



## OKANAGAN IN DROUGHT LEVEL 2

There has been some confusion recently regarding what drought level the Province of B.C. has declared for the Okanagan. While some regions around us have been moved to Drought Level 3, the Okanagan, as of August 22, remains at **Level 2**. That said, we haven't had any significant rainfall for many weeks, and the forecast is calling for more hot and dry weather.

According to provincial staff, at least two Okanagan streams are experiencing low flows: Vaseux Creek and Inkaneep Creek. Streams backed by storage are doing okay. After historic highs this spring, Kalamalka, Okanagan, and Osoyoos lakes are nearing average levels. Aquifers throughout the Okanagan are at, or above, historical averages. Real-time aquifer conditions are available on the [BC Groundwater Observation Well Network](#). Information on drought levels and average streamflows is available on the [BC Drought Information Portal](#).

Drought Level 2 calls for a voluntary 10% reduction in water use, but the province acknowledges that most water users on municipal systems have water conservation bylaws that differ from provincial targets due to local water supply and demand, and the availability of storage. Okanagan water purveyors are generally reporting normal supply conditions. We know of only two purveyors who have moved to higher restrictions. Kelowna has moved to Stage 1, not because their supply is insufficient (Okanagan Lake), but because their water system is running close to capacity due to high demand. Greater Vernon Water has moved to Stage 1 because their Duteau Creek reservoir is below average.

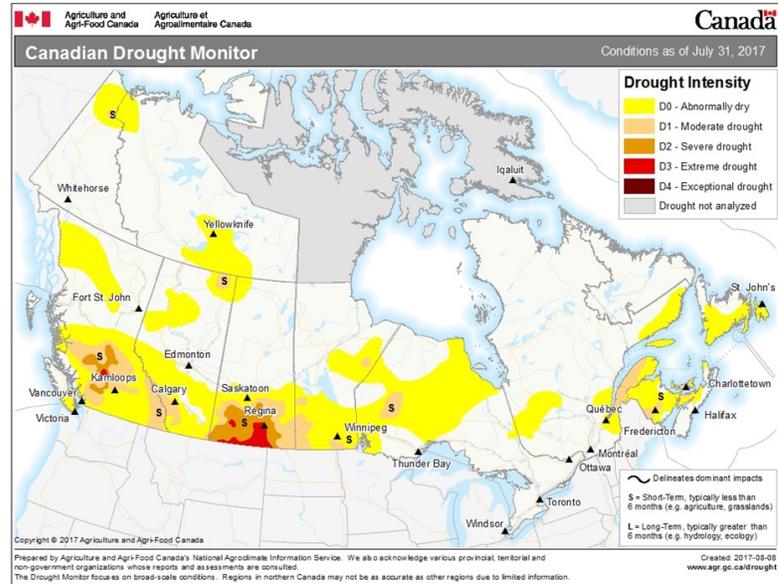
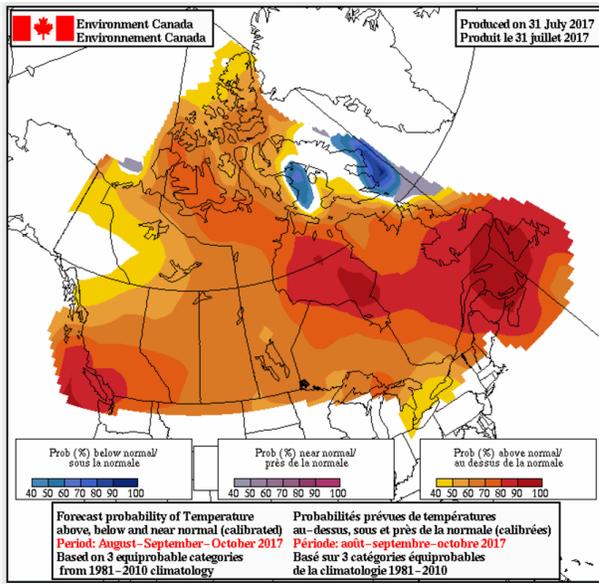
**The province is asking licensees with upstream storage to follow the release schedule requirements in their licences to avoid potential instream flow issues.**

We are in close communication with the province, and will send out a bulletin if the Okanagan is moved to Drought Level 3.



## WEATHER FORECAST

The forecast is for above normal temperatures into October. There is more uncertainty about precipitation, but as of July 31, conditions across Western Canada ranged from abnormally dry to extreme drought.



## COMMUNICATING WATER CONSERVATION WITH THE PUBLIC



The OBWB, through its Okanagan WaterWise outreach and education program, has developed the **Make Water Work** campaign in partnership with Okanagan water utilities. Make Water Work is aimed at tackling the 2nd largest use of water in our valley—residential outdoor use.

Visit [www.MakeWaterWork.ca](http://www.MakeWaterWork.ca) for tips to make water work more effectively and efficiently on residential landscapes. Also, find water restrictions for communities in the valley, and information on the “Make Water Work Plant Collection,” carried at garden centres throughout the Okanagan. Each year, a contest is held, inviting residents to visit the website and take the challenge and pledge to conserve for their chance to win a WaterWise yard upgrade. We also award the title of “Make Water Work Champions” to the community that collects the most pledges per capita.

We also have an **Okanagan Agricultural Water Users Resource Page** to help this sector take proactive steps to use water effectively and be ready to respond if drought conditions worsen during a growing season. Visit [www.OBWB.ca/ag](http://www.OBWB.ca/ag) for more.

## KEEP IN TOUCH!

The OBWB would like to hear about your water supply. Please let us know if you move from one stage of watering restrictions to another, and any other factors that influence water availability in your communities. Please contact Kellie Garcia at [kellie.garcia@obwb.ca](mailto:kellie.garcia@obwb.ca) or 250-469-6321.