



## News Release

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### **Groundwater Protection Signs Raise Public Awareness**

The Regional District of Central Okanagan has partnered with the Westbank Rotary Club and Westbank First Nation to raise awareness about the importance of protecting groundwater sources. Westside Electoral Area Directors Len Novakowski and David Knowles unveiled Groundwater Protection Zone signs. They are located along Gellatly Road at Angus Drive and at two locations along Boucherie Road on the Westbank First Nation Reserve to identify the Powers Creek fan aquifer.

Regional District Environmental Technologist Todd Cashin says, "An aquifer is a naturally saturated geologic deposit that holds and provides groundwater to wells and springs. Very often, water from an aquifer is interconnected with creeks, rivers and lakes. As a result, contamination of an aquifer may also have an adverse effect on an adjoining surface water body, such as Okanagan Lake." With more than 23 per cent of British Columbians depending on groundwater for their drinking water, it's important to protect these sensitive areas from pollution. Cashin adds, "There are over 25 known aquifers in the Central Okanagan. One-third of these aquifers are considered highly vulnerable to pollution from such substances as pesticides, fertilizers, manure, toxic chemicals, oils, paint and household garbage."

In all, 14 signs will be installed along roadways throughout the Regional District of Central Okanagan with the goal of raising awareness about the importance of protecting groundwater aquifers. Cashin says, "The program is the result of successful partnerships between the Regional District and many other organizations. Along with the Westbank Rotary Club and Westbank First Nation, the Black Mountain Irrigation District, Lakeview Irrigation District, Friends of Fintry Society, and Water, Land and Air Protection Ministry have contributed to the Groundwater Protection Zone sign program."

For more information on Aquifers and protecting them, visit the Environmental Planning pages on the Regional District of Central Okanagan website, [www.regionaldistrict.com](http://www.regionaldistrict.com).

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Westside Electoral Area Directors David Knowles (up ladder) and Len Novakowski unveil one of 14 Groundwater Protection Zone signs to be placed throughout the Regional District.