



June 24, 2025

To: Water System Owners/Operators/Purveyors

Re: Preparing for Potential for Drought Conditions in 2025

Please be advised that drought conditions experienced across the province in recent years may occur again. The [BC River Forecast Centre](#) has reported below normal [snowpack conditions](#) across much of the province, currently signalling an increased risk of drought for spring and summer. Based on these early indications, we recommend all water suppliers once again prepare for an increased risk of experiencing drought in 2025.

Take part in the water supply status survey

The Province, in partnership with the Regional Health Authorities is inviting drinking water suppliers across the province to submit water supply status information through voluntary surveys. The survey is your opportunity to share up-to-date information on the status of your water supply and to let us know if you have any concerns about a drinking water shortage.

We encourage you to take 10-15 minutes to fill out an [initial](#) survey and help us understand the state of drinking water supplies as we approach the dry season. Once you have completed the survey the first time, you do not need to fill out the survey again unless your situation or responses change. The survey will be accessible from June to October. You can take part in this survey effort by clicking on the link below:

[Drinking Water Supply Status Survey \(Click Here\)](#)

- There is no option to save the survey and return to it, so please set aside enough time to complete it in one sitting.
- Not all questions are mandatory. Please provide the information you have readily available.
- The survey will work on any web browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge) except for Internet Explorer.
- The survey can be accessed on mobile devices such as phones and tablets. If you open the survey on your mobile devices and it asks to use your location, please do not allow it to use your location to ensure built-in maps function properly.

- If multiple contacts within your organization have received the survey, please coordinate to provide a single survey response.

By sharing information with the Province, we can better assess which communities are at risk of water supply issues, and where operational support may be needed.

Stay informed about current drought conditions

The Province's [drought preparation and response website](#) has several online resources to support water suppliers through drought conditions. The BC Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan provides an overview of drought response in the province, including management responsibilities, pre-drought preparedness, descriptions of the provincial drought levels and the potential regulatory actions that may be taken. This plan is updated annually, so please look for the updated 2025 plan on the [BC drought information website](#) later this Spring.

To understand trends in water availability, it is important to regularly monitor available information about drought and streamflow conditions. The Province produces datasets to better understand water availability regionally including:

- the [BC Drought Information Portal](#) that displays regional Drought Levels and
- a [Map of 7-Day Average Streamflow](#) that displays Water Survey of Canada streamflow gauges relevant to your area.

Drought levels provide information about how dry conditions are, and how often these dry conditions may reoccur. However, they cannot tell you if your systems will be impacted or at risk of being impacted as this depends on the resilience of each water supply system in times of drought.

Improve resilience to drought and other hazards

Actions you can take to better prepare for drought and other hazards include:

- **Establish a water supply monitoring program:** If your water sources (raw water storage and inflows or groundwater levels) are not gauged, consider establishing a water supply monitoring program, which will enable you to quantify the water available and adjust water use accordingly. Understanding the status of your water supply can help to anticipate future water scarcity and improve drought resilience. Professional consultants can help design an appropriate monitoring program for your system.
- **Prepare/update a water conservation plan:** Preparing a water conservation plan or updating a current plan that is more than five years old is also recommended. This [Water Conservation Guide](#) provides a resource on creating these plans. A Water Conservation Plan can help you develop or update voluntary seasonal watering restrictions based on projections of water availability. Public outreach and communication can also be an effective tool to explain the importance of water conservation, its impacts and what individuals need to do to participate.

- **Prepare/update an emergency response and contingency plan:** Section 10 of the [Drinking Water Protection Act](#) (DWPA) requires all water suppliers to have a written emergency response and contingency plan (ERCP) to be implemented in the event of an emergency or abnormal operational circumstances. Having an updated ERCP that includes drought response actions will help ensure water systems are prepared to deal with water shortages.
- **Share key drought and water management resources with agricultural water users:** The [Drought in Agriculture](#) website offers factsheets, videos, tools, financial support information (including infrastructure funding), and workshop listings to help the sector make the most of water resources.

Keep up-to-date on the latest guidance available to you

You may already be aware that there are resources to help you fulfil your responsibilities as a water supplier regulated by the [Drinking Water Protection Act](#) and [Drinking Water Protection Regulation](#). These [resources for water system operators](#) include:

- [BC Small Water Systems Community Network](#)
- [Emergency Response and Contingency Planning for Small Water Systems](#)
- [Guide to Emergency Response and Contingency Plans for Water Supply Systems](#)
- [Dealing with Drought: A Handbook for Water Suppliers](#)

For questions about the DWPA and ERCPs, please contact your Drinking Water Officer (DWO) at the applicable email address:

Bowen Island	Ross Adamson	604-983-6758	ross.adamson@vch.ca
Central Coast & Indian Arm	John Pickles	604-983-6758	john.pickles@vch.ca
Powell River	Michael Nguyen	604-485-3324	michael.nguyen@vch.ca
Sechelt	Darren Molder	604-885-8711	darren.molder@vch.ca
Squamish/Sea to Sky	James Whalen	604-815-6846	james.whalen@vch.ca

We understand and appreciate that water suppliers are facing numerous challenges in addition to drought and are doing their best to plan ahead and ensure they can continue providing essential services to their communities.

Thank you for your cooperation and attention to preparing for drought this year.

Sincerely,



Darren Molder

Manager, Environmental Health (Coastal Rural)
Drinking Water Officer
Vancouver Coastal Health