



**REPORT TO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY 2009**

SUBJECT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LANDSCAPE BYLAWS

PURPOSE

To provide recommendations for landscape bylaws for referral to municipalities for consideration and implementation.

BACKGROUND

At the Regional Water Supply Commission meeting held September 19, 2007, the report entitled "Review of Landscape Ordinances Report, April 2007" was referred to the Commission for consideration and for circulation to the member municipalities for consideration.¹ The Commission requested a report be brought back to the Commission with a series of recommendations that could be referred to municipalities.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1. That the Regional Water Supply Commission recommends that local municipalities consider enacting a landscape bylaw containing the elements outlined in this report and that a committee be established to develop a model bylaw and assess the financial implications.

The following elements are suggested for inclusion in landscape bylaws:

1. Landscape/Irrigation Plans

That landscape/irrigation plans be required when installing a new irrigation system and when substantial changes to an existing system are proposed (from in-ground to micro, as an example) on all properties including provisions for:

- Water efficient and effective irrigation system design and installation, including the requirement of a multi-programmable irrigation controller, rain sensor, separate irrigation for different types of plantings.
- An irrigation system maintenance plan.
- Water efficient landscaping preparation and installation practices, including soil testing reports and amendments where required.
- A minimum of 76 mm (3") of organic mulch on all plantings except turf and low ground cover.
- A set percentage of landscape to be in natural or native vegetation.
- Retention of existing native trees and plantings with specific root protection zones.

2. Permits

That a permit for the installation of all new or renovated irrigation systems on all properties be required.

3. Restriction of Plant Species

That the sale and use of invasive species be prohibited, including:

- English Ivy (Hedera Helix)
- English Holly (Ilex Aquifolium)
- Spurge Laurel (Daphne Laureola)

¹ The report is available online at www.crd.bc.ca/water/conservation/ici/documents/ReviewofLandscapeOrdinances.pdf.

4. Specific Width of Turf Area for In-ground Sprinklers

That no overhead sprays be used in areas less than 2.4 m to 3.0 m (8' -10') wide in all municipal and Industrial/Commercial/Institutional (ICI) settings.

5. Micro-drip

That only micro/drip irrigation systems be used for all new trees, shrubs, and other bed plantings.

6. Limits on Non-Drought Tolerant Turf

That the use of non-drought tolerant turf be limited, starting with municipal properties and expanded to include ICI properties.

7. Certification for Irrigation Contractors

That any person designing and installing an irrigation system for hire must be certified by the Irrigation Industry Association of British Columbia.

8. Specific Inspection and Enforcement Requirements

That the municipalities develop a comprehensive inspection process for all issued permits conducted by qualified inspectors.

9. Irrigation Meters for Municipal Landscapes

That separate water meters be installed for municipal landscapes, particularly medians, boulevards and parks.

In order to develop a common approach to a landscape bylaw between the region's municipalities, it is also recommended that a landscape bylaw committee be established with representatives from municipalities who would seek advice from irrigation professionals, horticulturists, planners, nurseries, etc.

Alternative 2. That the Regional Water Supply Commission not recommend that local municipalities consider enacting a landscape bylaw.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Alternative 1. The financial implications of Alternative 1 would be assessed as part of development of a model bylaw. There would be cost implications for homeowners, the business community, as well as public sector entities.

Alternative 2. None.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Water Supply Commission recommends Alternative 1, namely that local municipalities consider enacting a landscape bylaw containing the elements outlined in this report and that a committee be established to develop a model bylaw and assess the financial implications.