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Drought level raised in the Okanagan as rain remains scarce

 By *John McDonald*


Image Credit: Wikipedia/JJ Harrison

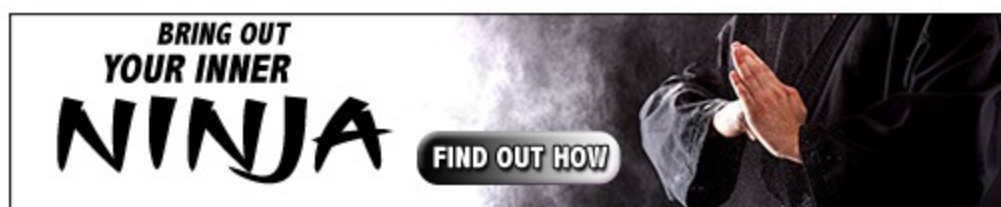
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OKANAGAN - With seemingly interminable smoke swirling through the air, it's easy to ignore the increase to the Okanagan region drought rating issued today by the provincial government but do so at your own risk.

"It's all connected, it's all part of the weather system in the Okanagan. This is climate change," Okanagan Basin Water Board communications director Corinne Jackson said.

Her organization is working in conjunction with the provincial government to ensure drought warnings reach the general public through the Okanagan drought response strategy and to make sure everyone knows we're all in this together, she added.

"The strategy is aimed at ensuring stronger communication and valley-wide coordination during a drought, recognizing that the water of the Okanagan is all connected," Jackson said. "One valley. One water."



The Okanagan along with the Similkameen and North Thompson regions were upgraded today, Aug. 24, to level two (dry) although it leaves them as three of just five regions in the province that aren't already at level three (very dry) including the South Thompson, Salmon River, Kettle and Nicola regions.

Under a level two drought rating, water utilities agree to voluntary conservation through education, communication and planning.

Last year at this time, most of the regions were already at drought level three or four (extremely dry).

Jackson urges residents to visit www.makewaterwork.ca for information about local watering restrictions.

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