

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2021



Cowichan residents urged to further conserve water in response to emergency drought levels across Eastern Vancouver Island

DUNCAN, BC – Water systems operators across the Cowichan region have collaborated to develop new emergency Stage 4 water restrictions in response to the provincial declaration of Drought Level 5 for Eastern Vancouver Island.

Following the announcement of the emergency drought level status from the Province of BC last week, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Regional Emergency Operation Centre began to actively develop Stage 4 restrictions. These emergency restrictions have been drafted by local government staff to respond to the Provincial declaration and extremely limited drinking water availability and fire suppression capacity in some water systems. Under Stage 4, all use of water for any purpose other than drinking, food preparation and personal hygiene is affected. At this time the new restrictions are only being implemented in two CVRD water systems in the region, Shellwood in Area H – North Oyster/Diamond and Burnum in Area B – Shawnigan Lake. Residents in all other areas across the Cowichan region are asked to consider abiding by these restrictions and take any further conservation measures possible at this time.

“This is a drought situation that we’ve come close to in the past, but never experienced until now,” said Aaron Stone, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “It’s been months since we have had significant rainfall in the region, and for many of our watersheds, the circumstances are dire. Please be conscious of water use. Look at and embrace the restrictions we’re asking everyone to adhere to until the rains return. Water is our most precious and critical resource. We’re all in this together when facing such an extreme drought.”

The Stage 4 restrictions were developed in partnership with experts from all water purveyors in the region, including municipalities, First Nations and improvement districts, based on staff expertise and risk-based assessments. Watering of public and school district sports fields and community parks will be eliminated where possible and reduced on sand-based fields, and local government outdoor water parks and pools will be closed or operating with reduced hours.

To learn more about Stage 4 water restrictions please see the attached information, and for further information about drought conditions visit the [New Normal Cowichan](#) website.

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STAGE 4 WATER RESTRICTIONS – EXTREME CONDITIONS

ALL USE OF WATER FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN DRINKING, FOOD PREPARATION AND PERSONAL HYGIENE IS SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS.

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

PROHIBITED USES:

- Outdoor sprinkler use;
- Filling or topping off or operating residential or commercial pools, hot tubs, ponds or fountains;
- Washing vehicles, boats, structures or outdoor surfaces; and
- Any other use not specifically listed below.

EXCEPTIONS TO STAGE 4 RESTRICTIONS – These uses are permitted but should be reduced to minimum essential levels:

- Hand-watering or micro/drip irrigation for watering gardens, plants and trees subject to the schedule and limits outlined in the accompanying chart;
- Using water for health and safety reasons;
- Cleaning outdoor surfaces is only authorized when required by law to comply with health or safety regulations, or to comply with an order of a regulatory authority having jurisdiction, such as WorkSafeBC or a public health inspector;
- Spot cleaning of vehicles and boats with a sponge and bucket for health and safety reasons (windows, lights, license plates, etc.); and
- Car dealerships; and other commercial enterprises which require water use to facilitate normal business activities (e.g., power washing companies, window washing companies, dust control on work sites).

Public and school district sports fields and community parks. Watering will be eliminated where possible and reduced for sand-based playing fields. Local government outdoor water parks and pools will be closed or operating with reduced hours.

While compliance with these regulations is voluntary for private well owners, we encourage everyone to do their part to limit water use to these essential purposes only.



STAGE 4 WATER USE RESTRICTION DETAILS

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	Stage 4
Effective Date	May 1 to October 31	As Required	July 16, 2021	
Lawn Sprinkling	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	NOT PERMITTED SPRINKLING BAN	NOT PERMITTED SPRINKLING BAN
Even Numbered Houses	Even days	Wednesday & Saturday		
Odd Numbered Houses	Odd days	Thursday & Sunday		
Watering New Lawn	Same as above unless Sprinkling Permit is obtained	NO PERMITS ISSUED	NO PERMITS ISSUED	NO PERMITS ISSUED
Hand watering of trees, shrubs & gardens (hose with nozzle or watering can).	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	2 hours per day 7:00 am - 9:00 am OR 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Micro OR Drip Irrigation	4 hours per day Anytime	4 hours per day Anytime	4 hours per day Anytime	4 hours per day Anytime
Even Numbered Houses	All days	All days	All days	Wednesday & Saturday
Odd Numbered Houses	All days	All days	All days	Thursday & Sunday
Filling/topping of pools and hot tubs	Anytime	Anytime	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED
Washing vehicles, houses or boats	Anytime	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED
Washing Driveways & Sidewalks	Anytime	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED

ALL USE OF WATER FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN DRINKING, FOOD PREPARATION AND PERSONAL HYGIENE IS SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS.