER WEEK WITH FILM, CONTEST, PANEL... & CLOSER LOOK AT WASTE(ing) WATER**

**Kelowna, B.C.** – The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) and its Okanagan WaterWise program have lined up a number of events to celebrate UN World Water Day and Canada Water Week (March 19-25), including a special screening of the award-winning film *RiverBlue*. Plus, there's a contest for youth, and the ever-popular – and free – public forum and mixer. These events are being rounded out by tours and other events by Water Board partners.

“There's truly something for everyone this year,” noted OBWB Chair Tracy Gray. “We're very excited about this year's events and pleased to have so many partners join us in this annual celebration.”

The fun begins on Monday, March 20 with the kick-off of the **Okanagan WaterWise Challenge**. Similar to bingo, school classes and individuals throughout the Okanagan, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, are invited to participate in up to three challenges on an “H2O” board that help conserve and protect our water. “It's a new twist this year, but with all the same great prizes as in past years,” added OBWB Communications Director Corinne Jackson, who also manages the WaterWise program. “We're encouraging young people to get active in and around water, and build awareness for the need to look after it.” Challenges include creek clean-ups, fixing leaks, and more.

Prizes include a 2-hour boat cruise on Okanagan Lake for a private class lesson on Okanagan water, presented by the Okanagan Science Centre, as well as pizza parties and pool passes. Contest ends April 28. More at [www.OkWaterWise.ca](http://www.OkWaterWise.ca).

On Tuesday, March 21, 6-8 p.m. the popular **annual panel discussion** makes a return with this year's topic “*Why WASTE Water?*” The panel will be MC'ed by well-known Kelowna broadcaster **Phil Johnson**, host of AM1150's The Early Edition. Johnson will keep the conversation flowing as he leads audience members on a story-telling water journey, first following the perspective of those who collect the water, clean the water, and deliver it to our homes. Then to one who uses it while trying to conserve and keep it clean. And then on to those who collect the waste water and clean it to be returned back to nature, for fish, for swimming, and to be collected once again. All along this journey, we learn about the risks – and the solutions – to ensuring a clean, abundant supply in the Okanagan, recognized as Canada's most water-stressed region.

Panelists include OBWB Executive Director **Anna Warwick Sears**, Greater Vernon Water's Water Sustainability Coordinator **Jennifer Miles**, and **Liisa Bloomfield**, Engineering Supervisor with Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

Following the panel and Q&A, join us for refreshments. Plus visit some of the information tables, including **BC Wildlife Federation** with their new Conservation App, **City of Kelowna**, **UN Association in Canada**, **Okanagan WaterWise** and others. Collect tips and free tools to help protect our water!

The panel will be held in the Centre for Learning Atrium at Okanagan College, 1000 KLO Rd., Kelowna (Room E100). This is a free event but seating is limited. Registration is required at <https://okanaganwhywastewater.eventbrite.ca>

And, on Wednesday, March 22, 7-9 p.m. join us at Landmark Cinemas – Grand 10 for a **special screening** of *RiverBlue: Can fashion save the planet?*, followed by a Q&A with the film’s director and Kelowna resident **David McIlvrde**.

This award-winning documentary follows B.C.-based Mark Angelo, an internationally-celebrated rivers conservationist, as he explores the textile industry and the resulting pollution in waterways around the world. See one of the most compelling films on the fashion world and its impact on our water.

Tickets are \$5. Details and tickets are available at <https://okanaganriverblue.eventbrite.ca>.

In addition to all this, we are pleased to partner with the cities of Kelowna and Vernon which will be holding **water treatment plant tours**, and Kelowna Museums Society which will have a special family event as part of the **Social Life of Water exhibit**.

Full details on all the events can be found at [www.OkWaterWise.ca](http://www.OkWaterWise.ca).

Special thanks to this year’s partners in the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge, including Vernon Aquatic Centre, the YMCA of Kelowna’s H2O Adventure and Fitness Centre, the City of Penticton Community Centre Pool, Okanagan Science Centre, Cruise Okanagan, The Executive Boardroom, and School District’s 83, 22, 23, 67 and 53.

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