

Vancouver

Overview

The City of Vancouver gets its water from three watersheds, which are operated and managed by the Greater Vancouver Water District, a division of Metro Vancouver: the Capilano Reservoir, Seymour Reservoir, and Coquitlam Reservoir. The population of the City of Vancouver was 578,041 in 2006, and that of Metro Vancouver was 2,116,581 (BC Stats, 2006). The City delivers an average of 360 million litres of high quality water to residents every day. According to Environment Canada daily per capita use of water in the Georgia Basin 2001 was 618L (includes all municipal water use sectors) (Environment Canada 2005). The Metro Vancouver website states that average per capita daily use in the region is 580L (this amount includes all residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and agricultural sectors) (Metro Vancouver 2007).

Residential

The City's water conservation programs consist of information provision, outreach activities to children (including the interactive play "The A2Z of H2O" that teaches responsible water consumption), reduced rates on water saving equipment to Vancouver residents and a lawn watering regulation. The City's water website provides a variety of tips to consumers regarding how to conserve and use water more efficiently, including specific gardening advice. Vancouver sells rain barrel collectors and indoor and outdoor water saving kits to residents at reduced rates (City of Vancouver, 2007c; 2007d). Since 1993 Metro Vancouver has limited lawn watering to two days per week (and only at certain times) under its lawn sprinkling regulations, which are part of the regional Water Shortage Response Plan (City of Vancouver, 2007e; GVRD, 2004b). The focus of the plan is to reduce demand for outdoor use. The population of the Lower Mainland is expected to increase by 800,000 in the next 20 years. To meet that future demand, Metro Vancouver has been planning for increased water treatment and distribution at various sites (see "current projects": <http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/water/current-projects.htm>).

ICI, Metering, Pricing, Leak Detection

Businesses consume over 40% of Metro Vancouver's total daily water usage. Metro Vancouver has three programs to promote water conservation in business: water auditing, SmartSteps, and BuildSmart. Water audits will highlight areas of excess use and focus conservation efforts. SmartSteps is a program for businesses to increase their efficiency of energy, water and material use. BuildSmart encourages and assists with the construction of "green" buildings, which generally use less water. Properties with flat water rates are billed on their property tax assessment and charged as follows: Single Family Dwelling - \$349.00, One Extra Unit - \$124.00, and Strata Duplex (per unit)- \$236.00 (City of Vancouver, 2007f). Some properties (multi-family residential, industrial and commercial customers) are metered, and they pay \$1.687 per 100 cubic feet (City of Vancouver, 2007f). The City water website has a flood and leak detection guide in which best responses to floods or leaks are provided along with contact numbers of appropriate City crews.

References

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