



DROUGHT RESPONSE PLAN

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	page 2
2.0	Purpose	page 2
3.0	Definitions	page 2
4.0	Applicability	page 3
5.0	Determining Stage Restrictions	page 3
6.0	Water Use Restrictions	
	6.1 Stage 1	page 4
	6.2 Stage 2	page 5
	6.3 Stage 3.....	page 6
	6.4 Stage 4.....	page 7
7.0	Vacant Land	page 8
8.0	Communications	page 8
9.0	Permits	page 8
10.0	Waste of water	page 8
11.0	Enforcement	page 8
12.0	Schedules	
	Schedule "A": Water Use Restrictions – At a Glance	page 9
	Schedule "B": Example of Lawn Watering Permit	page 10
	Schedule "C": Summary of Communication Plan	Page 11

1.0 Introduction

The SCRD's Drought Response Plan is the primary tool for minimizing impacts to water supplies caused by summer drought or unforeseen water shortage situations. The Plan prescribes water use restrictions leading up to, during, and following periods of drought, with an emphasis on curbing outdoor water use. Restrictions follow four stages, reflecting the level of risk of a water shortage. A detailed communications plan is implemented at each stage in order to reduce water consumption by changing behaviour.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Drought Response Plan is to manage demand for drinking water during the summer months or during other unforeseen water shortage situations such as emergencies or major service disruptions. A Drought Response Plan is necessary in order to:

- Ensure drinking water can be delivered to all users during summer months when rainfall levels are lowest and demand for water is highest.
- Guide local behaviour change to reduce the outdoor use of potable water
- Ensure adequate water and pressure is maintained for fire protection during peak use periods.
- Ensure water sources continue to support fish and ecosystem functions.
- Be prepared for further uncertainties associated with climate change including increasing severity and frequency of drought situations.

3.0 Definitions

- "Drought" is a recurrent feature of climate involving a deficiency of precipitation over an extended period of time, resulting in a water shortage for activities, communities or aquatic ecosystems. Locally, drought may be caused by combinations of insufficient snow accumulation, hot and dry weather, or a delay in rainfall.
- "Engineer" means the person holding the position of the General Manager of Infrastructure Services / Regional Engineer for the Regional District or designate.
- "Micro-irrigation or Drip-irrigation System" means a system using irrigation components which consume less than 76 litres per hour and operate at 25 psi or less to deliver Water to the root zone of the plant material being irrigated.
- "Permit" means a Permit issued under Section 9 of this Plan.
- "Person" shall include an individual, a corporation, a firm or a partnership.
- "Public Sector Entity" means federal and provincial government agencies, municipalities, school districts, universities, colleges and other schools.

- "Sprinkler" means a hose-connected or other sprinkler system, including automatic in-ground systems and weeper/soaker hoses, but excludes a Micro-irrigation or Drip-irrigation System (see definition above).
- "Stage" means the Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Water Use Restrictions prescribed by Section 6 of this Plan.
 - "Stage 1" water supply conditions shall also be known as Normal.
 - "Stage 2" water supply conditions shall also be known as Moderate.
 - "Stage 3" water supply conditions shall also be known as Acute.
 - "Stage 4" water supply conditions shall also be known as Severe.
- "Water" means water supplied by the SCRD to an Owner or Occupier of a property and does not include collected rain, grey or recycled water. ("Owner" and "Occupier" have the same definitions as in the Community Charter).
- "Water Use Restrictions" means the restrictions on water use prescribed by Section 6 of this Plan.

4.0 Applicability

Based on local conditions, and as determined by the Engineer, any stage of Water Use Restrictions may apply to any SCRD water supply system, at any given time.

Water Use Restrictions as set out herein are applicable to all water users serviced by SCRD water, and to the use of any water supplies that have been mixed with any amount of SCRD water.

Water Use Restrictions do not apply to the use of private well water, rain water, grey water, any forms of recycled water, or other sources of water outside of the SCRD water supply system, although, other water supply systems may choose to adopt the SCRD Water Use Restrictions.

5.0 Determining Stage Restrictions

Stage 1 Water Use Restrictions are in effect from May 1 to September 30, unless otherwise directed by the General Manager. Decisions about which Stage to implement are based on a set of criteria and guidelines used to assess the risk of drought or water shortage and trigger the appropriate stage of Water Use Restrictions. In making a determination to increase the restrictions to Stages 2, 3 or 4 the Engineer will consider the following:

- i. Time of year and typical seasonal trends
- ii. Snow pack assessments and snowmelt forecasts
- iii. Storage volume of water sources and draw down rates
- iv. Stream flows and monitoring data
- v. Weather, recent conditions and forecasts
- vi. Water usage, recent consumption and trends

vii. Water supply system performance

Any stage of Water Use Restrictions may be declared or delayed at any time or in any order, as the Engineer deems necessary. Extenuating circumstances include but are not limited to:

- Unusual weather conditions
- Supply disruption
- Excessive water consumption

6.0 Water Use Restrictions

6.1 STAGE 1 - Water Supply Conditions: "Normal"

The following water use restrictions for Stage 1 are in effect from May 1 to September 30 each year, unless otherwise determined by the General Manager.

During Stage 1 a person may:

- (a) use a sprinkler to water trees, shrubs, flowers or food producing plants and trees only during the following scheduled times:
 - i. on a property with an even numbered address on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm; and
 - ii. on a property with an odd numbered address on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm;
- (b) use a sprinkler to water lawns only during the following scheduled times:
 - i. on a property with an even numbered address on Thursday and Sunday from 7:00 am to 8:00 am; and
 - ii. on a property with an odd numbered address on Wednesday and Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.;
- (c) at any time water lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, and food producing plants and trees by hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle, hand-held container, micro-irrigation, or drip-irrigation;
- (d) under the authority of a New Lawn Watering Permit, water a newly seeded or sodded (unestablished) lawn on any day from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm upon installation and for the following 21 day period or until Stage 3 is declared as specified in the Permit;

- (e) at any time use water to wash a vehicle or boat, but must use a hand-held hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle or pressure washer, or hand-held container; or commercial car wash;
- (f) at any time use water to wash sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, exterior windows, decks, fences or exterior building surfaces, but must use a hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle, a pressure washer, or hand-held container; and
- (g) at any time use water to fill a swimming pool, spa, garden pond, or decorative fountain.

During Stage 1, the following exceptions apply:

- (a) The Engineer may establish a separate schedule for sprinkling of public sports fields, public swimming pool maintenance and operation of public water parks to balance water demands. Public sector sprinkling of other landscaped areas and ornamental gardens follow the same schedule as set out in Section 6.1.
- (b) Commercial food producing farms paying a metered rate for water are exempt from Stage 1 restrictions.

Enforcement Approach

First time offenders will receive a warning. If an owner or occupier of a premise has received a warning at any time in the past, fines during Stage 1 will be \$200.

6.2 STAGE 2 - Water Supply Conditions: "Moderate"

During Stage 2, a person may:

- (a) use a sprinkler to water trees, shrubs and flowers only during the following scheduled times:
 - i. on a property with an even numbered address on Thursday and Sunday between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 am; and
 - ii. on a property with an odd numbered address on Wednesday and Saturday between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 am;
- (b) use a sprinkler to water food producing plants and trees only during the following scheduled times:
 - i. on a property with an even numbered address on Thursday and Sunday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm; and

- ii. on a property with an odd numbered address on Wednesday and Saturday from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm;
- (c) at any time water trees, shrubs, flowers and food producing plants and trees by hand-held hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle, hand-held container, micro-irrigation, or drip-irrigation;
- (d) not water lawns, except under the authority of an existing New Lawn Watering Permit, in which case lawn watering is allowed on any day from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm during the remaining term of the Permit or until Stage 3 is declared. No new Permits will be issued during Stage 2;
- (e) at any time use water to wash a vehicle or boat, but must use a hand-held hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle or pressure washer, or a hand-held container, or commercial car wash;
- (f) not use water to wash sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, exterior windows, decks, fences or exterior building surfaces, except as necessary for applying a product such as paint, preservative and stucco, preparing a surface prior to paving or repointing bricks, or if required for health and safety reasons; and
- (g) at any time use water to fill a swimming pool, spa, garden pond, or decorative fountain.

During Stage 2, the following exceptions apply:

- (a) The Engineer may establish a separate schedule for sprinkling of public sports fields, public swimming pool maintenance and operation of public water parks to balance water demands. Public sector sprinkling of other landscaped areas and ornamental gardens follow the same schedule as set out in Section 6.2.
- (b) Commercial food producing farms paying a metered rate for water are exempt from Stage 2 restrictions.

Enforcement Approach

First time offenders will receive a warning. If an owner or occupier of a premise has received a warning at any time in the past, fines during Stage 2 will be \$300.

6.3 STAGE 3 - Water Supply Conditions: "Acute"

During Stage 3, a person may:

- (a) at any time use a hand-held hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle, hand-held container, micro-irrigation or drip-irrigation system to water food producing plants and trees;

- (b) use a hose equipped with a spray-trigger nozzle, a hand-held container, micro-irrigation or drip-irrigation system to water trees, shrubs, and flowers only between the hours of 7:00 am and 8:00 am or 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm any day of the week;
- (c) not water lawns, including newly seeded or sodded lawns;
- (d) not use a sprinkler to water trees, shrubs, flowers or food producing plants and trees, at any time;
- (e) not use water to wash sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, exterior windows, decks, fences or exterior building surfaces, unless required for health and safety reasons;
- (f) not use water to wash a vehicle, boat or equipment except to wash salt water from a vehicle, boat or equipment or if part of a non-cosmetic commercial process legally required by a third party; and
- (g) not use water to fill a swimming pool, spa, garden pond, or decorative fountain.

During Stage 3, the following exceptions apply:

- (a) The Engineer may establish a separate schedule for sprinkling of public sports fields, public swimming pool maintenance and operation of public water parks to balance water demands. Public sector sprinkling of other landscaped areas and ornamental gardens follow the same schedule as set out in Section 6.3.
- (b) Commercial food producing farms paying a metered rate for water are exempt from Stage 3 restrictions.
- (c) For certainty, essential water for livestock is exempt from Stage 3 restrictions.

Enforcement Approach

Fines during Stage 3 will be \$400.

6.4 STAGE 4 - Water Supply Conditions: "Severe"

During Stage 4, all outdoor water use is banned (including greenhouses), unless required by law to comply with health and safety regulations. Main line water pressures will also be reduced where possible.

For certainty, essential water for livestock is exempt from Stage 4 restrictions.

Enforcement Approach

Fines during Stage 4 will be \$500.

7.0 Vacant Land

On vacant land where an address number does not exist, the water use restrictions for that property will match those of the abutting, same side of road, properties.

8.0 Communications

Water shortage can result in economic and social hardship. It is therefore critical to ensure timely communications with water users and relevant government agencies. Detailed communications plans exist for each Stage.

Water shortages can be actively reduced by effective communications and engagement with water users. The communications plans associated with each of the stages are critical tools to be utilized early, monitored and adjusted as needed.

9.0 Permits

During Stage 1, a person who has installed a new lawn, either newly seeded or sodded, may apply to the SCRD Water Services department, for a Permit, which will allow the new lawn to be sprinkled with water outside of the designated sprinkling days, but still within the restricted hours described in Section 6 for trees, shrubs, and flowers. Sprinkling may occur upon installation and any day during the following 21 day period under Stage 1 or 2.

The SCRD Water Services department shall issue a Permit upon payment of a fee as determined by Bylaw No. 422 Schedule B, D, and E. Permit cards can be picked up from the SCRD main office at 1975 Field Road at the time of payment, and must be displayed on the lawn for the duration of their valid period. Permits will be issued to an owner or occupier one time only. No permits will be issued during Stage 2, Stage 3 and Stage 4.

10.0 Waste of water

Notwithstanding the Water Use Restrictions prescribed in Section 6, no person shall at any time waste water, caused by, but not limited to, the damage or deterioration of any sprinkler, micro-irrigation or drip-irrigation system, or plumbing fixture that results in water waste, or use more water than required to provide a service or complete a task, including over watering plants or lawns, and allowing a tap or hose to run unnecessarily. This is consistent with the Water Rates and Regulations Bylaw 422 and is enforceable.

11.0 Enforcement

The water use restrictions contained herein are enforced by of the Water Rates and Regulations Bylaw No. 422, the Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw No. 558 and the Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw No. 638. Fines range from \$200 to \$500. Patrols will be stepped up as the Stages progress.

12.0 Schedules

Schedule "A": Outdoor Water Use Restrictions

Schedule "B": Example of Lawn Watering Permit

Schedule "C": Summary of Communication Plan

Schedule A: Drought Response Plan – Outdoor Water Use Restrictions

 <h1 style="text-align: center; color: green;">WATER CONSERVATION REGULATIONS</h1> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">www.scrd.ca/sprinkling-regulations</p>		1	2	3	4
		NORMAL	MODERATE	ACUTE	SEVERE
ACTIVITY					
LAWNS (Sprinkler or soaker hose)	 2 days/week ** 7 am - 8 am (hand watering is permitted anytime)	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
NEW LAWNS (With permit)	 7 days/week 7 am to 9 am and 7 pm to 9 pm	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS (Sprinkler or soaker hose)	 3 days/week *** 7 am - 9 am and 7 pm - 9 pm	2 days/week ** 7 am - 9 am	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS (Hand held hose with nozzle, hand held container, micro/drip-irrigation)	 PERMITTED	PERMITTED	1 hr/ day max 7 am - 8 am or 7 pm - 9 pm	NOT PERMITTED	
FOOD PRODUCING PLANTS AND TREES (Sprinkler or soaker hose)	 3 days/week *** 7 am - 9 am 7 pm - 9 pm	2 days/week ** 7 am - 9 am 7 pm - 9 pm	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
FOOD PRODUCING PLANTS AND TREES (Hand held hose with nozzle, hand held container, micro/drip-irrigation)	 PERMITTED	PERMITTED	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
COMMERCIAL FOOD PRODUCING FARMS	 PERMITTED	PERMITTED	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
WASHING VEHICLES OR BOATS	 PERMITTED with container, hand-held hose with nozzle, or commercial car washes.	PERMITTED with container, hand-held hose with nozzle, or commercial car washes.	PERMITTED only to wash off sea water.	NOT PERMITTED	
WASHING SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS, WINDOWS, FENCES OR EXTERIOR BUILDING SURFACES	 PERMITTED with hand-held hose with nozzle, or pressure washer.	PERMITTED for preparing surfaces for painting or paving. For health and safety.	NOT PERMITTED except for health and safety.	NOT PERMITTED except for health and safety.	
FILLING SWIMMING POOLS, SPAS, GARDEN PONDS, FOUNTAINS	 PERMITTED	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED (Except public pools)	NOT PERMITTED	
PUBLIC SPORTS FIELDS	 Restricted under separate schedule.	Restricted under separate schedule.	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	
FINES	\$200	\$300	\$400	\$500	
WATERING SCHEDULES:	Two days per week ** Thursday and Sunday for even numbered address. Wednesday and Saturday for odd numbered address.		Three days per week *** Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday for even numbered address. Monday, Wednesday and Saturday for odd numbered address.		

For more information, contact 604-885-6806 or email infrastructure@scrd.ca.

www.scrd.ca/sprinkling-regulations

Schedule B – EXAMPLE Temporary Lawn Watering Permit



Permit No. _____

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
1975 Field Rd,
Sechelt, BC V0N3A1
604-885-6800

TEMPORARY LAWN SPRINKLING PERMIT

Owner / Occupier Name (Please Print): _____

Company Name (if applicable): _____

House Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____

Permission for Use:

This permit is issued in accordance with Sunshine Coast Regional District Bylaw No. 422 to permit daily watering of newly seeded or sodded lawns to support their survival during water use restriction periods.

Note: time of day watering restrictions still apply.

Duration of Use: (21 day maximum)

Today's Date: _____ Permit Expiry Date: _____

Cash register impression constitutes your official receipt.

Permit Fee: \$50.00

- Applicant (original)
- Finance Department (copy)
- Infrastructure - Water Services (Copy)

Schedule C - Communications Summary

Stage 1 (Blue)

Water supply conditions are “Normal” and emphasis is on drought preparedness. Stage 1 is in effect from May 1 to September 30, unless otherwise declared by the General Manager.

Water Conservation Goal: *Prevent water shortage.*

Messages:

- Use water wisely.
- How we use water now will determine how much we have for the remainder of the summer.

Stage 2 (Yellow)

Water supply conditions are “Moderate” and emphasis is on preventing a water shortage. Stage 2 is in effect at the time it is declared by the General Manager.

Water Conservation Goal: *Prevent water shortage.*

Messages:

- Diligent water use now ensures adequate supplies later.
- Please use only what you need.
- Aim to reduce water use by an extra 20%

Stage 3 (Orange)

Water supply conditions are “Acute” and emphasis is on preserving existing supplies. Stage 3 is in effect at the time it is declared by the General Manager.

Water Conservation Goal: *Preserve existing water supplies.*

Messages:

- No cosmetic uses of water.
- Aim to reduce water use by further 20 - 40%.
- Help spread the word.

Stage 4 (Red)

Water supply conditions are “Severe” and emphasis is on preparing for emergency water supplies. Stage 4 is in effect at the time it is declared by the General Manager.

Water Conservation Goal: *Prepare for emergency supplies.*

Messages:

- Ban on all outdoor water use.
- Aim to reduce water use as much as possible indoors and outdoors.
- Help spread the word.