



August 24, 2022

Big White Water Utility Ltd
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 KELOWNA BC
 V1P1P3
 CANADA

To: West Kettle River Basin Water Licence Holders

Re: Low Water Advisory and Water Conservation Request

Many areas in Southeast BC are facing seasonal water shortages. The purpose of this letter is to request that you **voluntarily** reduce your water usage for the remainder of the drought season and to let you know that mandatory restrictions on water licences may be necessary should conditions worsen.

The Province uses a 6-level system to rank drought severity by basin, with Level 0 representing average or wet conditions and Level 5 representing the most severe conditions of drought and water scarcity. In response to a lack of rain and stream flows approaching critically low levels, the Province has declared a **Level 3** drought for the West Kettle River Basin. You are receiving this letter because your water licence has been found to be in this basin.

Due to the Level 3 drought conditions, the Ministry is requesting voluntary water use reductions of 30% by all water users in the West Kettle River Basin. Level 3 drought means that serious ecosystem, community and economic impacts are possible. All water licence holders are asked to reduce water use by 30%; this includes groundwater use and for all use purposes whether domestic, commercial, irrigation or otherwise. If your water licence includes a storage purpose, you are encouraged to **not** divert water for storage at this time.

When voluntary water conservation measures are not sufficient to meet all water needs, mandatory restrictions may be necessary to protect the rights of water users, essential household needs and aquatic ecosystems. The Province may respond with enforcement of unauthorized use, which includes withdrawals greater than authorized by licence. Under the

“first in time, first in right” system of precedence of rights, older licences have priority over junior licences to access water first during times of drought and water scarcity. We encourage you to collaborate with other water licensees in your community to help achieve

voluntary reductions on your source. To find water licence information online, use the keywords “BC water licence search” in your web search.

Because stream flows can change rapidly, we ask that you stay tuned to the **BC Drought Information Portal** (listed below) for the latest information. The Drought Portal provides information on drought levels across the Province and is updated weekly on Thursdays. Information specific to the West Kettle River Basin can be found in the **Kootenay-Boundary Stream Watch** tab and by clicking on the labeled part of the map in your area.

If you see the West Kettle River Basin drought level updated to Level 4, the Ministry requests voluntary water use reductions of 50%. The Drought Portal will also announce when drought conditions improve to Level 2 in your basin, when normal water use may resume.

More information and updates are available on the following websites, which can be found by searching for the underlined wording in your preferred search engine or by using the shortened URL (shown in bold lettering):

- [British Columbia Drought Information Portal](http://bit.ly/BCDroughtPortal): current provincial drought levels and advisory bulletins (**<http://bit.ly/BCDroughtPortal>**).
- [Drought Information-Province of British Columbia](https://bit.ly/37vhPAj): current drought information and other helpful resources, including tips for water conservation (**<https://bit.ly/37vhPAj>**).
- [River Forecast Centre](https://bit.ly/37C9PNG): streamflow conditions and modelling (**<https://bit.ly/37C9PNG>**).
- [British Columbia Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan](https://bit.ly/2VG3QVx): information on drought levels and how the Province manages drought (**<https://bit.ly/2VG3QVx>**).
- Local governments may also have up-to-date information on their platforms.

If you have questions about drought or drought conditions, please contact Front Counter BC at 1-877-855-3222 or FrontCounterBC@gov.bc.ca.

Conserving water is everyone’s responsibility, even more so in times of water scarcity. Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,



Russ Laroche
Regional Executive Director
Kootenay Boundary Region
Ministry of Forests