



New tools to predict flooding

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UBCO researchers are looking at creating new policy and planning tools to address flooding in the Okanagan Valley.



With many eyes on rising lake levels these days, researchers from UBC Okanagan's Lifecycle Management Laboratory are partnering with the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) to develop new policy and planning tools to address flooding in the Okanagan Valley.

Given recent flooding and its disastrous consequences on communities throughout the region, this research project will help local governments make informed decisions to mitigate flood-related risks, says UBCO researcher Kh Md Nahiduzzaman.

"Communities like Kelowna are facing flooding on a regular basis, so creating models based on historical trends and future projections is vital for decision-makers," explains Nahiduzzaman, who is a visiting professor and teaching at UBCO's School of Engineering.

According to Anna Warwick Sears, executive director of OBWB, these tools are needed by the region's stakeholders.

The OBWB has contributed more than \$37,000 to help UBC engineers create

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modelling tools and flood protection strategies.

"Cities across the Okanagan are increasingly at risk of repeated flooding due to a variety of factors, including the impacts of climate change."

Sears points to the impact of flooding on neighbourhoods from a social, financial and environmental perspective.

"What we need is a shift in focus from a flood-protection approach to an adaptive resilience approach," said Nahiduzzaman.

The research will develop risk and vulnerability assessment tools, make future risk projections, review current decision-making tools and identify ways that multiple levels of government can work together seamlessly.