



REGIONAL DISTRICT NORTH OKANAGAN GREATER VERNON WATER

New Agricultural Volumetric Rate for 2027

Greater Vernon Water (GVW) is updating its agricultural water rate structure to start consumption billing to help protect our shared water resources and support long-term sustainability. This change will start in **2027** and will apply to all agricultural water users.

Why GVW Is Introducing Volumetric Billing

The Okanagan is one of Canada's driest regions, making water a precious resource for the Greater Vernon community. Agriculture is an essential industry that represents over 50% of GVW's total water use. Currently, agriculture is billed based on a flat fee with limited conservation efforts beyond staying within the property's allocation. In contrast, domestic customers have been billed based on volumetric billing for over 30 years, demonstrating that paying for the amount of water used effectively encourages conservation efforts.

To encourage water conservation in the agricultural sector, GVW will introduce an agricultural volumetric rate of **\$0.01 per cubic metre** starting in 2027. This modest rate is designed to highlight the value of water while keeping costs reasonable for producers.

The goal of the new rate structure is to:

- Support long-term water security for everyone in the region
- Encourage efficient water use during increasingly dry summers
- Recognize water as a valuable and limited resource.

Here's How the New Rate Structure Works:

1. Allocation Fee (Flat Rate)

- Your allocation fee (based on hectares of irrigated land) will remain the same until 2032. This fee will only increase once the overall agricultural revenue is 75% from flat fees + 25% from volumetric (water use), the parameter used to set rates.

2. Volumetric Rate (New in 2027)

- Properties will be billed based on actual water use as measured by your agricultural meter. The rate is set to absorb scheduled rate increases and will gradually increase each year until the 75:25 revenue goal is reached in 2032.
- The rate is designed to encourage water efficiency, not to penalize farmers.

Year	Previous Flat Rate Structure	New Rate Structure (Flat & Metered Water Use)	
	Annual flat rate / ha	Annual flat rate / ha	Volumetric (per m ³)
2026	\$429.32	\$429.32	\$0.00
2027	\$456.80	\$429.32	\$0.01
2028	\$486.00	\$429.32	\$0.03
2029	\$510.00	\$429.32	\$0.04
2030	\$535.00	\$429.32	\$0.05
2031	\$561.00	\$429.32	\$0.06
2032	\$572.00	\$429.32	\$0.07
2033	\$583.00	\$437.00	\$0.07
2034	\$594.00	\$445.00	\$0.07

Additional Considerations

- Over-Allocation Charges Continue:
Over-allocation fees still apply when allocation is exceeded and will be billed on top of the consumption fee.
- Off-Season Rates Continue:
GVW will maintain off-season rates. The volumetric cost will be credited to the off-season rate, so you will not be charged two (2) fees for the volume of water.
- Billing:
 - Both the **Allocation Fee** and **Volumetric Rate** will appear on the water bill
 - Property owners will see charges **quarterly**
 - Expect bills to look different beginning in 2027 due to the new structure.
- Monitoring:
GVW will continue to monitor **hourly maximum flow rates** to ensure sustainable service for all customers.

Our Shared Future

GVW values the agricultural community and understands the pressures producers face. By working together and using water more efficiently, we can:

- Strengthen our region's climate resilience
- Protect our limited water resources
- Support sustainable agriculture for future generations

Agriculture accounts for half of all water use in the GVW service area. Residential and commercial customers already face tiered pricing structures designed to promote efficient use.

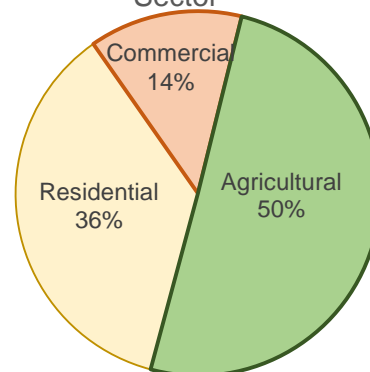
If you have questions or would like support with water-efficient irrigation practices, GVW staff are here to help.

What's Coming Up

GVW staff are preparing communication materials for Spring 2026. Additional resources coming soon include:

- **A new annual online water-use calculator** to help plan and track your water use and allocation and predict for future utility bills
- **Access to the Temetra water-use portal** currently available on a trial basis for producers interested in monitoring real-time consumption
- **A Fall 2026 water-use summary** outlining individual consumption and what to expect for 2027 water fees based on seasonal allocation and use.

2020-2024 Average Water Use by Sector



Questions?

Information about the GVW agricultural program and related application forms can be found at www.rdno.ca/agwater.

If you have any questions, please contact our office.

Phone: 250-550-3700 Email: utilities@rdno.ca