



BOARD REPORT: March 3, 2016



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

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District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

To be announced,
Okanagan Nation Alliance

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Rob Birtles, Okanagan Water
Stewardship Council

**The next meeting of the OBWB
will be 10 a.m. April 5, 2016 at
Regional District of North
Okanagan in Coldstream.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Mission Creek Groundwater Study approved: The OBWB will lead a study on groundwater flows to Mission Creek. The study is a partnership with Kelowna area water utilities, UBC Okanagan, the Province of B.C., and Okanagan Nation Alliance. In part, the research will allow for a deeper look at recent UBCO study results that suggest very little water from the aquifer is reaching Okanagan Lake. As well, with the Province now requiring: 1) a licence to extract groundwater and 2) that Environmental Flow Needs of fish be understood before a licence is issued, this research will better inform licence decisions and fisheries work by ONA. It will also assist Kelowna utilities that depend on groundwater for its customers.

Rain Barrel Pilot Project launched in Central Okanagan: The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program has launched a pilot project, partnering with Regional District of Central Okanagan's Waste Reduction Office to offer rain barrels to Central Okanagan residents as part of this spring's annual composter sale. There are 100 barrels available at only \$75 each. Depending on how the pilot goes, staff will consider a similar sale in other parts of the valley next year. For more information, visit www.OkWaterWise.ca.

Popular annual World Water Day event returns: The Water Board is again holding a public event to celebrate UN World Water Day and Canada Water Week. The event is co-presented with the BRAES Institute out of UBCO (Okanagan Institute for Biodiversity, Resilience, and Ecosystem Services) and will include a keynote address by Maggie Catley-Carlson, former chair of the UN-affiliated Global Water Partnership. The focus will be on the new normal – droughts and floods – how the Okanagan is preparing and how local residents can help. The event will be March 22, 6 p.m. at Kelowna's Laurel Packinghouse. Refreshments will be provided and registration required. Registration opens March 7. Details to be posted at www.OkWaterWise.ca.

Water Stewardship Council tasked with review of new B.C. water act: B.C.'s long-awaited Water Sustainability Act was brought into force Feb. 29 with the release of new regulations. The board welcomed the update to the century-old Water Act, noting it has been providing input since 2009, informed by its technical advisory body, the Water Stewardship Council. Significant changes include introduction of groundwater licencing. The council has been asked to review the act and provide feedback to the board.

Make Water Work survey says...: Staff delivered results from a survey of Okanagan residents who took the [Make Water Work](#) pledge this past summer. The survey was, in part, aimed at identifying barriers to conservation efforts. Results indicate the majority of respondents followed through with all pledges they made. Barriers to some of the tougher pledges (e.g. replacing thirsty lawn) were mostly cost and time. However, 75% of respondents indicated they made additional changes to conserve in and outside their home, including rain barrels, irrigation fixes, installing dual flush toilets and collecting grey water for reuse. The survey will inform the 2016 Make Water Work program. Additional questions around cost were asked to help inform potential conservation supports from local governments.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca