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Columbia Basin Water Smart

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**CBT has
launched new
Columbia
River Treaty
web pages
Take a look here!**

The third edition of the Water Smart newsletter provides an update on CBT's Implementation Support, water conservation actions underway, the Water Smart Ambassadors Program and recently released water conservation resources.

If you have any questions about CBT's Water Smart Initiative, contact [Meredith Hamstead](#), Water Smart Coordinator or [Heather Mitchell](#) CBT Program Manager, Water Initiatives.

CBT Supports Water Smart Plan Implementation

In March of this year CBT announced it is continuing to support 22 Basin communities with implementation of their Water Smart Action Plans. [Work is already underway in many communities](#) and CBT is supporting them with shared learning opportunities, capitalizing on economies of scale, and assisting with the implementation of proven strategies for water conservation.



Water Smart Action Plan
2010



Focused on local government capacity building in 2011, CBT will support communities to:

- o better understand the appropriate role of water metering in their local context;
- o develop plans for more effective water loss management;
- o gather, analyze and use their available water data; and
- o implement effective water conservation outreach programs.

[Learn more about how CBT will support Water Smart Communities to implement their action plans.](#)

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Basin Communities Take Action

With their water conservation plans and targets now finalized, 22 Basin communities participating in CBT's Water Smart Initiative have started to put their plans into action. Collectively, Columbia Basin Water Smart communities are working to **save 6,305,714,000 (that's 6.3 billion!) litres of water annually** by 2015.



[Learn more about how communities are implementing their Water Smart Action Plans](#)

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Water Smart Ambassadors Connect with Residents

Eleven communities have Water Smart Ambassadors this summer

Even with the significant amount of rainfall in the Basin early this summer, it has been a busy few months for the Columbia Basin Water Smart Ambassadors. The Water Smart Ambassador program aims to reduce outdoor water use in the summer as outdoor water use accounts for a significant percentage of the annual water demand in the Basin.



Water Smart Ambassadors have been educating residents by offering free residential outdoor water audits to help residents better understand outdoor watering requirements and efficient water use.

[Learn more about the program and the successes achieved.](#)

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Publications – Water Pricing Attitudes and Approaches

Two recent [Canada West Foundation](#) publications provide information that will support staff and elected officials to better understand public attitudes toward water pricing; and to identify and address key questions in order to build a comprehensive water charging system.

[**Water Worries: Western Canadian attitudes toward paying more for water**](#) provides a uniquely Western Canadian context for discussions around water pricing.

[**Charging for Water Use in Canada: a workbook of the central principles, key questions, and initial steps**](#) presents commonly agreed upon principles to inform effective water charges and a “workbook” of key questions that need to be addressed to achieve sustainable and effective water charges.

This document is an important companion to the POLIS publication [*Worth Every Penny: a primer on conservation oriented water-pricing.*](#)

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March 2011 Conference Videos Online

CBT hosted a Columbia Basin Water Smart Implementation Conference in Nelson in March 2011. Four of the sessions are now available online. For a refresher or for those not able to attend click on the links below.

- [*Water Metering: Everything you ever wanted to know but were afraid to ask.*](#) Presented by Joel Carty
- [*Secrets to Designing Effective Water Conservation Regulations.*](#) Presented by David Reid
- [*Beyond Leak Detection: Water Loss Management.*](#) Presented by Joe McGowan and Jamie Eichenberger
- [*Implementing the Water Smart Ambassador Program.*](#) Presented by Neal Klassen

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Columbia Basin Trust supports efforts by the people of the Basin to create a legacy of social, economic and environmental well-being and to achieve greater self-sufficiency for present and future generations.

For more information on the Columbia Basin Water Smart Initiative, please contact:
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*You're receiving this email because of your previous interest or involvement in CBT's [WaterSmart Initiative.](#)
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Basin Communities Take Action

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

With their water conservation plans and targets now finalized, 22 Basin communities participating in CBT's Water Smart Initiative have started to put their plans into action. Collectively, Columbia Basin Water Smart communities are working to save 6,305,714,000 (that's 6.3 billion!) litres of water annually by 2015. These communities are focused on six areas of actions, including:

- detecting water loss management and implementing strategies for reduction;
- developing water rate and/or revenue sufficiency studies;
- evaluating and implementing water metering;
- improving municipal irrigation practices;
- improvements water data gathering, analysis and understanding; and
- reducing peak outdoor irrigation demands.

The work being undertaken in the areas of reducing outdoor water demands, water loss management and data gathering will provide a solid foundation for achieving measurable reductions in water consumption. Above all, the conversation about water conservation in the Basin has changed over the past year. CBT has heard from communities that the level of support for and knowledge about water conservation has improved among staff, elected officials and the public, and communities are prepared to take action. The following are examples of what some communities are already doing.

- 11 communities have Water Smart Ambassadors delivering on the ground public education to reduce outdoor water consumption, which accounts for a significant percentage of the annual water demands in the Basin. The Ambassadors, who all received technical training this past spring are booking appointments until the end of August to visit homes, municipal parks and commercial accommodations to provide free irrigation and indoor water use assessments that will provide property owners with recommendation on how to reduce their water use.
- Local governments are taking clear action to reduce their outdoor water use. These actions include:
 - updating the technology used to irrigate parks - with rain sensors being one of the most common items implemented; and
 - using untreated and/or reclaimed water to irrigate parks and green spaces, wash streets and flush irrigation lines.
- Many communities have begun to implement water loss management (or leak detection) programs to identify and repair leaks and other related issues in the community water distribution infrastructure as these are often the single largest user of water in the system as a whole. This work includes:
 - major infrastructure replacement programs resulting in significant reductions in water loss in the main distribution lines - in some cases many millions of litres on a monthly basis;
 - identification and repair or replacement of individual valves and hydrants that have been a source of persistent and significant water loss;
 - installation of pressure reducing stations resulting in reduced water loss due to excessive pressures in the main distribution lines.
- Water Smart Communities have done a significant amount of work in the area of enhanced data gathering, a fundamental component of a successful water conservation program. It is critical to know where the community water is going before the community can determine how to effectively reduce demand.
- Communities have taken a variety of action related to water metering:
 - implementing universal metering programs; and
 - undertaking metering assessments to determine if water meters are a necessary and a cost effective tool for water conservation in their community;
- Where water metering has not been deemed a preferred option, some communities are:
 - installing system meters within their main water distribution lines; and
 - testing, recalibrating and replacing existing system meters to ensure accurate data gathering and effective water loss management programs.

Over the coming year, CBT will continue to support communities to implement their Water

Smart Action Plans and to gather the data they need to monitor progress toward achieving their local water conservation targets. In the next edition of the Water Smart Newsletter we will report on the results to date.

For more information, contact Meredith Hamstead, Water Smart Coordinator at watersmart@cbt.org or Heather Mitchell, CBT Program Manager, Water Initiatives at hmitchell@cbt.org.



CBT Supports Water Smart Plans

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

In March of this year CBT announced it is continuing to support 22 Basin communities with implementation of their Water Smart Action Plans. Work is already underway in many communities and CBT is supporting them with shared learning opportunities, capitalizing on economies of scale and assisting with the implementation of proven strategies for water conservation.

Focused on local government capacity building in 2011, CBT will support communities to:

- better understand the appropriate role of water metering in their local context;
- develop plans for more effective water loss management;
- gather, analyze and use their available water data; and
- implement effective water conservation outreach programs.

In future years, as communities' needs change, CBT will continue to offer relevant support to individual communities while also seizing opportunities to implement Basin-wide synergies.

Water Metering Assessments

Water metering studies and programs in communities across North America have demonstrated that water meters are the most comprehensive means of gathering water demand data (the City of Guelph, ON, City of Kelowna, Regional District of Nanaimo and District of Invermere offer some notable examples across a variety of scales). However, for many Water Smart communities it is unclear whether the cost of acquiring data through metering programs is offset by the value of the data for improving system operation and reducing consumption. While some Basin communities are already pursuing metering programs, others still need to assess the benefits and costs of water metering in their local context.

In 2011, CBT will support interested communities in the development of a multi-community Request for Proposals (RFP) for water meter assessments to determine the benefits, necessity and type of metering program applicable to their community. The assessments will evaluate:

- the ongoing and long-term system operation and infrastructure costs of each utility relative to the potential water savings;
- costs of meter implementation and maintenance; and
- social and environmental benefits.

The water meter assessments will help communities more accurately understand whether or not a metering program is appropriate, and if so, what type of program is most effective.

CBT's Water Smart Team will support RFP coordination, development, posting and evaluation for the Water Metering Assessments. Communities will be directly responsible for contracting the services of the successful bidder. Communities may apply Water Smart match funding toward these contracted services.

Water Loss Management Training and Planning

When people think of water conservation, their mind may leap first to low flow toilets and turning off the tap when brushing their teeth. However, in virtually every Basin community, the single largest opportunity for water conservation comes from improvements to the identification and repair of water loss in the storage and/or distribution system.

This year, CBT will support communities to improve their local capacity to address water loss management in two ways:

1. Water Loss Management Training: CBT will provide a water loss management training course for staff to enhance their skill sets in this critical area of water management. CBT will provide the training and local governments will be required to cover travel and accommodation costs.
2. Multi-community RFP for water loss management planning: CBT's Water Smart Team will support the development and evaluation of a multi-community RFP for water loss management planning services. The successful proponent will assist communities to establish a target for acceptable water loss in the communities' water system and to identify the most effective strategies to achieve that target over the long-term.

Water Data Gathering and Analysis

The foundation of successful water system management and water conservation

programs is data collection and interpretation-the right data, well understood by staff and elected officials, and well communicated to the public. The more a community understands their water supply and demand data, the more effectively the community can reduce demand and water loss, defer infrastructure upgrades and improve overall system operation.

The Water Smart Team will work with Water Smart communities to interpret the water data they have gathered from 2009, 2010 and 2011 by using the newly created Water Smart Data Monitoring and Reporting Template (to be released in September 2011). The Water Smart Team will assist communities in understanding the data and together come up with refined solutions for the most effective conservation methods.

Water Conservation Education and Outreach

The Water Smart Ambassador Program was launched in 11 communities throughout the Basin this spring. The program is designed to support communities to address outdoor residential water use, one of the highest uses of water in the Basin, and the cause of peak summer demands.

The Water Smart Ambassadors have been actively educating residents in participating communities to make the link between information and action, providing each participating community with a local contact who can interact and work with the public to reduce their outdoor water watering during the summer months.

A program review is being planned for the fall with the 11 communities participating communities.

CBT Water Smart Team

In addition to the implementation support outlined above, CBT's Water Smart Team will continue to respond to the needs of participating communities. We are always happy to hear from our communities and project partners so please do not hesitate to contact us.

For more information, or to provide feedback to this implementation support plan, contact Meredith Hamstead, Water Smart Coordinator at watersmart@cbt.org or Heather Mitchell, CBT Program Manager, Water Initiatives at hmittchell@cbt.org.



Water Smart Ambassadors Connect with Basin Residents

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

Eleven communities have Water Smart Ambassadors this summer

Even with the significant amount of rainfall in the Basin early this summer, it has been a busy few months for the Columbia Basin Water Smart Ambassadors. The Water Smart Ambassador program aims to reduce outdoor water use in the summer as outdoor water use accounts for a significant percentage of the annual water demand in the Basin. Water Smart Ambassadors have been educating residents by offering free residential outdoor water audits to help residents better understand outdoor watering requirements and efficient water use.

The 11 participating communities include Fernie, Kimberley, Fruitvale, Rossland, Creston, Golden, Sparwood, Montrose, Valemount, Radium Hot Springs and RDCK-Erickson.

The Ambassadors' role is to educate residents in the community about water conservation" the need for it and how they can accomplish it.

In many Basin communities, water use more than doubles in the summer months due to outdoor irrigation and the Water Smart Ambassador program aims to reduce these outdoor summer peaks.

Depending on each communities needs, the Ambassadors have been carrying out a variety of tasks in their community including:

- residential irrigation audits (which often include provision of a free hose timer for residents);
- park, school and municipal office irrigation audits and indoor fixture audits;
- residential indoor fixture and behaviour surveys;
- commercial and accommodation sector audits; and
- outreach and education at community events.

Each Ambassador is booking between 5-10 residential appointments a week. Some of the significant achievements to date:

- The Town of Creston was able modify their watering schedule to reduce water use at the town office by more than 50 per cent after Brittny Anderson, Water Smart Ambassador completed an irrigation assessment.
- Town of Golden Ambassador, Sheelagh England completed park irrigation audits for all parks in Golden and has written a priority action plan. The park irrigation audits generated interest from the public and have directly resulted in appointments for residential audits.
- District of Sparwood Ambassador, Tiana Shea, has been spreading the word about water conservation through a rain barrel painting contest. The winner of the contest will receive a contribution toward a complimentary water efficient landscape for their yard in 2012.

The program is concluding at the end of August. The Water Smart Team will review the program based on information the Ambassadors have collected throughout the summer and feedback from Ambassadors and participating communities. This review will inform program delivery for 2012 and will be shared with communities in November.

For more information, contact Heather Mitchell, CBT Program Manager, Water Initiatives at hmitchell@cbt.org, or Neal Klassen, Water Smart Public Education and Outreach Coordinator at neal@getwatersmart.com.

