

The logo for the City of Calgary, featuring the word "Calgary" in white serif font on a red rectangular background.

Calgary

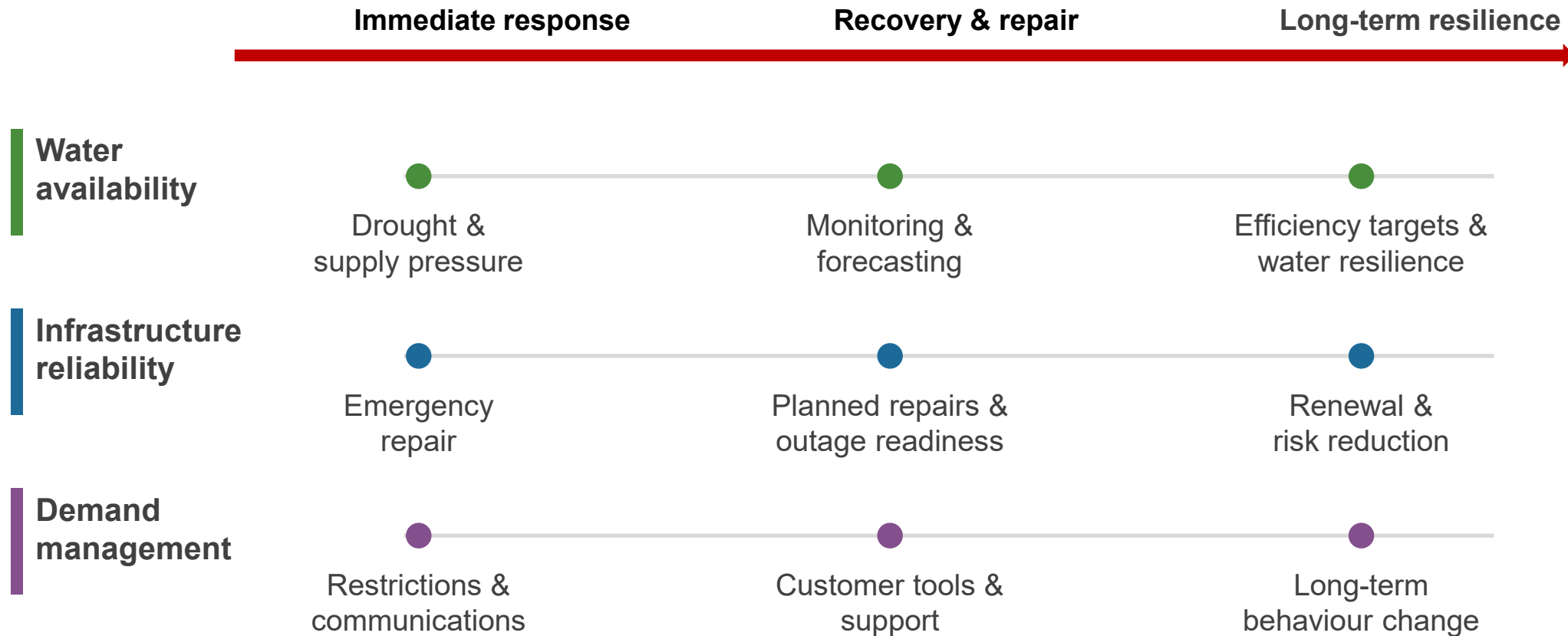


City of Calgary: Water Shortage Response

Canadian Water Network

July 8, 2026

Water Shortage: Spectrum of drivers & response



Demand Management Journey

Fall 2023
Stage 1
restrictions
Low river flow

Winter 2025
Stage 4
restrictions
+ indoor
conservation
*feeder main
break*

Fall 2026
Stage 4
restrictions
+ indoor
conservation
*planned
shutdown*

Summer 2024
Stages 1 – 4
restrictions
+ indoor
conservation
*drought risk
feeder main
break*

Spring 2026
Stage 4
restrictions
+ indoor
conservation
*planned
shutdown*

Looking ahead
New water
treatment plant,
new water efficiency
plan targets

On June 5, 2024, The City's largest water feeder main experienced a catastrophic failure, forcing Calgary and regional customers to drastically reduce water use while it was repaired.



The morning of June 6, an
Alberta Emergency Alert
was issued.



Calgary's outdoor water restrictions

Stage 4

- No outdoor water use, including for construction purposes

Stage 4+ (not recognized in City Bylaw)

- Residential customers asked to voluntary reduce indoor water use by 25%
- ICI customers asked to voluntarily reduce water use



	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
Sprinklers	YES 2 hr max., one day/week	YES 1 hr max., one day/week	NO	NO
	Watering schedule is based on house number: Even house number: Wednesday or Saturday Odd house number: Thursday or Sunday Watering is allowed between: • 4 a.m. – 7 a.m.; or • 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.; or • 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.		NO	NO
Hoses with spray nozzle Only for gardens, trees and shrubs	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	NO	NO
Hand watering	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	NO
Watering new grass	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	NO
Washing outdoor: Cars, windows, exterior building surfaces, sidewalks, driveways or walkways	NO	NO	NO	NO
Filling outdoor pools or hot tubs	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	NO	NO
Filling of fountains and other decorative features	NO	NO	NO	NO
Water use for construction purposes including grading, compaction and dust control	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	YES Any day/time	NO
Water use after applying pesticides or fertilizer	NO	NO	NO	NO

Calgary's outdoor water restrictions

Stage 4+	26 days
Stage 4	4 days
Stage 3	12 days
Stage 2	5 days
Stage 1	34 days
Stage 4+	27 days

June 6 - July 1

July 2 - July 5

July 6 - July 17

July 18 - July 22

July 23 - August 25

August 26 - September 21

53 days total in **Stage 4+** restrictions for Calgary and region



Demand management - customer communication

Strategies for demand management were divided into several broad categories:



Reinforced actions we needed residents to take



Reinforced support needed from industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) customers



Provided alternative water sources (e.g. river water pick-up)



Coordinated with regional customers

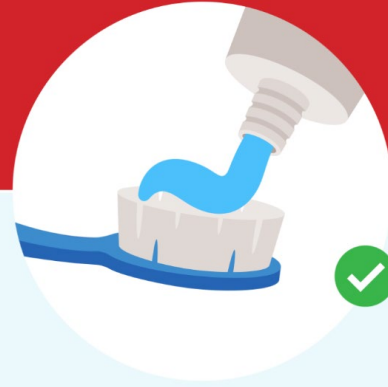


City Operations led by example

Residential customer communications

- Provided residents with a variety of **water saving actions** to achieve a 25% reduction in water use:
- Updates on target and actions we needed citizens to take were provided through multiple channels
- Messaging was amplified through various marketing tactics

Reduce 25%



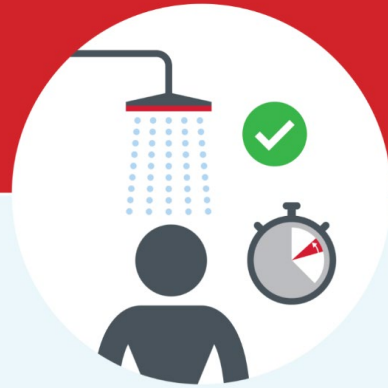
Brush teeth with the tap off

Reduce 25%



Scrape plates instead of rinsing

Reduce 25%



Keep showers to 2-3 minutes

Reduce 25%



Flush only when needed

Key touchpoints with ICI customers

June 6 - 7

Calls to ICI high-water use customers (~700)

June 7 - 9

All ICI customers (~18,000) contacted by email

June 14

Requested car washes, car dealerships and car repair shops to cease water use for vehicle cleaning.

June 15 - 20

Sector specific toolkits distributed to key industries (hotels, restaurants and bars, recreation facilities)

June 20

City requested recreational pool operators, including hotels, to close

Communicating with businesses

- Collaborative approach
- Educational support & transparency
- Direct customer support
- Proactive communication during construction disruptions






STAGE 4 Outdoor Water Restrictions for Businesses



✗ All outdoor water use is banned

This includes:

- Watering new or established lawns, gardens, flowers, trees, shrubs, sod or grass seed with City water.
- Using outdoor automatic sprinkler systems.
- Filling of outdoor hot tubs, swimming and wading pools.
- Filling of fountains and other decorative features.
- City water use for construction purposes including grading, compaction and dust control.
- Pesticide or fertilizer application that requires the use of City water.

Essential use exemptions:

- Businesses using water to deliver a life-sustaining product or service.
- Businesses that must use water to meet health and safety regulations, such as hospitals, restaurants, animal care facilities and child care facilities.

Help reduce your indoor water use

We're also asking all businesses to voluntarily reduce their indoor water use by 25 per cent without compromising safety or quality.

- Adjust and raise building temperatures. Review and adjust water-based temperature control systems to ensure optimal indoor temperatures. CSA's acceptable range is 23-26 degrees Celsius.
- Check and fix leaks. Toilets and faucets are the most common.
- Minimize water use in cleaning. Wipe instead of wash and sweep instead of spray.
- Work with staff to identify ways to minimize water use and loss throughout their work duties.

Visit calgary.ca/savewateratwork for more ways to reduce your water use based on your business type.

Commercial river water pick up

To support businesses during Stage 4 Outdoor Water Restrictions, non-potable river water is available for use. Businesses can bring their water trucks for filling at two locations, free of charge.

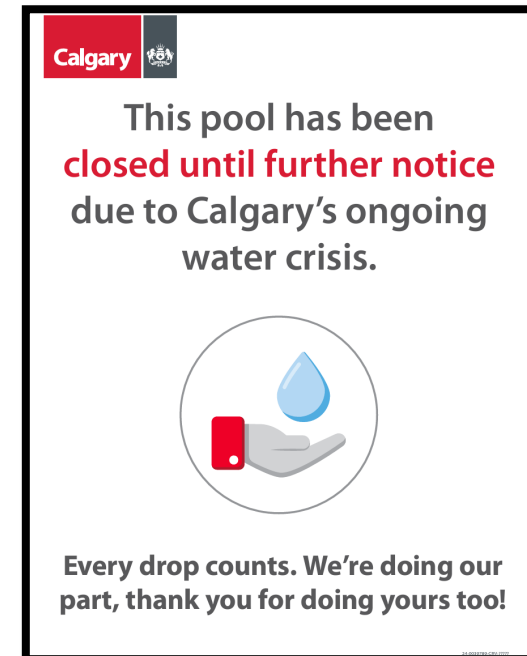
Pick up locations
Hours of operation: 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

- West Baker Park Boat Launch: 4320 Bow River Pathway
- Ogden Boat Launch: 3303 Bow River Pathway

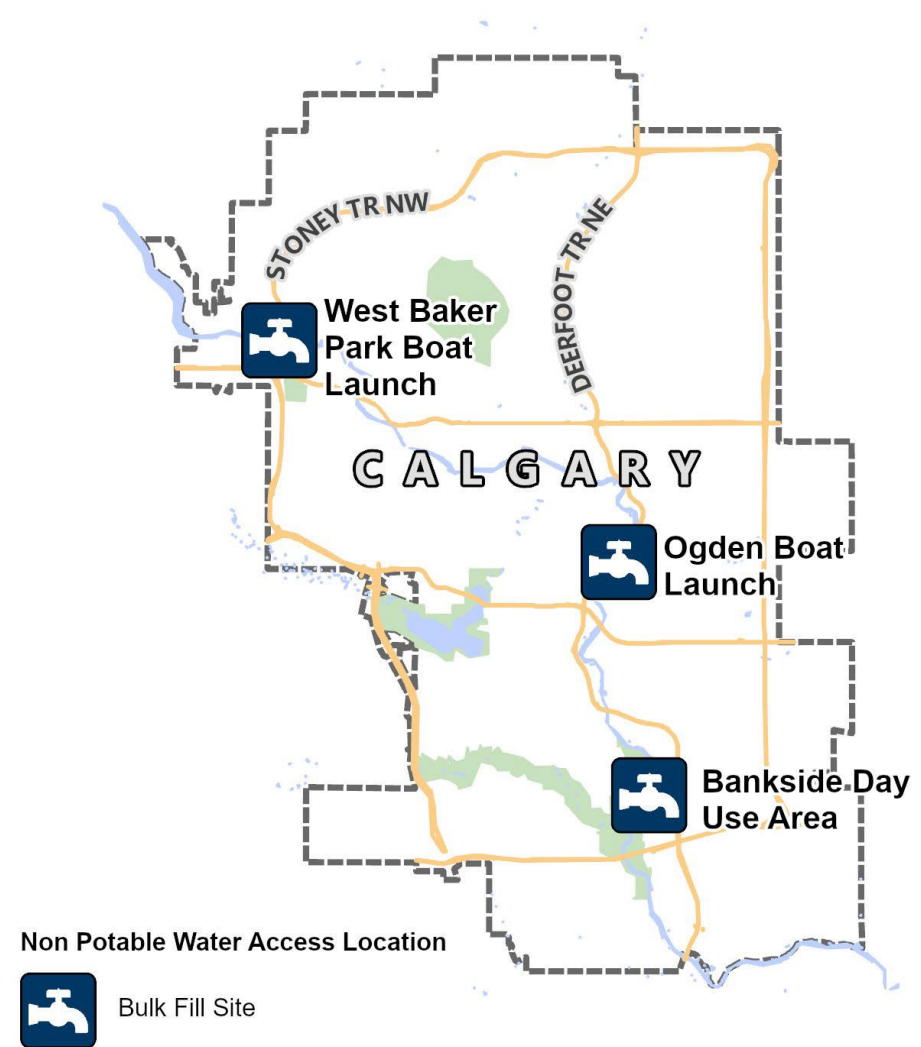
! Failure to follow a restriction can result in a fine. Stage 4 violations start at \$3,000.

Sector specific toolkits

- Shared sector-specific water reduction advice with a "you know your business best" approach
- Provided supporting signage and social media packages



River water pick-up locations



Coordination with regional customers

- Single customer contact established to communicate directly with regional customers

Actions Taken

- All regional customers asked their residents to limit indoor usage and banned all outdoor water use.
- Communities of Airdrie and Strathmore:
 - Closed pools and arenas
 - Contacted their top 100 consumers to ask them to limit usage where they could
 - Staff visited top 5 businesses

The City of Airdrie
June 12 · 📍

Water restriction update:
📉 Water consumption is down an average of 23 per cent since June 5, before the water main break and the outdoor water restrictions were announced. Thanks for continuing to help manage our water usage!
📞 Calls to Municipal Enforcement about water usage have been minimal. M.E. used each opportunity to educate about the outdoor water ban, resulting in no repeat complaints or fines.
🏊 We understand that the recreation closures are impacting athletes a... See more



City operations led by example

- No irrigation or watering at City facilities
- Decorative fountains turned off
- Vehicle wash bays closed
- Arenas, pools and showers closed
- Opening of spray parks delayed
- Non-potable water used on turf, new trees and City golf course greens
- Community street sweeping postponed, nighttime street sweeping done with non-potable water
- Dust suppression stopped where safe to do so
- All City staff encouraged to work from home



We are reducing our water usage

Hot tubs and steam rooms are closed during the water feeder main repairs.

How you can help:



Limit your showers to 3 minutes or less.



Reuse your towel.



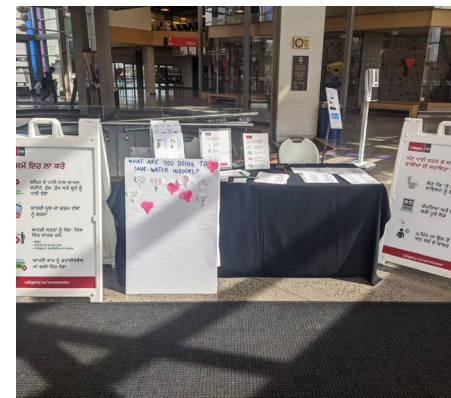
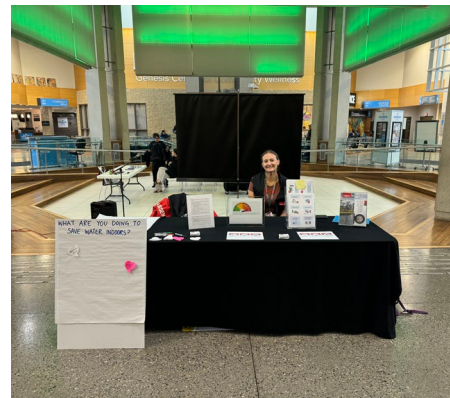
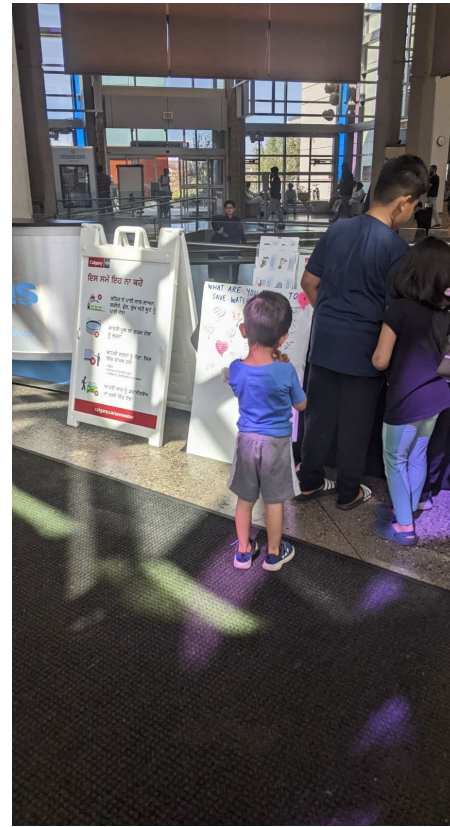
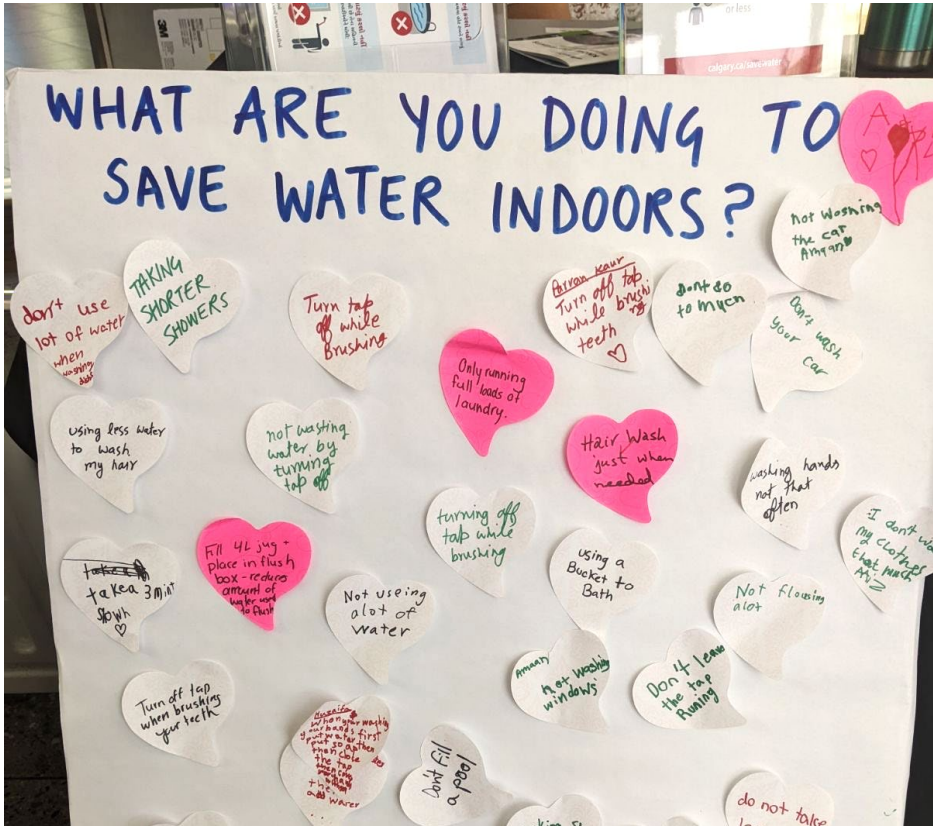
Turn off the faucet while washing your hands.

Together, we can get the job done.



Learn more about how you can reduce your water use.

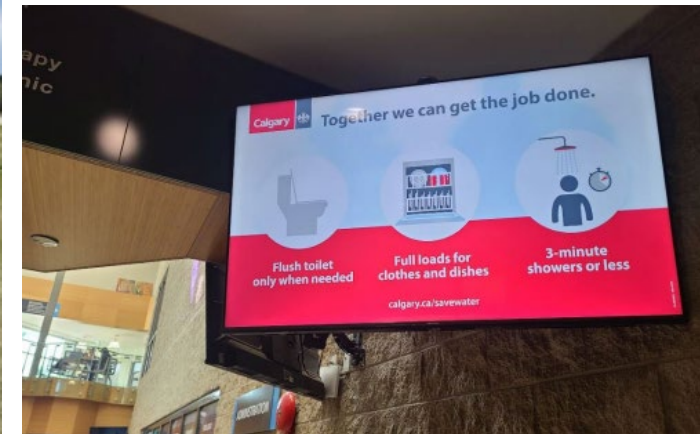
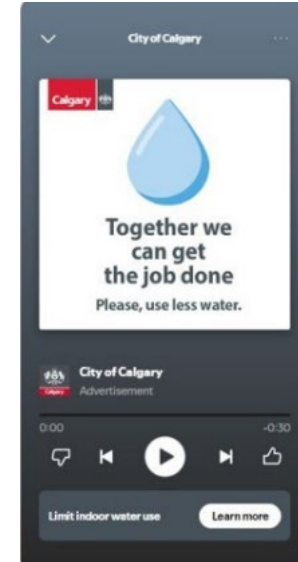
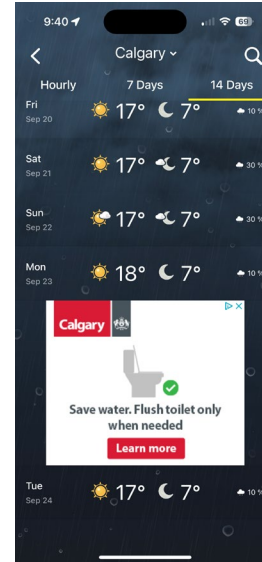




Calgary



Marketing campaign



Calgary



Translating material to reach multilingual Calgarians

Calgary

**ਬਾਹਰੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਲਈ ਸਟੇਜ
4 ਪਾਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਗੂ ਹਨ**

 ਲਾਅਨਾਂ, ਬਗੀਚਿਆਂ, ਰੁੱਖਾਂ
ਅਤੇ ਝਾੜੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੀਣ ਯੋਗ
ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾ ਦਿਓ

 ਬਾਹਰੀ ਪੂਲਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਗਰਮ
ਟੱਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਭਰੋ

 ਬਾਹਰੀ ਸਤਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਧੋਵੋ,
ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ:

- ਪਿਕਨੀਕੀਆਂ
- ਇਮਾਰਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਸਤਹਾਂ
- ਸਾਈਡਵਾਕ, ਡਰਾਈਵਵੇਅ ਜਾਂ ਵਾਕਵੇਅ

 ਆਪਣੀ ਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਡਰਾਈਵਵੇਅ
ਜਾਂ ਗਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਧੋਵੋ

calgary.ca/savewater

Calgary

减少用水, 帮助全体卡城市民。

 节约用水。仅在必要时才
冲马桶

 仅在必要时使用洗碗机和
洗衣机, 且满载运行

 将淋浴时间限制在三分钟
以内

calgary.ca/savewater

Calgary



**حافظ على الماء. لا تضغط سيفون
الحمام إلا عند الحاجة.**

اعرف المزيد

Calgary

**ਘੱਟ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਕੈਲਗਰੀ
ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰੋ**

 ਲੋੜ ਪੈਣ 'ਤੇ ਹੀ
ਟਾਇਲਟ ਨੂੰ ਫਲੋਸ਼ ਕਰੋ

 ਕੱਪੜਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਬਰਤਨਾਂ
ਲਈ ਪੂਰੇ ਲੋਡ

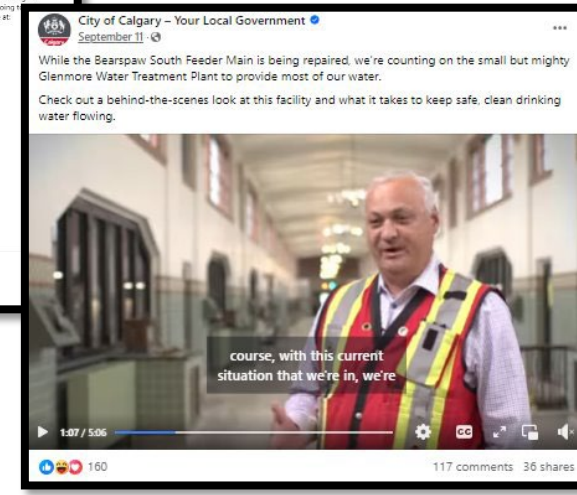
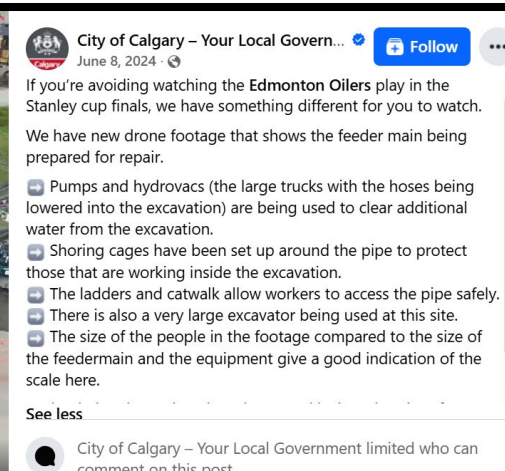
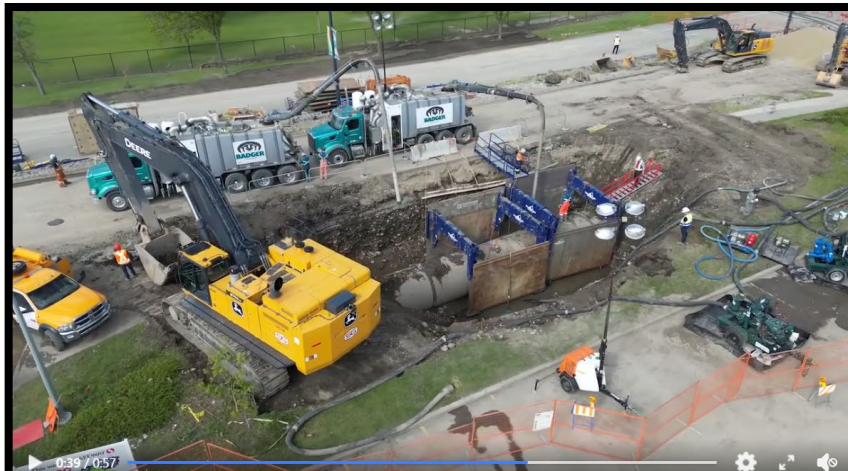
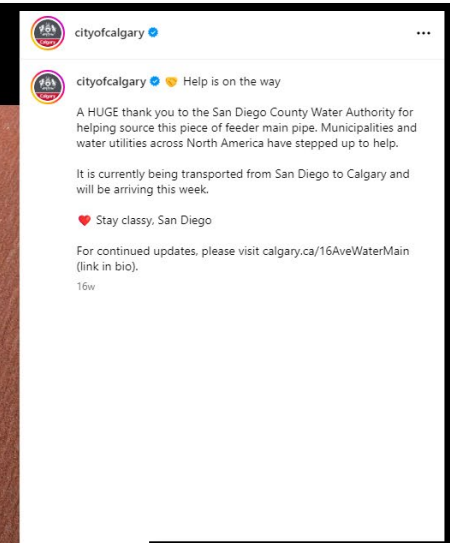
 3-ਮਿੰਟ ਜਾਂ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ
ਘੱਟ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਾਵਰ

calgary.ca/savewater

Calgary



Social media campaign



The background features a series of overlapping, light blue wavy lines that resemble water or mountains. A large, solid white heart is positioned in the center, overlapping the blue waves. The bottom of the image is a solid red band.

All water restrictions lifted

Thank you, Calgary!

Responding to planned and unplanned outages

Demand management objectives

Monitor

Monitor supply, system, and demand balance

Expand

Expand Demand Management toolkit and readiness

Deploy

Deploy Demand Management tactics for planned and unplanned events

Drive

Drive long term water efficiency practice

Demand management tactics: **monitor & plan**

Deploy **EXISTING** demand management tools

Supply forecast

Demand forecast

DMLT governance

Business Unit readiness

Bylaw readiness

Community water usage analysis

Specific customer contact

Emergency preparations

Create and deploy **NEW** and **EXPANDED** demand management tools

Update demand forecasting

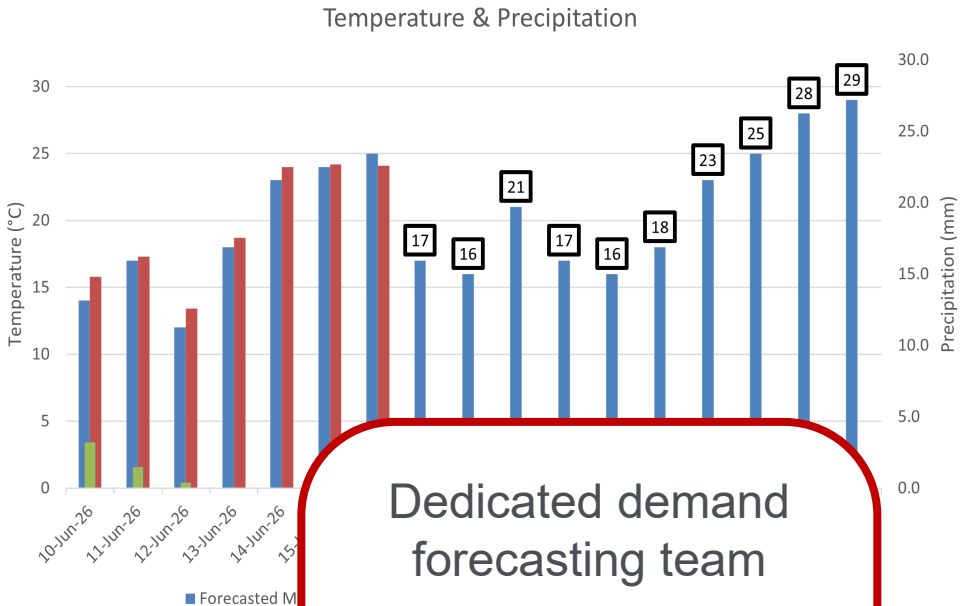
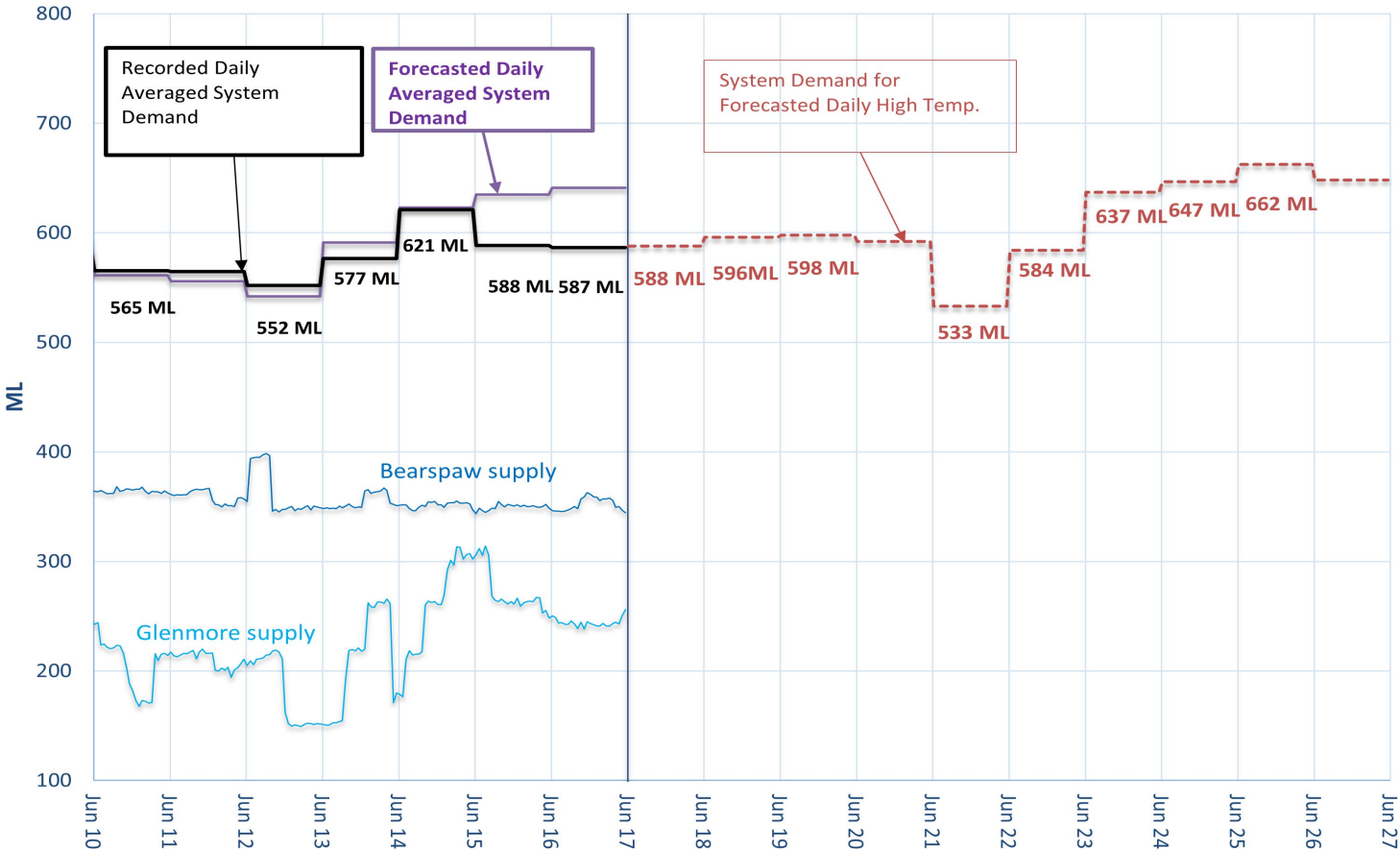
Establish Demand Management Playbook

Update social marketing research

Improve customer contact data

Water demand forecasting

WATER DEMAND ACTUAL AND FORECASTED (ML) June 10 - June 26, 2026



June Historic Demand	2017	2025
Max Daily (ML/day)	684	744
Min Daily (ML/day)	470	529
Average Daily (ML/day)	564	629

- Localized precipitation on June 15 & 16 resulted in high deviation from modeled demand. Model did not consider rainfall for these days
- There are chances of precipitation later this week and above average temperature forecasted for later next week.

Social Marketing Research

- Hired Behavioural Science Consultant, BIT, to provide recommendations to increase Calgarians motivation and ability to reduce indoor water use during average conservation times and periods of water shortage.
 - Will analyze specific barriers Calgarians face to reducing water indoors and propose solutions The City can take to help Calgarians overcome them.

Pulse Surveys

- The Corporate Research Team was asked to conduct ongoing pulse surveys with Calgarians to learn:
 - What steps they took to reduce their water consumption
 - What barriers they experienced when trying to reduce their water usage and what motivators may encourage Calgarians to reduce their water consumption
 - What communication tactics would work best to reach Calgarians

>Nine-in-ten (90%) Calgarians were aware of the Bearspaw South Feeder Main break.

>Being socially responsible (29%) and complying with City requests (26%) to reduce water were common motivators during the most recent shutdown of the Bearspaw South Feeder Main.

Tracking how people hear about restrictions

Updating our social marketing and communication research

Demand management tactics: **inform & ask**

Deploy **EXISTING** demand management tools

Annual campaigns

Water partnerships

In-community events

Direct customer contact

YardSmart

Create and deploy **NEW** and **EXPANDED** demand management tools

Year-round water
communications

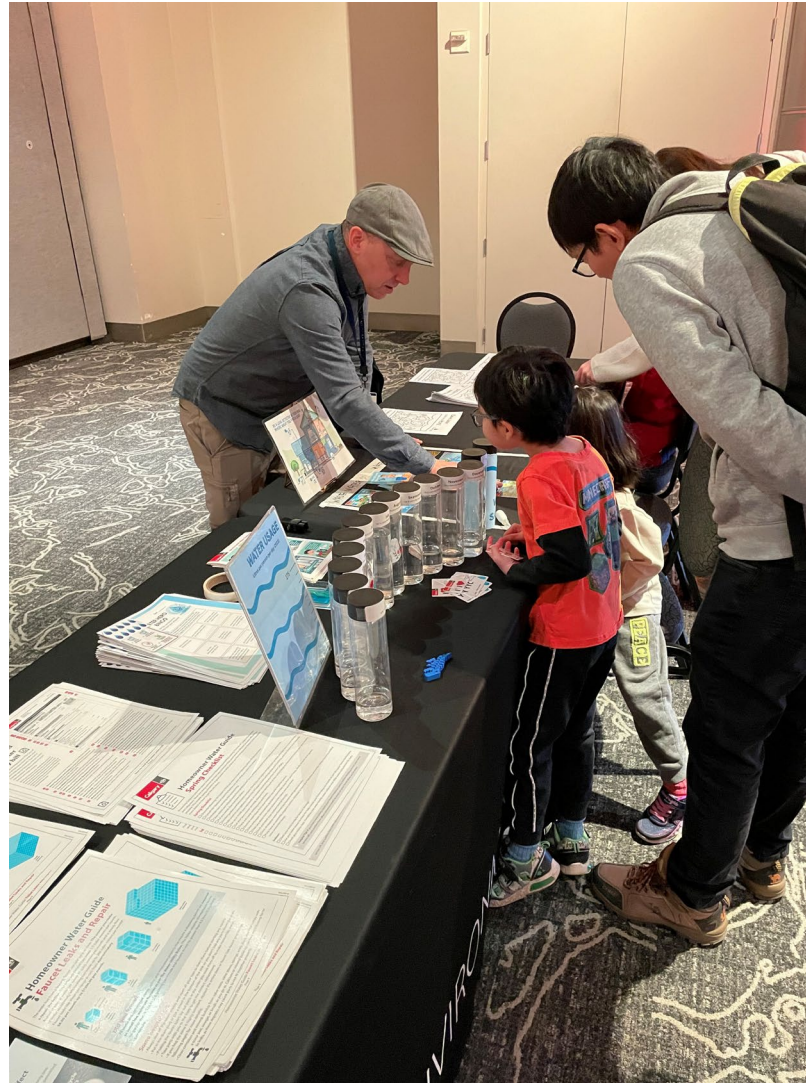
More in-community events and
pop-ups

Water efficiency prompts and
tools

New partnerships

More direct customer contact

Elevated leak, arrears, meter
management



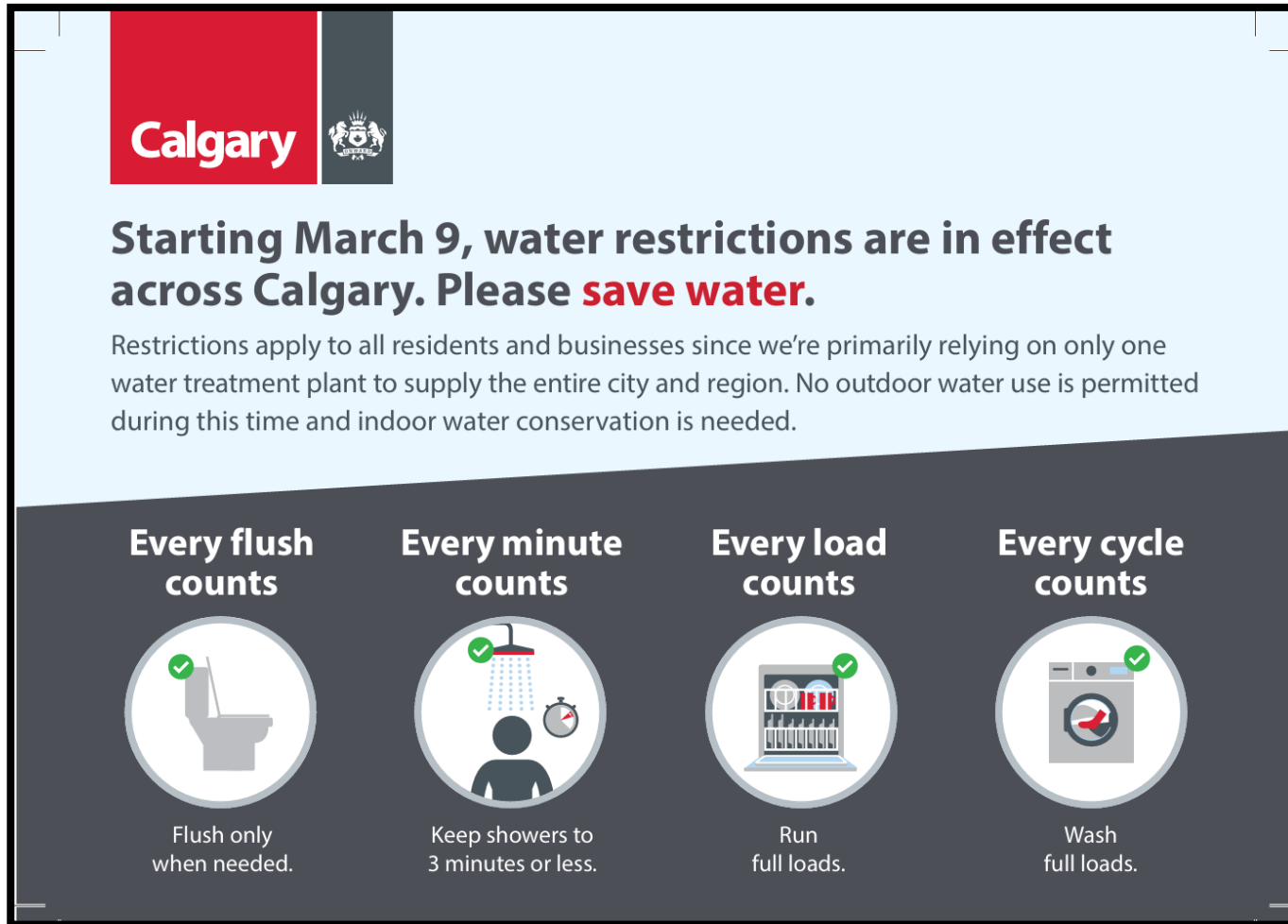
Community presence typically well received

Hired 6 new Water Educators in 2026

Currently assessing cost/benefit of community event types

Postcards in every home

Example



Broad awareness is critical

Postcard delivered to every address in first days of planned restrictions



Join us at calgary.ca/bewaterwise

Be Water Wise Campaign

- New for 2026
- Brings together indoor and outdoor water conservation
- Creates one flexible, foundational platform for public education
- Connects leak awareness, YardSmart, watering schedule and water-saving actions under one campaign.

Demand management tactics: **incent**

Deploy **EXISTING** demand management tools

Rain barrel rebates

Water managed sites

Home upgrades

Create and deploy **NEW** and **EXPANDED** demand management tools

Expanded rain barrel
rebates

Piloting residential fixture
rebates

Piloting partner facility
upgrade rebates

Piloting ICI water audits
and upgrade incentives

Expanding water managed
sites



The screenshot shows the website for the City of Calgary Rain Barrel Rebate Program. The header includes the 'green calgary' logo, navigation links for Programs, Events, Eco Products, About, and Volunteer, and a 'Get Involved' button. The main content area features the title 'Rain Barrel Rebate Program' with the tagline 'Making water conservation more accessible for all Calgarians.' Below this, it states 'City of Calgary 2026 Rain Barrel Rebate: Open April 1 – October 31, 2026'. A photograph shows two people in green shirts working with large white rain barrels. At the bottom, a paragraph explains the rebate: 'The City of Calgary has teamed up with Green Calgary to provide Calgarians with an opportunity to receive up to \$50 rebate on up to three rain barrels starting April 1 – Oct 31, 2026.'

green calgary

FAQ BLOGS Newsletter Contact Us

Programs Events Eco Products About Volunteer **Get Involved**

ECO PRODUCTS

Rain Barrel Rebate Program

Making water conservation more accessible for all Calgarians.

City of Calgary 2026 Rain Barrel Rebate:

Open April 1 – October 31, 2026

The City of Calgary has teamed up with Green Calgary to provide Calgarians with an opportunity to receive up to \$50 rebate on up to three rain barrels starting April 1 – Oct 31, 2026.

Third year

2000+ applications in
first 60 days

Community
awareness builder

DIY Training Centre Workshops



The City of Calgary is partnering with the DIY Training Centre to create educational and skill building opportunities for Calgarians to advance indoor water efficiency via workshops.

- Workshops will specialize in hands-on learning with small class sizes, expert instructors, beginner-friendly approaches and easy-to-understand language.
- 40 free workshops to be delivered to Calgarians in 2026, including ten workshops dedicated to newcomers and other equity deserving groups with translation services

TACKLE ANY PROJECT LIKE A PRO™

We teach homeowners how to do the work themselves — properly, confidently and without paying someone else to do it. Hands-on classes in Calgary, Edmonton and Greater Vancouver. Real skills you'll use in every home you ever own.

2026 pilot

160-240 total
participants in 2026

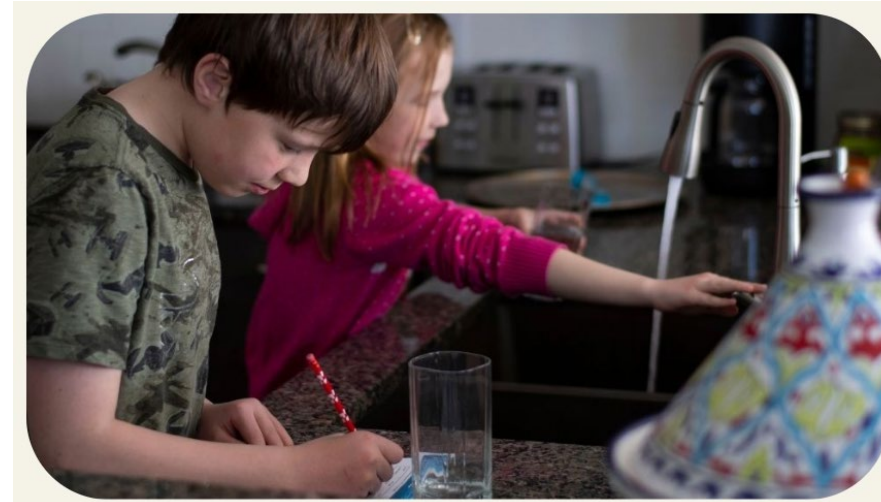
Ten workshops for
equity-deserving
groups

Youth Home Water Audits

Example

The Home Water Audit Program offered by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) Southern Alberta is a hands-on environmental education activity that helps young participants assess household water use, identify leaks, and adopt practical conservation strategies.

The program will empower individuals with actionable knowledge, and through student-led audits and real-world application, will support broader water stewardship and measurable indoor water conservation while fostering long-term behaviour change within homes and communities.



2026 Partnership with
CPAWS Southern AB

Workshops,
classroom activities,
and hands-on audits

Knowledge transfer
from classroom to
real-world applications

Demand management tactics: **tell**

Deploy **EXISTING** demand management tools

Outdoor water use
restrictions

Create and deploy **NEW** and **EXPANDED** demand management tools

Land and Landscapes
Watering Schedule

ICI demand agreements

Targeted curtailment plan

Your residential guide to outdoor water restrictions for single-family homes

There may be times when we need all Calgarians to temporarily reduce their outdoor water use, such as when:

- Less water is available in the rivers, due to drought
- Water demand is high due to hot temperatures and is straining the capacity of our water treatment plants
- We're repairing or upgrading our water system infrastructure
- River water quality is poor, like during a flood, and it takes longer to treat



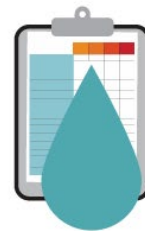
Take action when outdoor water restrictions are declared

Restrictions apply to all Calgary residences, businesses, organizations and City operations.



1. Find out what water restriction stage is in place.

Outdoor water restrictions will be announced through local news, social media and on calgary.ca/restrictions



2. Understand how and when you can use water outdoors.

Please refer to the table on the back to understand what mandatory actions to take.



3. Restrictions may change. Stay informed.

We're constantly monitoring conditions and our city's water usage to determine the necessary water restriction stage.

26-005438 | CPW-47235

Example

Bylaw based outdoor
water restrictions

Stages 1 to 4

Only enact when
necessary

Let's take turns to protect our water supply.

Watering your lawn or landscape (sprinkler or irrigation system)



Water up to three days per week based on the last number of your street address.



Even street address (ending in 0,2,4,6,8)?

You can water on the following days and times:

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays
12 a.m. - 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.



Odd street address (ending in 1,3,5,7,9)?

You can water on the following days and times:

Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays
12 a.m. - 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.

Allowed any day, anytime



Hand watering landscapes (excluding grass) with a hose connected to a spring-loaded nozzle or watering can.



Watering newly planted grass, trees or shrubs.



Watering fruits and vegetables.



Filling pools, hot tubs and fountains, and running through sprinklers.



Washing windows, decks, fences and siding.



Learn more at calgary.ca/whentowater

Lawn and Landscape Watering Schedule

- Introduced in 2026
- Designed to reduce peak-day demand
- Supported by citywide direct mail, bill inserts, roadside signage, and a paid/publicity campaign
- Created strong public visibility for the new watering schedule

Key Take Aways

Communications learnings

Planned versus unplanned

- Communicate early-especially for unplanned events
- Help shift business practices and operations
- Build public awareness before restrictions are needed

Tone and Messaging

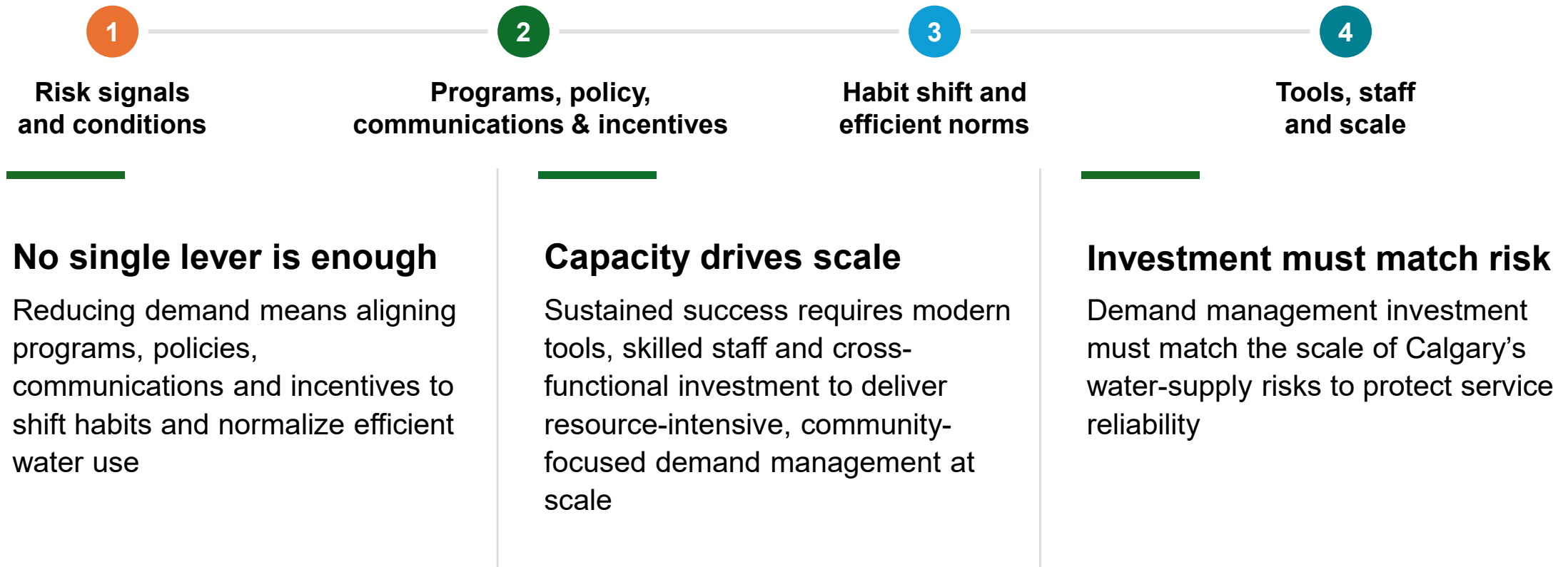
- Stay positive and solution focused
- Avoid alarmist or punitive framing

Explain the Why

- Clearly explain the current conditions and risks
- Provide sample context
Build understanding to support behaviour change

Demand management learnings

Demand management is a **year-round continuum**



Questions?