

From: ["van Dyk, Donny"](#)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 4/27/2026 2:49:03 PM

Subject: ENG - Memo - Stage 2 Water Restrictions Activate May 1, 2026

Attachments: ENG - Memo - Stage 2 Water Restrictions Activate May 1, 2026.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find attached, a memo regarding the Staged Water Restriction for the City of Vancouver that will come into effect on May 1st. This year we will be starting with Stage 2 Water Restriction.

- Each year, Metro Vancouver member jurisdictions, including the City of Vancouver, automatically implement Stage 1 water use restrictions from May 1 to October 15 under the Regional Drinking Water Conservation Plan; Stage 1 focuses on limiting outdoor water use, particularly lawn watering.
- On April 24, 2026, Metro Vancouver announced the activation of Stage 2 water use restrictions effective May 1, 2026, bypassing Stage 1, due to the following considerations:
 - Snowpack levels are 55% of historical average (April 1, 2026 Provincial Snow Survey);
 - Reservoirs are full but there is an elevated risk of drought conditions anticipated by the low snowpack; and
 - Work on the Metro Vancouver Stanley Park water supply tunnel replacement project.
- Stage 2 includes a ban on lawn watering and prohibition on filling or topping up aesthetic water features, with continued allowance for essential uses. Approved Water Use Plans remain in place under all stages of Metro Vancouver's Drinking Water Conservation Plan for City of Vancouver and Park Board golf courses and playing fields, including FIFA World Cup training facilities. FIFA-related commercial operations at BC Place and surrounding areas are unaffected.
- The City of Vancouver is aligned on implementation and enforcement under By-law No. 12086, including required 72-hour public notification, \$500 fines under Stage 2, and continued enforcement and outreach. As per City of Vancouver By-law 12086, the City Engineer has authority to activate or adjust water restrictions.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Thanks,

Donny

Donny van Dyk (he/him)

City Manager

City of Vancouver

MEMORANDUM

April 27, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Chris Freek, Director of Civic Engagement & Communications
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Teresa Jong, Administrative Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Metro Vancouver Activation of Stage 2 of the Drinking Water Conservation Plan, effective May 1, 2026.

RTS #:

This memo provides an update on the 2026 activation of Metro Vancouver's Drinking Water Conservation Plan. Each year, Metro Vancouver member jurisdictions, including City of Vancouver, automatically activate Stage 1 water use restrictions from May 1 to October 15 in accordance with the Regional Drinking Water Conservation Plan, as enacted through local by-laws. Stage 1 restrictions focus on limiting outdoor water use, particularly lawn watering.

However, local snowpack levels are at 55% of the historical average, based on the April 1, 2026, Provincial Snow Survey and Water Supply Bulletin¹. While reservoirs are currently full of winter rains, anticipated drought conditions² and work related to the Stanley Park water supply tunnel replacement are expected to result in strain on the regional water system this summer. Metro Vancouver's Chief Administrative Officer has directed the activation of **Stage 2 water use restrictions effective May 1, 2026** (see *Appendix A*) to support conservation of the region's drinking water supply.

Metro Vancouver notified member jurisdictions on April 24, 2026, to allow for the required 72-hour notification period prior to enforcement. Stage 2 restrictions include a ban on the

¹ [Snow Survey and Water Supply Bulletin, April 1, 2026 - Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship.](#)

² [Encouraging people to prepare for seasonal hazards - BC Gov News.](#)

application of drinking water to lawns or boulevards at any time and prohibit the filling or topping up of aesthetic water features. Metro Vancouver also notes that while reservoir levels are currently normal, low snowpack, and limited rainfall mean there is little opportunity for replenishment as water is used; based on current forecasts and system analysis, they anticipate moving to Stage 3 on June 1.

Activation of Stage 2 Restrictions

Under the City of Vancouver [Drinking Water Conservation By-law No. 12086](#), the City Engineer has the authority to activate or adjust water use restrictions. Accordingly, the **City will implement Stage 2 water use restrictions effective May 1, 2026**, in alignment with Metro Vancouver and other regional municipalities. In accordance with the by-law, a 72-hour public notification period is required. City staff will update all communications platforms accordingly, and enforcement will commence on May 1, 2026.

The City of Vancouver Waterworks maintains a robust enforcement program under Drinking Water Conservation By-law No. 12086, including prohibitions against wasting water. Vancouver issues approximately 95% of all water use violations tickets in the region. Under Stage 2 restrictions, fines of \$500 per violation apply. Strong enforcement and water demand management measures have resulted in the City's seasonal increase in water consumption being approximately half the regional average.

Stage 2 Water Use Restrictions

On March 1, 2022, City Council approved amendments to [Drinking Water Conservation By-law No. 12086](#), including eliminating lawn water during Stage 2 restrictions.

Stage 2 restrictions include:

- All lawn watering prohibited
- Residential trees, shrubs, and flowers can be watered by hand or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation at any time, or by using a sprinkler between 5:00 and 9:00 am any day
- Vegetable gardens can be watered at any time
- Aesthetic water fountains and features cannot be filled or topped up
- Washing impermeable surfaces like driveways and sidewalks is prohibited except in limited circumstances
- Watering golf courses and playing fields is reduced in alignment with their approved water management plans

Approved Water Use Plans remain in place under all stages of Metro Vancouver's Drinking Water Conservation Plan for City of Vancouver and Park Board golf courses and playing fields, including FIFA World Cup training facilities. FIFA-related commercial operations at BC Place and surrounding areas are unaffected.

The City will continue to align with Metro Vancouver water conservation campaigns and provide water-wise practices, including:

- Replacing or over-seeding lawns with drought tolerant groundcover or gardens
- Allowing lawns go dormant (brown); with recovery expected during fall rains
- Applying mulch in gardens to reduce water loss through evaporation
- Checking for leaks, particularly in irrigation systems and water features
- Installing or maintaining pressure-reducing valves

If you have any questions, please contact me directly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lon LaClaire'.

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca

APPENDIX A

STAGES

1-4

DRINKING WATER CONSERVATION PLAN: SUMMARY

STAGE 1 IN EFFECT: MAY 1 TO OCTOBER 15

■ = Allowed

■ = Allowed but with restrictions

■ = Prohibited

WATER USE		1	2	3	4	RESTRICTION DETAILS
RESIDENTIAL	Watering lawns	■	■	■	■	Stage 1: One morning per week: Automatic watering from 5 am to 7 am Manual watering from 5 am to 9 am
	Watering new lawns or lawns being treated for the European Chafer Beetle	■	■	■	■	Stage 1: Outside restricted lawn watering times if in compliance with a member jurisdiction permit Stage 2: Member jurisdiction permit issued in Stage 1 remain in effect until permit expires. No new permits issued or renewed
	Watering trees, shrubs, and flowers excluding edible plants	■	■	■	■	Stages 1 & 2: On any day from 5 am to 9 am if using a sprinkler, and on any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, a soaker hose, water container, or drip irrigation Stage 3: On any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, water container, or drip irrigation. Prohibited if using a sprinkler or soaker hose
	Washing impermeable surfaces	■	■	■	■	Stage 2: Prohibited except if for a health or safety reason, preparing a surface for painting or similar treatment, or aesthetic cleaning by a commercial cleaning operation Stage 3: Prohibited except if for a health or safety reason or if preparing a surface for painting or similar treatment by a commercial cleaning operation. No aesthetic cleaning Stage 4: Prohibited except if ordered by a regulatory authority for a health or safety reason
	Topping up or filling aesthetic water features	■	■	■	■	
	Topping up or filling pools and hot tubs	■	■	■	■	
	Washing vehicles and boats	■	■	■	■	Stages 3 & 4: Prohibited except to clean windows, lights, mirrors, licence plates, and boat engines for safety
NON-RESIDENTIAL	Watering lawns <i>Mixed-use buildings (i.e. residential and commercial) should follow non-residential watering times.</i>	■	■	■	■	Stage 1: One morning per week: Automatic watering from 4 am to 6 am Manual watering from 5 am to 9 am
	Watering new lawns or lawns being treated for the European Chafer Beetle	■	■	■	■	Stage 1: Outside restricted lawn watering times if in compliance with a member jurisdiction permit Stage 2: Member jurisdiction permit issued in Stage 1 remain in effect until permit expires. No new permits issued or renewed
	Watering trees, shrubs, and flowers excluding edible plants	■	■	■	■	Stages 1 & 2: On any day from 4 am to 9 am if using a sprinkler, and on any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, a soaker hose, water container, or drip irrigation Stage 3: On any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, water container, or drip irrigation. Prohibited if using a sprinkler or soaker hose
	Watering golf courses	■	■	■	■	Stage 2: Fairways watering anytime on any one day in a 7-day period except if operating under an approved member jurisdiction water management plan Stage 3: Fairways watering prohibited except if operating under an approved member jurisdiction water management plan
	Washing impermeable surfaces	■	■	■	■	Stage 2: Prohibited except if for a health or safety reason, preparing a surface for painting or similar treatment, or aesthetic cleaning by a commercial cleaning operation Stage 3: Prohibited except if for a health or safety reason or if preparing a surface for painting or similar treatment by a commercial cleaning operation. No aesthetic cleaning Stage 4: Prohibited except if ordered by a regulatory authority for a health or safety reason
	Topping up or filling aesthetic water features	■	■	■	■	
	Topping up or filling pools and hot tubs	■	■	■	■	Stage 3: Prohibited except with a permit to operate in accordance with health authorities having jurisdiction over pool and hot tub regulation
	Washing vehicles and boats	■	■	■	■	Stages 3 & 4: Prohibited except to clean windows, lights, mirrors, licence plates, and boat engines for safety
	Commercial vehicle washing	■	■	■	■	Stage 3: Prohibited except if a facility operates on a basic wash and rinse cycle, or recycles 80% of water over the full wash cycle, or if it is a hand wash facility using high-pressure (max. 11.4 L/min) wand/brushes

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SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A VIBRANT REGION

The restrictions apply only to the use of GWWD drinking water and not to the use of rain water, grey water, any form of recycled water, or water from sources outside the GWWD water system.

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STAGES		DRINKING WATER CONSERVATION PLAN: SUMMARY				
1-4		STAGE 1 IN EFFECT: MAY 1 TO OCTOBER 15				
		 = Allowed	 = Allowed but with restrictions	 = Prohibited		
WATER USE		1	2	3	4	RESTRICTION DETAILS
GOVERNMENTS / SCHOOLS / PARKS	Watering lawns and grass boulevards					Stage 1: One morning per week. Automatic watering from 4 am to 6 am. Manual watering from 6 am to 9 am.
	Watering new lawns or lawns being treated for the European Chafer Beetle					Stage 1: Outside restricted lawn watering times if in compliance with a member jurisdiction permit. Stage 2: Member jurisdiction permit issued in Stage 1 remains in effect until permit expires. No new permits issued or renewed.
	Watering trees, shrubs, and flowers excluding edible plants					Stages 1 & 2: On any day from 4 am to 9 am if using a sprinkler, and on any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, a soaker hose, water container, or drip irrigation. Stage 3: On any day at any time if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off device, water container, or drip irrigation. Prohibited if using a sprinkler or soaker hose.
	Watering soil-based playing fields					Stage 1: On any day from 7 pm to 9 am except if watering newly over-seeded fields if in compliance with a member jurisdiction permit, or if operating under an approved member jurisdiction water management plan. Stage 2: No more than 4 days in a 7-day period from 7 pm to 9 am. (same exceptions as in Stage 1) Stage 3: No more than 3 days in a 7-day period from 7 pm to 9 am. (same exceptions as in Stage 1)
	Watering sand-based playing fields					Stages 1 & 2: On any day from 7 pm to 9 am except if watering newly over-seeded fields if in compliance with a member jurisdiction permit, or if operating under an approved member jurisdiction water management plan. Stage 3: No more than 5 days in a 7-day period from 7 pm to 9 am. (same exceptions as in Stages 1 & 2)
	Flushing water mains					
	Operating water play parks					Stages 2 & 3: Prohibited except water play parks with user-activated switches.
	Topping up or filling aesthetic water features					
	Topping up or filling pools and hot tubs					Stage 3: Prohibited except with a permit to operate in accordance with health authorities having jurisdiction over pool and hot tub regulation.
	Washing vehicles and boats					Stages 3 & 4: Prohibited except to clean windows, lights, mirrors, license plates, and boat engines for safety.