



NEWS RELEASE

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WATER WISE CREW ENCOURAGES CONSERVATION EFFORTS

In a place full of waterways and lush greenery, where fresh, clean water is available at the turn of a tap, is it easy to take one of our most valuable resources for granted. But it isn't always rainy here on the "wet coast" of Canada, and the reserves that supply us with water for drinking and dealing with emergencies aren't always plentiful.

That's why the Water Wise team will once again take to the streets of Langley Township and spread their message of conservation and awareness at special events this summer.

"Water conservation is a year-round goal, but it is even more important in the summer," said Water Wise team member Sumara Stroshein, as water usage increases by 50 per cent during the warm, dry months, putting a strain on the environment and our limited water resources.

"Some parts of Langley Township rely solely on groundwater drawn from local aquifers, and even people hooked up to municipal water get 50 per cent of that from the ground," added Water Wise's Hillary Rowe. "But often the ground is not getting water because it's not raining."

Water Wise, a Township public outreach program presented by the Langley Environmental Partners Society, was launched 14 years ago to raise awareness of the need to be careful with our precious water resources. Through the program, information on how to save water inside and outside is delivered door to door, presented at events, and made available at municipal facilities and online at tol.ca/waterwise and leps.bc.ca/water-wise.

This summer, the Water Wise team aims to visit 2,500 homes. Starting with the Brookwood area, they will provide residents with door hangers, magnets, postcards, and leaflets full of tips and information, before moving on to the Murrayville, Willoughby, and Walnut Grove neighbourhoods. Township employees will also hold awareness campaigns in south Langley's High Point community, as well as Fort Langley and Bedford Langley.

"People should be practicing these tips all the time, but it is especially important to do them now in the summer," said Water Wise Coordinator Erin Pawlikowski, adding that it may not be hot and dry now, but it can quickly turn that way. "The more water we can save now, the better."

"One of our main focuses is to encourage people to Go Golden with their lawns," she said. "Keeping lawns green requires a huge amount of water – water that should be saved for drinking and fighting fires when the rainfall that replenishes local aquifers and reservoirs is sparse."

“One lawn sprinkler uses as much water in one hour as 25 toilet flushes, five loads of laundry, and five dishwasher loads combined,” Pawlikowski said, “but it only takes one hour or one inch per week to keep your lawn healthy. Better yet, stop watering your lawn during the summer months. Let it go dormant and turn golden – it will become green again when the fall rains return.”

During the campaign, Water Wise will distribute Go Golden and 1” or 1 Hour Weekly lawn signs to residents who are proud to participate. Those who display the signs for the duration of the summer will be entered into a draw to win a rain barrel.

The message is hitting home, according to the Water Wise team: “People are telling us there are more important things than the esthetic value of having a green lawn,” said Rowe.

Stroshein added that children learning about water conservation in the classroom eagerly share what they have learned with their parents, and with the Water Wise crew when they meet them: “They are so excited to tell you everything they know about water.”

Those who live in multi-family homes can also do their part to save water. BC residents use 465 litres of water per day – the highest average in all of Canada. That amount can be reduced by turning the tap off while brushing your teeth or shaving, checking toilets and faucets for leaks, running the dishwasher and laundry machine only when there is a full load, and using water efficient appliances and low-flow shower heads and toilets.

This summer, the Water Wise team will be setting up booths, distributing information, conducting an online survey, and offering interactive games and prizes at the Langley Events Centre on Canada Day, during Aldergrove Fair Days on July 15, 16, and 17, and at Picnic in the Park at the Langley Demonstration Garden on July 18.

Displays with information boards and brochures will also be set up at recreation centres and libraries throughout the Township.

Information and tips provided through the Water Wise program are based on watering restrictions that are enforced in the Township of Langley and throughout Metro Vancouver each summer. Stage One Watering Restrictions, which limit the hours and days when lawns can be watered, are currently in effect. Visit tol.ca/waterrestrictions.

For more information, contact Water Conservation Coordinator Erin Pawlikowski at Water@leps.bc.ca or 604.546.0340