
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Environment

May 14, 2010

WATER SUPPLY ALERT FOR CHIMNEY LAKES

VICTORIA – The Ministry of Environment is issuing a water supply alert for the Chimney Lakes community in the Cariboo.

Chimney Lakes, located southwest of Williams Lake, is on advance notice for possible regulatory action under the Water Act in the coming weeks. Calculations for the Chimney Lake water system indicate that unless there is significant rainfall during the month of May, there will not be enough water to supply all licensed demand.

In order to protect water supplies in the Chimney Creek watershed (including Chimney Lake, Felker Lake and Brunson Lake), the B.C. government may have to implement regulations under the Water Act.

Currently, much of the Central and North Interior (including the Cariboo, South Thompson, Upper Fraser, Skeena, Nass, Bulkley, and Peace) is classified at Drought Level 2 (dry conditions across the larger basin). Areas near Williams Lake and other Cariboo watersheds (Borlund, 10 Mile and Knife Creeks) have early indications of potential low stream flow and summer water supply shortages.

Environment Minister Barry Penner is urging voluntary water conservation by all water users in the Cariboo region. In addition, he says community drought management plans should be reviewed.

Drought conditions can impact communities in many different ways, including reduced water availability for household and business use, potential impacts to fish and other aquatic life, and potential impacts to agricultural crops.

As a proactive measure, the B.C. government is developing a 2010 Drought Response Plan to guide government actions for low stream flows and drought conditions. The plan ensures a co-ordinated response to help sustain water supplies and to protect fish and aquatic systems. The plan considers the needs of the agriculture sector and includes recommended actions to help sustain agricultural and other economic activity during times of drought.

For more information on drought, and what the B.C. government is doing to prepare for and respond to drought, go to:

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public_safety/drought_info/.

For more information on what farmers and producers can do to manage their crops and livestock before and during a drought, go to:

<http://www.waterbucket.ca/>.

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