

## Website Update - Understanding Our Water System

With the move to Stage 4 Watering Restrictions earlier this week and the ongoing drought affecting most of Vancouver Island, City staff wish to clarify a few points as well as inform our citizens of recent updates to our website.

- The Ministry of Forests, under our Conditional Water Licence, ordered the City of Parksville to implement Stage 4 Watering Restrictions and provided an Enabling Order to reduce dam flows to best prolong the dam water resources to provide benefits to the river ecology. The City of Parksville is in close contact with the Ministry and is in compliance with the order.
- We have had an unpredicted hot dry September and the beginning of October is continuing that trend. This caused the river base flow (all contributing sources other than dam flow) to be well below normal. Because we can release water flow from the dam, we are able to supplement the river water levels to support the ecological health of the river.
- The quantity of water drawn in by the treatment plant is very minimal compared to the flow in the river. To help support river ecology, we have ramped down the water treatment plant production to a minimal flow and increased our well water production.
- Our wells (groundwater source) are in a very healthy condition as stores have been recharged while we used more river water during rainier seasons. We had several of the wells artesian this year (water is overspilling from the top of the well).

To provide as much information about our water sources, supply, and usage and address some commonly asked questions, the City website was updated with the following information:

### [Arrowsmith Water Service section](#)

- Charts and Data (new)
  - Dam Flow and Base Flow 2017-2021
  - Monthly Water Consumption 2012-2022
  - Rainfall Records
  - River Intake and Population 2017-2022
  - Water Consumption by User 2020/2021
  - Water Consumption 2013-2021 and Restrictions
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Operation Updates – most recent ASW/ERWS bulletin

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[Arrowsmith Dam section](#) (updated)

- Arrowsmith Dam Lake Levels
- Dam Outflow Volumes

Through the Arrowsmith Water Service and Englishman River Water Service Boards and Parksville City Council approval, staff are currently working on:

- **Water Resiliency Planning** - As a water supplier, we strive to provide a consistent supply of the best quality and safest drinking water to our community. A critical component in providing safe drinking water is having contingency plans for unexpected emergencies. Also, as we move into hotter temperatures and longer periods without rain, we need to expand public water education and conservation campaigns. In 2023, City staff will undertake water resiliency planning. The objective of the planning process is to review the assumptions made in the existing water supply plan, outline measures to mitigate against the impacts of climate change and provide alternative supply sources, respond and recover from various types of emergency events as quickly and efficiently as possible, and protect the ecological systems from which we draw water.
- **Five-year Fish Monitoring Plan** - The program is required as part of the post-construction commitment with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The purpose is to ensure measures and standards are in place and conducted according to the conditions of the authorization/permit during operations to protect fish habitat. The intent is to monitor and report on the effects of the river intake on the fish population of the Englishman River.

For additional information about watering restrictions, please refer to [Let's Talk Parksville](#).

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