

## News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Stage 1 water restrictions begin across Cowichan region May 1 and will elevate in step with provincial drought level**

**COWICHAN VALLEY, BC** – Once again on May 1, water systems across the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) will collectively implement Stage 1 water restrictions in an effort to conserve water use on residential properties and ensure aquifers and lakes can withstand the increasingly dry summers.

Local governments and water purveyors across the Cowichan region continue to collaborate and modify the water restriction stages to ensure they balance the needs of residents and those of the watersheds, in recognition of the extreme drought conditions experienced in recent summers.

“Last year we formally introduced Stage 4 restrictions in yet another year of record low precipitation,” said Todd Etherington, Manager of Utility Operations for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “Based on feedback from residents and the business community, and the likelihood of needing to implement this heightened stage of restrictions again this summer, we’ve made several changes to Stage 4 for 2023.”

Stage 4 prohibits all outdoor uses of potable water, with the exception of two-hour daily maximums for hand-watering and micro-drip irrigation of vegetable gardens and fruit trees, and one-hour daily limits for ornamental trees, shrubs and flower gardens. To prevent watering during the heat of the day and reduce peak demand, water times in all stages are before 9 a.m. or after 7 p.m. on your designated watering day as per the 2023 Water Use Restrictions table.

As in 2022, movement between water restriction stages in the Cowichan region will be happen in sync with the provincial drought levels as determined by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.

“We’re incredibly fortunate in our region to have a high degree of collaboration between our local and regional governments, First Nations and improvement districts, allowing for a highly coordinated and effective approach to our summer water scarcity issues,” said Aaron Stone, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “Living a ‘new normal’ means using only as much water as we need, and getting better at storing water so we have enough to support our ecosystems and economy.”

Water restrictions apply to all CVRD water systems, City of Duncan, Municipality of North Cowichan, Cowichan Tribes, Town of Ladysmith, Town of Lake Cowichan, Mill Bay Water District, Cowichan Bay Waterworks, and Diamond Improvement District. Residents of other improvement districts and private water systems in the region are encouraged to follow regional water restrictions, but should contact their local system operators for information on any specific regulations which may apply to their system.

Visit the [New Normal Cowichan](#) website to learn more about the updated stages of water-use restrictions, including a [Water Restrictions Map](#) to find the current stage of restrictions on each water system in the region.

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*For more information, please contact:*

Kris Schumacher  
Manager, Communications & Engagement  
250.701.2631  
[kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca](mailto:kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca)