



Theme I: Public Education

Drought education is an important part of the management process because it creates awareness among key groups and the public about multi-year drought triggers, impacts, management actions, and how and where residents can find help and resources in times of emergency.

Strategies

Educate Citizens and Stakeholders and Encourage them to Implement Best Practices

- Before Drought
- Warning Signs
- During Drought
- After Drought

Prepare Communications Materials

- Before Drought
- Warning Signs
- During Drought
- After Drought

Considerations for an Education and Outreach Plan

- Provide regular updates to the community
- Profile best practices
- Include water use reduction goals
- Provide ongoing education
- Establish an evaluation plan
- Provide information on drought stages and triggers

Tools and Resources

- Working Well Program
- Drought Response and Recovery (EPA)
- Communications Plans (e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Drought Communication Toolkit)



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Example

- The Okanagan Valley region has experienced several droughts over the last two decades: 2009, 2015, and the most severe in 2003. In 2003, low streamflow events caused serious damage to fish and fish habitat in the Okanagan and Thompson regions in the Okanagan Valley region.
- Communication is a key focus of the Okanagan's drought response. The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) aims to develop consistent drought communication tools and messaging to reduce public confusion and uncertainty. The OBWB has hosted numerous workshops and webinars since 2009, including drought planning workshops, drought tournaments, and water supply webinars. These events have served to engage stakeholders and increase understanding of the water supply and the impacts water management decisions can have on the supply.