



# INFORMATION NOTICE

## NARAMATA WATER SYSTEM USERS

EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 28 to MARCH 3, 2023

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) will be conducting a routine inspection and cleaning of two of the treated water storage reservoirs in Naramata during the week of February 28, 2023. The RDOS is providing this **Information Notice** to all Naramata water system users as there is the potential for a change in water quality during the period of this work.

People that are seeking additional protection (such as those with health concerns) are advised to consider using a safe alternate source of water or to boil the water during this period.

All customers may notice elevated levels of chlorine in the water during this period.

No interruptions of service are expected, however the RDOS does encourage all residents to conserve water during this time.

The RDOS would also like to remind all business owners/operators (hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, wineries, stores, etc.) and public facilities operators that it is the responsibility of said establishments to notify their customers of this Information Notice.

For further information, please contact the Utilities Department at (250) 490-4106, (250) 490-4135 or toll free at 1-877-610-3737.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen  
**Utilities Department**  
February 22, 2023

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## **SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING WATER STORAGE RESERVOIRS**

### **What is a storage reservoir?**

A storage reservoir is a large concrete or metal structure that is located at an elevated location in the community (not to be confused with the upland reservoir lakes that collect water from the watershed). Treated water is pumped from the Water Treatment Plant to fill the storage reservoirs and when full, the reservoirs feed the distribution system via gravity. These reservoirs lower the demand on the pumps and provide storage for peak demands and fire protection.

### **Why is cleaning of the storage reservoirs required?**

As the water from Okanagan Lake is not filtered, any silt, sediments, algae or organic material settles out into the storage reservoir and water distribution main. Biofilms can also potentially develop over time, however, this is more prevalent in non-chlorinated systems. These sediments and biofilms do not pose a health risk but can affect the aesthetic quality of the water. To ensure that the highest quality of water is being delivered, periodic cleaning is required to remove materials from the walls of the storage reservoir and sediments that have settled on the bottom of the storage reservoir. In addition, draining of the storage reservoir makes it easier to inspect the inside for cracks, leaks or signs of deterioration.

### **What is involved in the cleaning of a storage reservoir?**

The reservoir has to be isolated from the distribution system and drained of all water. It is then pressure washed and flushed of any material. The final step is the disinfection of all surfaces through the application of a sprayed solution of sodium hypochlorite (liquid bleach) before water is reintroduced to the reservoir. A water sample is then taken and sent to a laboratory to ensure that the bacteriological quality of the water is not compromised. While many steps are taken to make the cleaning process hygienic, bacteriological testing helps to verify that no bacteria were introduced during the cleaning process.

### **Why is this Information Notice being provided?**

Typically, a reservoir remains isolated until satisfactory laboratory test results are received. This testing process can take up to three days. Due to operational constraints, some of the Naramata reservoirs cannot be removed from service for the time required for the laboratory to process the samples. The Interior Health Authority was consulted on this issue and it was decided that an *Information Notice* be issued. This Notice provides the opportunity for people that are seeking additional protection (such as those with health concerns) to make an informed decision regarding the steps they wish to take to safeguard their health. In addition, this Notice prevents the need for any planned water service interruptions to residences. The RDOS would like to encourage all customers to conserve water during this time.

A higher than normal level of chlorine (odour and/or taste) may be noticeable during this period of work. Monitoring will be ongoing to ensure that levels are maintained within an acceptable range.