

NEWS RELEASE

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City of Nanaimo moving to Stage Three watering restrictions

Residents asked to conserve on outdoor watering to maintain supply

Summary

Following the Provincial announcement that Vancouver Island is experiencing a Level Four drought, the City of Nanaimo is moving watering restrictions to Stage Three. Effective Monday, July 12, property owners are encouraged to voluntarily reduce the amount of outdoor watering. Permitted watering times are between 7- 10 a.m. or 7 -10 p.m. for no more than two hours total allocated per day. The same watering schedule as Stage 2 will be maintained, even days for even numbered houses and on odd days for odd numbered houses.

On July 9, 2021, the Province announced that the East Vancouver Island Basin is at Drought Level 4. At this level, adverse impacts on people or ecosystems are likely. Impacts on fish have been observed due to very high water temperatures combined with low flow conditions and water conservation is being urged across the region to help reduce the risk of significant impacts on the environment and other water users.

Some tips to reduce outdoor water use include:

- Reduce the lawn irrigation on your property by decreasing sprinkler run times, cutting back on the number of watering days and refraining from sprinkling certain lawn areas. Lawns naturally go dormant in the summer months and return with fall rains. One hour of watering per week is all a lawn needs to stay healthy.
- Avoid washing vehicles or boats unnecessarily, unless for safety reasons.
- Sweep outdoor surfaces with a broom rather than using a hose or power washing.
- Retrofit leaking or inefficient irrigation systems.
- Add mulch/topsoil to aid in landscape water retention so you can decrease sprinkler run times.

The City of Nanaimo's water supply at Jump Lake is currently 95 per cent full. Summertime draw-down started approximately one month earlier than previous years. However, given the storage level and corresponding the level of consumption at this time the City does not foresee the need for more severe restrictions. Nanaimo staff continue to monitor reservoir levels and consumption very closely, to ensure a consistent level of supply well into the fall.

For more information on watering restrictions with the City of Nanaimo and other ways residents and businesses can reduce use, visit www.nanaimo.ca/goto/watering. For information on regional watering restrictions (including City of Nanaimo), visit www.teamwatersmart.ca.

Strategic Link: Watering restrictions support a community that is environmentally responsible.

Key Points

- Stage 3 watering restrictions requests further voluntary reductions prior to implementing a ban, enabling residents to choose where they cut back – the focus is on lawns, and providing an opportunity to defer a comprehensive ban.
- The increased watering restriction level supports the Province's call for voluntary water use reduction, and helps to ensure the City's water supply will remain in good shape for the duration of the summer.
- Hand-watering with a shut-off nozzle and drip irrigation are exempt from watering restrictions. Watering restrictions do not apply to vegetable gardens but please be careful with water use.

Quotes

"Water conservation is key to ensuring sufficient water is available for emergency fire supply, essential community needs and the ecosystem. Water is critical to our health and vital to our community, let's all help protect our most precious natural resource."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"While our reservoirs capturing upper elevation snow melt and precipitation provide a resilient water supply for the City, the record-breaking heatwave has now spurred us into summer drought conditions. Residents and businesses are encouraged to reduce outdoor watering to help maintain supply throughout the summer."

Mike Squire
Manager, Water Resources
Engineering & Public Works

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