

Current Water Restrictions

Regional Water Supply Service



Capital Regional District | August 2018

Local and provincial weather patterns are generating inquiries about our region's current and near future water supply. With the warm, dry July and August we have had this year, the CRD is monitoring the water supply situation closely and will continue to do so through the summer and into the coming fall and winter months. Average daily water demand across Greater Victoria has been between 195 - 215 million litres/day since mid-July, which is what was projected. At the start of the spring and summer demand period this year, the Sooke Lake Reservoir, which is the primary storage reservoir for the Regional Water Supply system, was at full storage capacity. Currently the reservoir is at 76.8% of full capacity which is within the normal range for this time of year. Staff have projected, based on current demand projections and weather forecasts, that the reservoir will reach a low level of approximately 60% of full storage capacity in the late fall, before it begins to recharge. It is also projected that the reservoir will reach full storage capacity over the winter months before the peak demand season starts next spring.

Greater Victoria is currently under Stage 1 Water Conservation under the CRD Water Conservation Bylaw. Under the bylaw, the CRD considers a number of factors in determining the conservation level including:

- Time of year and typical seasonal water demand trends
- Precipitation and temperature conditions and forecasts
- Storage levels and storage volumes of water reservoirs (Sooke Lake Reservoir and the Goldstream Reservoirs) and draw down rates
- Stream flows and inflows into Sooke Lake Reservoir
- Water usage, recent consumption and trends, and customer compliance with restrictions on water use under the bylaw
- Regional Water Supply System performance
- Impacts of climate change

Given the storage volume projection, the CRD is not considering a higher level of conservation at this time, but staff will continue to closely monitor the supply outlook and the potential need to increase conservation levels. However, residents are encouraged to reduce outdoor discretionary water use to maximize the amount of water in the reservoirs for indoor use and fire protection. The CRD has not implemented Stage 2 Water Conservation since the Sooke Lake Reservoir dam was raised in 2002.

The Province has recently issued a Level 4 drought rating for Eastern Vancouver Island and a Level 3 rating for Western Vancouver Island. In doing so, the Province is urging all surface water and groundwater users, including residents, industry, farmers and municipalities to voluntarily reduce water consumption. However, the Province has noted that local water conservation bylaws, such as the CRD's, may set specific water conservation targets or requirements due to local water supply and demand, and the availability of storage.