

## Main Takeaways from Similkameen Water Operators and Providers Symposium

Hosted by Hedley Improvement District

Facilitated by Shelley Fiorito (RDOS)

April 25, 2024 at Hedley Centre

Attended by Bill Kresowaty and Pamela Mann representing the LNID and Twin Lake Strata 551

### Notes:

1. In the context of a radically changing climate and complex, ever-changing government attempts to deal with and reorganize water and fire related infrastructure, small operators and community based groups like ours sometimes feel overwhelmed by the challenges and obstacles we face.

- This was a good attempt to bring like-minded groups together to begin a process of sharing information and ideas and making valuable contacts in nearby areas.
- The best communication method for us and for the residents of our communities is actual face-to-face meetings. We need to encourage these.
- Continuing education of our community members on both fire and water issues is very important in these times.

2. BC government provides a guide to homeowners entitled **Well Protection Kit** that was recommended to us.

3. Not every locality within a Regional District necessarily has the same problems or solutions. Local autonomy is often preferable to handing over administration to Regional District or Province. But it takes an active community of willing and committed individuals.

- Each locality should understand and define its own aquifer and waterway and in case of drought decide what indices and trigger points will define each of the 4 stages of water restrictions.

4. Levels of drought and what each stage of restrictions means were discussed (Stages 1 to 4) Bill and I thought this was a good idea for the LNID web site. Example: See link below for a summary of all stages taken from metro Vancouver. (<https://metrovancover.org/services/water/Documents/drinking-water-conservation-plan-summary.pdf>)

5. FITFIR "First in time- first in Rights" is no longer relevant but is still being used in some cases. Province is moving away from this model. (This might impact us regarding water use by golf course for example.)

6. Not everyone has water monitoring wells

7. Many ID's have Dams and they buy insurance for them to cover liability. One ID said they pay about \$4000 per year for this. (Another said \$400,000 but they will flood everything East of them, from Princeton all the way to Keremeos, if their Dam fails.) Private dams must be inspected every 5 years (cost is covered by the ID)

8. There are currently no government regulations on enforcing water use or water restrictions. They know this needs to change and they are working on it??? We need to think of water as a shared resource.

9. \***Fire Safe**-If you have a Personal Fire Sprinkler System -set it up but **do not turn it on** when you get evacuated. Turning it on wastes water and causes water pressure to drop and this makes it so that fire fighters cannot do what they have to do.

Fire fighters Assess properties and help the properties that can be most easily saved first. If your property is a fire hazard, they may have to let it burn and protect other properties first. (Keep your property fire safe if you want the fire fighters to prioritize your property)

10. Shelly from the RDOS assured us that if the LNID wants to apply for a grant, the RDOS will definitely work with us??????? Maybe we need to go through Shelly Fiorito when making a request for working on a Grant Application in cooperation with the RDOS.

11. \* A contact list of all the participants in the symposium was established and a follow-up meeting is planned for sometime in the fall.