



South East Kelowna Irrigation District

INTERNET WEB SITE

sekid.ca

A reminder to landowners in the district who have access to the internet to visit the district's web site at www.sekid.ca - we are hopeful that landowners will find the site useful for getting general information about the district as well as access to past newsletters and internal and external reports. A number of links to other water related sites are also provided for those interested in finding out more about water issues.

The home page welcomes you to the site and provides the latest information and announcements on district events. A series of menu choices are available to search for a wide range of information including billing, bylaws, water conservation and water quality. A number of internal reports prepared for the Board of Trustees are also available for those who might be interested in more in-depth information about different aspects of district operations and policy development.

Your comments about the web page are welcome. Suggestions about how to improve the content and additional information you would like to see will help us to improve the site and make it more useful for the landowners. Drop us

Board of Trustees

The Trustees would like to take this opportunity to invite the landowners to call us with your comments and concerns regarding the district's operations and policies. We are:

Ken Harvie	860-6881
Alan Porter	861-1193
Dave Stirling	861-6172
Frits Verkerk	764-1987
Hazel Ziegler	861-1088

Or, call or stop by our office and talk to the staff at 3235 Gullely Road, ph. 861-4200, fax 861-4213.



**Season's Greetings from all
of us at the South East
Kelowna Irrigation District!**

Holiday Office Hours:

Dec. 24 - 29: closed
Dec. 30: open
Dec. 31: open 8:30 – 12:00
Jan 1-2: closed

a line at info@sekid.ca or pick up the phone and give us a call at the district office. For those who do not have web access, don't worry, the district will continue to publish a newsletter twice a year.

WATER SUPPLY

2004 - year in review

The 2004 irrigation season provided some relief from the drought conditions of the previous three years. While the year was still higher than average, the winter snow pack, timely seasonal rains and effective water use by district landowners combined to leave surface water supply inventory at comfortable levels going into this winter.

The end of season water supply levels are significant because the greater they are, the less we rely on the annual snow pack to replenish our water supplies in the spring.

As of the end of November McCulloch Reservoir was at 64% of capacity, which is the highest carry -over we have had since 1997.

This is particularly significant because demand was still considerable. According to the Farm west web site (www.farmwest.com) our irrigation period May 1 to October 15 had a net moisture deficit of 748.7mm compared to an average for this period of 551.2mm. The net moisture deficit for the same period in 2003 was 789.2mm, one of the highest demand years on record.

WATER CONSERVATION

Metering program results

The water use information from the 2004 irrigation season has again showed very encouraging results.

As with the last three years, all metered irrigation properties in the district were given an allotment of water in the spring. The allotment this year was the same as last: 2.25 acre feet of water per acre of water rights. This is equivalent to the estimated drought year water requirement of the district.

For the second year in a row a metered rate penalty for water use in excess of the allotment was in effect. The metered rate is an inclined block rate, which means the penalty for water use increases incrementally with water use over the allotment (for more information go to http://www.sekid.ca/agri_metering_program.html).

The board also retains the discretion to turn off any irrigation connection in excess of the allotment for the property, but this was not necessary this year.

The following graph provides a break down of water use as a percentage of the annual allotment for all metered irrigation services for 2003 and 2004.

In 2003, which by all measures was a drought year, a total of 71 properties exceeded the annual allotment. Only four properties in 2004 exceeded the annual allotment. This is encouraging given that 2004, while not as high as the previous year, was a higher

than average demand year (see previous story).

DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Metering program sparks interest

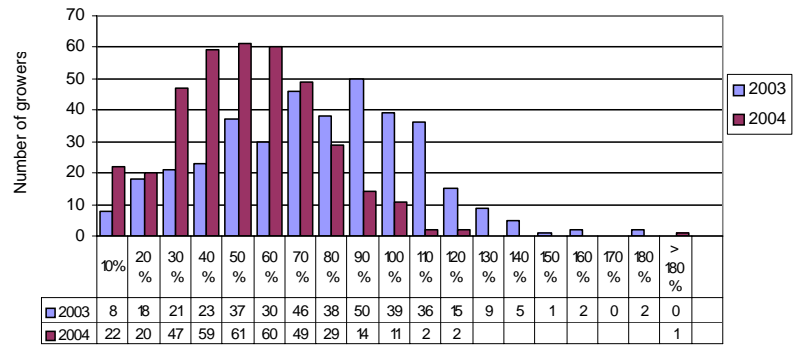
The dry conditions of the past four years, particularly the 2003 drought, have sparked considerable interest by others in the district's Agricultural Metering Program.

SEKID's program is based on an allotment system that keys on eliminating water waste while ensuring adequate water is available for the intended use – in this case, agriculture (see previous stories).

The effectiveness of this approach became evident during the drought of 2003.

The period from May 1, 2003 to October 14, 2003, was one of the driest on record. A total of only 63mm (2.5 inches) of precipitation fell at the Kelowna Airport during that time. After evaporation losses are taken into account, this amount is insignificant for

Water Use % Allotment
2003 / 2004



irrigation purposes. Consequently, the total irrigation demand of the 2003 season relied upon the district's water supplies.

Despite one of the driest years on record, annual water use for 2003 was up only 2.7% over our average annual water use for the previous nine years.

Significantly, our storage reservoir supply at the end of the year was greater than at the beginning of the year, indicating that the district would be able to manage through a consecutive drought event of a similar magnitude, if necessary.

SEKID has been asked to make numerous presentations on the metering program. These have been given to local government councils, water boards and associations throughout the valley, as well as at provincially sponsored workshops and technical paper sessions.

In June the district was invited to Ottawa to provide a presentation at the federal government's Policy Research Initiative expert's symposium on Economic Instruments for Demand Management in Canada.

The event was limited to 70 invited participants from Australia, Israel, the EU, US and Canada. For more information go to http://policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=freshwater_symp.

RATES

Toll increase for 2005

Effective January 1, 2005 toll rates for domestic and commercial connections will increase. The rate for domestic connections will increase to \$19.00 per month, while the metered rate for commercial users will increase to \$1.25 per 1,000 US gallons with a minimum monthly rate of \$19.00.

A number of factors influenced the board's decision to raise rates. These include increased energy and material costs and the need to augment district reserves for both system improvements and unforeseen contingencies.

Domestic services are billed quarterly and the new rate will amount to a billing of \$57.00 for each three month period.

Domestic accounts pre-paid for the year prior to 4:00 PM February 28, 2005 are entitled to a 6% discount. The annual toll amounts to \$228.00. When the 6% discount is applied to the annual toll, the total payable is reduced to \$214.32, a savings of \$13.68.

Residents of the Hall Road area who pay a special charge are also eligible for a discount.

Residents of the Hall Road area who pay **both** the annual toll and annual Special Charge on or

before 4:00 PM February 28, 2005 are entitled to a discount of 6.0%, a savings of \$25.20.

Details of the discount are also presented in the table at the bottom of this page.

For more information please see the billing page on the web at www.sekid.ca or contact the district office for details.

RATES

Taxes due December 31

A reminder to all landowners in the district that your property taxes are due on December 31, 2004 - a ten percent penalty will be added to taxes outstanding as of 4:00 PM on February 28, 2005.

Please, avoid the penalty and pay your taxes on time!

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

Crown lease sales

Land and Water B.C. (LAWBC) is the crown corporation that looks after all crown lands in the province. SEKID received a referral from LAWBC in May of 2002 indicating they proposed to sell some 141

waterfront lots located on 16 drinking water reservoirs throughout the Okanagan Valley highlands. Twenty-two of these lots are adjacent to SEKID reservoirs.

A study done by Dr. Rick Nordin in 2000, while employed by the provincial Ministry of Environment, indicated almost two thirds of the e-coli in SEKID's source water supply already comes from humans and domestic animals, including cattle. The district believes the sale of this property would only make matters worse and that LWBC should be proactively managing crown lands to minimize the threat to public health.

The Board of trustees met with LAWBC officials and strongly indicated the district's opposition to this proposal. This opposition was shared by every local government organization in the valley directly affected by the proposal, including the Senior Medical Health Officer for the Interior Health Authority. Several residents of the district also took the time to write to the government to express their opposition to the crown lease sales.

In June of this year, after over two years of widespread opposition, SEKID received a letter from the minister responsible for LWBC. The Honorable George Abbott advised the district that "the project has been put on hold...[because] at the present time there are no resources available to coordinate the Okanagan reservoir Lakes Project."

Domestic Toll and Special Charge Discount for 2005						
(For annual charges paid on or before February 28, 2005)						
	<u>Annual Toll</u>	<u>Special Charge</u>	<u>Sub-total</u>	<u>6% discount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Savings</u>
Non-Hall Road	\$228.00	0	\$228.00	-\$13.68	\$214.32	\$13.68
Hall Road Area ¹	\$228.00	\$192.00	\$420.00	-\$25.20	\$394.80	\$25.20

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

McCulloch purchase uncertain

The purchase of McCulloch Lake Fishing Resort is in jeopardy. A joint venture/trust agreement with the Regional District of Central Okanagan and the Okanagan Boys and Girls Clubs was reached in the spring to purchase the facility.

The agreement provides for the property to become a regional park with an outdoor education centre operated by the Boys and Girls Clubs. Key for SEKID in the agreement is the ability to review, assess and approve recreational activity arising from the resort. This would significantly advance the district's ability to fulfill its source water protection mandate and enable the development of best management practices to that end.

The sale was initially approved by the court in May and then overturned on appeal in June. Leave to appeal that decision was granted in August and it is hoped the matter will be heard by the Appeal Court of British Columbia in the near future.

PROVINCIAL WATER MGMT

Hydrometric program faces cuts

The Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM) has long operated a network of hydrometric stations throughout the province. These stations provide key data about the water supply and determine long term hydrological trends, including the impact of climate change.

MSRM is currently operating 454 stations in the province and is considering cutting one third of this network, which is already at its lowest number since inception of the program.

This at a time when there is so much uncertainty surrounding water supply in the province.

As an example of the importance of hydrometric data in water supply management, SEKID re-established two abandoned hydrometric stations in 2003 and commissioned two more in 2004.

The cost of this work, of course, is borne by the ratepayers of the district. Water resource management is a provincial responsibility and this latest move by the provincial government clearly shows a lack of commitment in that regard.

OF INTEREST...

News In

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brief...

A new Capital Works Plan (CWP) has been adopted by the Board of Trustees. The CWP anticipates the capital improvements required to service growth in the district over the next twenty years. Highlights of the CWP include the Turtle Lake Reservoir and the new water rights fee of \$3,000 per acre....

The provincial government has created a Leadership Council to come up with guidelines and directives for implementation of the *Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation*. The council consists of representatives from the health authorities and several government ministries. While the council was formed almost one year ago, no consultation with local industry has occurred to date....

The office of the Auditor General has initiated a new report looking at the state of source water protection in the province. A 1999 report by the Auditor General was highly critical of the way water sources were managed by the government. Considerable change in water management has taken place over the past several years and the AG has determined a new investigation and report is warranted. The new report is expected out some time in 2005.

