



New Water Conservation Regulations Approved by SCRD Board

Sechelt, BC—May 9, 2019— The Sunshine Coast Regional District is changing its water regulations in order to conserve water and meet high demand during the hot, dry summer months.

“Summer is the time when more water is used,” says Remko Rosenboom, General Manager, Infrastructure Services. “The regulation changes look at where we can conserve water from lawn irrigation and other lower-priority outdoor uses in order to make water available for food producing plants and trees.”

The SCRD recently completed a review and update of the Drought Management Plan. The Drought Management Plan is a technical guide that provides direction for managing water supply during times of supply challenges or seasonal droughts.

The result is several changes that were approved at the May 9 Board meeting.

“During Stage 1, lawn-watering times are reduced from three mornings and evenings per week to two mornings per week, and not allowed at all during Stages 2, 3 and 4,” said Rosenboom.

With the new regulations watering flowers, shrubs and trees with a sprinkler or soaker hose is allowed to take place three days per week in the mornings and evenings for residential users during Stage 1 and two days per week during Stage 2 in the mornings. Hand watering and micro/drip irrigation of flowers, shrubs and trees is allowed at Stages 1 and 2 and only allowed in the mornings at Stage 3.

For food producing plants and trees the use of a sprinkler or soaker hose is allowed three days per week in the mornings and evenings at Stage 1 and two days per week, mornings and evenings at Stage 2. Hand watering and micro/drip irrigation is allowed at Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Commercial food producing farms will be able to use water with more flexibility at Stages 1, 2 and 3. Given the severity of water supplies at Stage 4 only essential uses for human health, fire protection, and environmental flow needs are prioritized, therefore there will not be any exemptions for food production at Stage 4.

In order to be exempt from the crop sprinkling schedule, commercial food producing farms should register for a metered commercial rate. Billing on a metered rate will begin on January 1, 2020.

Penalties at each stage will also increase as follows: Stage 1 at \$200, Stage 2 at \$300, Stage 3 at \$400, and Stage 4 at \$500.

These regulations apply only to the use of treated drinking water not to the use of rainwater, private well water or any forms of recycled water.

“These changes reflect the comments we’ve heard from the community, and we feel that the Drought Management Plan balances water conservation with the need to provide water for food production,” says Rosenboom.

The water conservation regulations chart can be found at www.scrd.ca/sprinkling-regulations.

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