



REGIONAL DISTRICT NORTH OKANAGAN – GREATER VERNON WATER

Stage 3 Water Restrictions Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do these water restrictions apply to me?

If you are a resident, business, or agricultural water user within the City of Vernon or District of Coldstream, then yes, this applies to you. If you are a resident of Electoral Area B or C, Township of Spallumcheen, or Electoral Area D and are serviced by Greater Vernon Water (GVW), then these restrictions also apply to you.

Q: Why have these restrictions been put in place?

These restrictions are necessary due to low snowpack levels, which have reduced the available stored water, combined with warmer-than-normal spring temperatures and low rainfall for the area. Under the *GVW Water Shortage Management Plan*, stronger restrictions are required now to protect the water supply throughout summer and fall.

Q: Where does our water come from, and why does snowpack matter?

Much of Greater Vernon's water supply comes from snowpack that melts and fills reservoirs and lakes like Duteau and Kalamalka Lake. Low snowpack means less stored water available for the year. Low storage levels are also aggravated due to the low amount of rain we have received last fall and this spring.

Q: Will these restrictions be enforced, and are there penalties?

Yes. Water restrictions in Stage 3 are actively enforced. Non-compliance will result in warnings, fines, or further action, including water shut off for continued non-compliance. The goal is to ensure fair and consistent water use across all users and ensure we have water throughout the dry summer season.

Q: What happens if conditions get worse?

If water levels continue to decline, stricter restrictions (Stage 4) may be implemented, which could eliminate outdoor water use and introduce mandatory bans in certain sectors.

Q: How will I be updated if restrictions change?

Updates will be posted on the RDNO website and shared through local communication channels. Residents and users are encouraged to regularly check for updates as conditions can change throughout the season. Go to our website and subscribe for updates at <https://www.rdno.ca/subscribe>.

Q: Is my lawn going to die if I follow these water restrictions?

Even when lawns go brown, they are only dormant and will come back when conditions improve. Allowing your lawn to go dormant forces the plant to grow deeper roots and makes your lawn more resilient.



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Q: What are Stage 3 restrictions for watering aesthetic gardens?

Watering is allowed by micro jet, drip irrigation or hand watering to maintain plant health. Sprinklers and soaker hoses are not allowed. No new aesthetic garden plants to be planted if they require watering more than 2 days per week.

Established Gardens

May be watered 1 day a week between 7:00pm and 10:00am

Newly Planted Gardens

May be watered up to 2 days a week between 7:00pm and 10:00am

Q: What are Stage 3 restrictions for watering residential fruit trees and shrubs?

Watering is allowed up to 2 days per week between 7:00pm and 10:00am by micro jet, drip irrigation or hand watering for plant health. Sprinklers and soaker hoses are not allowed.

Q: Are Stage 3 water restrictions the same for food gardens and potted plants?

Watering is allowed up to 7 days a week between 7:00pm and 10:00am to maintain plant health for food security. Watering can be done by micro jet, drip irrigation, or hand watering. Sprinklers and soaker hoses are not allowed

Q: Can I still fill my pond, and/or water feature?

No, filling and refilling with water supplied by GVW is prohibited.

Q: Can I still fill my pool?

Filling of pools is prohibited. Topping up a pool is allowed up to 1% of pool volume (or approximately 2cm) per week to replace lost water and maintain pool filter functionality.

Q: What do I do if I witness someone blatantly wasting water, or watering outside of the watering schedule?

Please send us an email at utilities@rdno.ca with an address and description or fill out a Bylaw Complaint Form at <https://www.rdno.ca/form/bylaw-complaint-form-duplicate>, and one of our staff members will follow up.

Q: What are some other things I can do to help save water?

There are lots of ways to save water!

- Take shorter showers (3- 5 minutes) and turn off the water while soaping and shampooing
- Catch shower warm-up water in a bucket and use it for cleaning or for plants
- Reuse cooking water (once cooled) for plants



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- Wash fruit and veggies in a bowl and not under running water, then use that water for plants.
- Skip rinsing dishes and scrape them before putting them in the dishwasher
- Only run dishwashers once full
- Fix leaks immediately – even a small leak can waste multiple litres a day.

For even more ideas head to rdno.ca/conservation.

Q: What does water reduction look like for my household or property?

Water reduction can be achieved by reducing outdoor water use through turning off irrigation and allowing the lawn to go dormant as it will recover during wet seasons. Additionally fixing leaks & running full loads in dishwashers and laundry machines can help reduce water use indoors.

Q: Why are golf courses still watering their grass?

Golf Course in Vernon are connected to the Vernon Water Reclamation Centre's Spray Irrigation Program which utilizes reclaimed water. This water is not supplied by Greater Vernon Water and does not impact the regional drinking water supply.

Q: Why is water main flushing still happening?

Routine water main flushing has been paused; however, some flushing is still required for essential health and safety purposes to maintain water quality.

Q: Do agricultural users have specific requirements under Stage 3 restrictions?

Yes, agricultural properties will be required to reduce their water use by 70%. Without drastic reductions, agricultural customers could potentially be shut off later this summer if the water supply runs out. Greater Vernon Water will be working directly with the agricultural community on how to use the current water supply as efficiently as possible.

Q: Why are agricultural users required to reduce water use if food production is important?

Water supply must be carefully managed to ensure there is enough for essential needs throughout the entire season. Agricultural irrigation uses over 55% of all water used in GVW, with most used over the dry summer months. Without conservation efforts by the agricultural users, the water supply would not last the summer. Reductions help balance agricultural demand with available supply and protect long-term water reliability for all users.

Q: Do the restrictions apply to wells or private water sources?

If your property is connected to the GVW system, the restrictions apply. Private wells not connected to GVW are not regulated under these restrictions, but conservation is strongly encouraged.



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Q: Do these restrictions apply to businesses and commercial properties?

Yes. All businesses must comply with watering restrictions and are encouraged to implement water-saving practices where possible.

Q: How can you allow events that consume a lot of water to continue to run (i.e. 5K Foam Fest)

We have been in contact with the organizers of this event, and other events in the community. They are required to cut water consumption for the event down by 50% in order to run the event.

Q: Why can't we just use a different water source?

In order to conserve water from the Duteau Creek source GVW is already maximizing the use of the Kalamalka Lake source throughout the distribution system wherever interconnections allow; however, Kalamalka Lake levels are also extremely low.

Q: Why do restrictions happen so early?

Restrictions are based on a combination of factors, including:

- Storage Conditions
- Current Moisture
- Forecasted Weather (heat and drought conditions)
- Forecasted Customer Demand

Acting early helps prevent more severe restrictions later in the season.

Q: Why doesn't the RDNO just build bigger infrastructure, so we don't need restrictions?

Even with infrastructure upgrades, our water supply isn't unlimited. Over the past several years, we've experienced ongoing drought conditions, which means reservoirs and natural water sources are not always fully replenished. Building larger systems does not guarantee more available water.

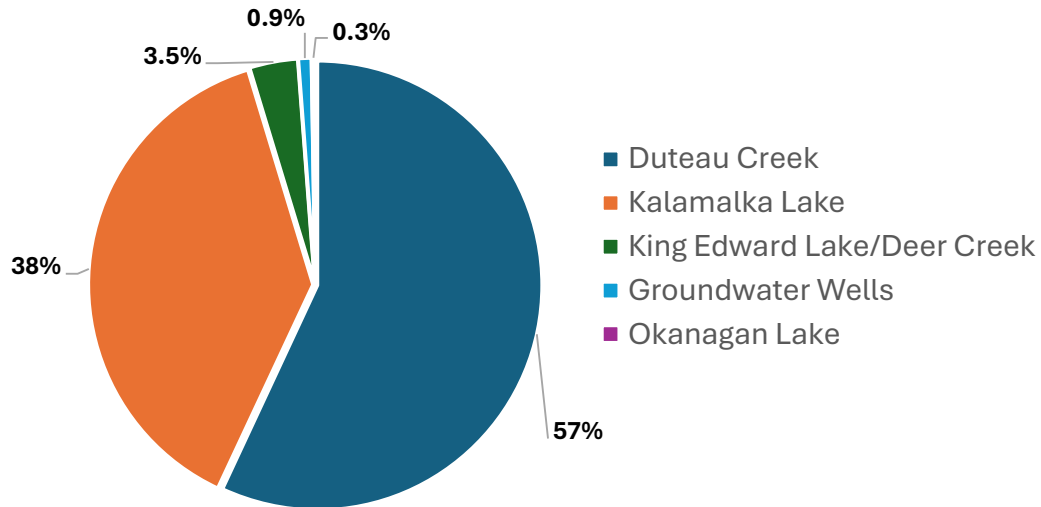
Q. Where does our water come from?



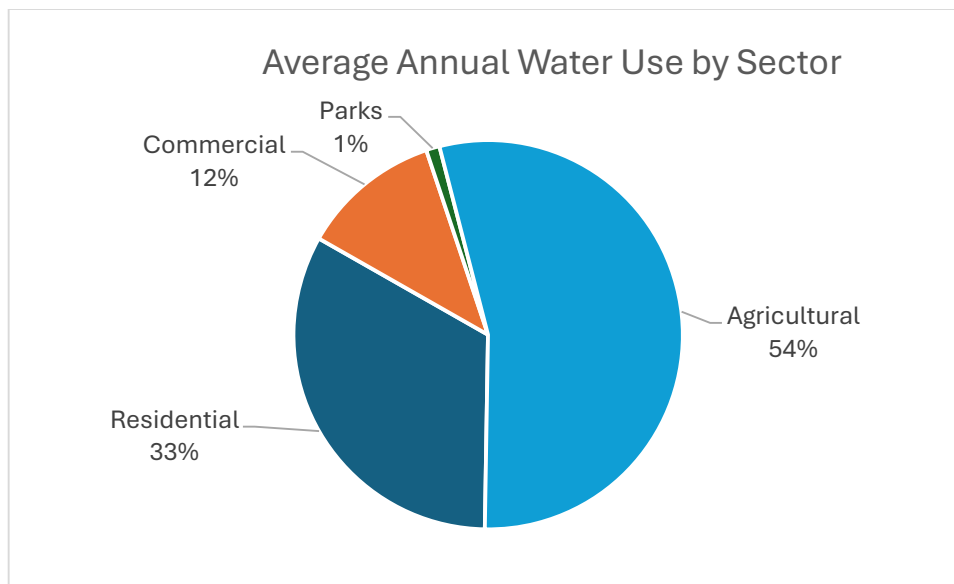
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2025 Percentage of GVW Water Inflows by Source



Q. How is GVW water used across different sectors?



Q: Why is my water black or contains black particles?

The Antwerp aquifers contain high amounts of manganese. When chlorinated, manganese will precipitate out of the water and form brown or black particles in the water, which may lead to staining of fixtures and laundry. Water from the Antwerp Deep Well is typically above the aesthetic guideline of 0.02 mg/L, but below the health guideline of 0.12 mg/L. All manganese results were



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reviewed and approved by the Interior Health Authority before putting the Antwerp Deep Well online. Greater Vernon Water will continue to monitor the manganese levels in the distribution system while the Antwerp Deep Well is being used.