



**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2025**

SUBJECT **Bylaw No. 4671: CRD Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2025 and Bylaw No. 4673: CRD Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 84, 2025**

ISSUE SUMMARY

Amendments to Bylaw No. 4492, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023” and Bylaw No. 1857, “Capital Regional District Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990” are required to support the introduction of an additional water use restriction stage in Local Service Areas (LSA).

BACKGROUND

Over the past several years, seasonal droughts have increasingly stressed source water supplies, making water conservation measures for local services on Salt Spring Island, the Southern Gulf Islands, and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Areas more critical. Bylaw No. 4492, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023” (Appendix A for the unofficial redlined consolidation version) was adopted in 2023 and regulates the use of drinking water in LSA for the protection of local water system supplies to mitigate the risk of low water storage levels.

Currently Stage 3 is the most restrictive stage in Bylaw No. 4492. In 2023, Stage 3 was activated for three systems (Cedars of Tuam, Skana and Surfside Park). In 2024, Stage 3 was activated for two systems (Cedars of Tuam and Skana). Given the frequency of activations and the goal to avoid operational implications, including the trucking of emergency water supplies, there is a need for a more restrictive stage in times of severe water shortages where water supplies may be at risk of not having enough water available.

Bylaw No. 4671, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2025” (Appendix B) amends the Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw to add a fourth water conservation stage, broadens the scope of vegetable watering to allow “food production” in Stages 1, 2 and 3 and adds or amends sections and definitions, as needed. The goal of Stage 4 is to restrict outdoor and residential indoor water use as much as possible at times of severe water shortage. Commercial indoor water use is not regulated in this amendment.

To support the new Stage 4 restrictions, the Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw requires amendment via Bylaw No. 4673, “Capital Regional District Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 84, 2025” (Appendix C) to insert two new Stage 4 offenses and fines.

These bylaws were originally received at the March 12, 2025 Electoral Areas Committee meeting and were referred to staff for revision. Bylaw No. 4671 and the unofficial redlined consolidated version of Bylaw No. 4492 have been updated for this staff report. Changes include: Stage 4 was updated to remove “food production” as an allowed use of water, clarification of the sanitary use

of water as “non-discretionary”, the time for Stage 4 to take effect was changed to be immediate when Notice is given and the Notice for stages now includes an option for a Public Alert Notification System (PANS) message. No changes were required to Bylaw No. 4673.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4671, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2025”, be introduced and read a first, second and third time; and
2. That Bylaw No. 4671 be adopted.
3. That Bylaw No. 4673, “Capital Regional District Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 84, 2025”, be introduced and read a first, second and third time; and
4. That Bylaw No. 4673 be adopted.

Alternative 2

That Bylaw No. 4671 and Bylaw No. 4673 be referred to staff for revision.

IMPLICATIONS

Regulatory Implications

Water use restrictions in any stage do not apply to nurseries, farms, turf farms or tree farms. A summary of Stage 4 restrictions is as follows:

- all outdoor water use is restricted,
- residential indoor water use is restricted to drinking, food preparation purposes and for non-discretionary sanitation purposes; and
- other uses may be granted with written approval from the General Manager of the Capital Regional District Infrastructure & Water Services Department.

Financial Implications

The costs of promoting and enforcing Stage 4 water use restrictions will be borne by the specific service in which the action is taken as an operational expenditure.

Service Delivery Implications

Due to the severity of water levels that will activate Stage 4, staff will notify water users in the affected LSA by media and hand-delivery of a letter (sample attached as Appendix D) describing the situation, applicable regulations and additional best practices for water users to follow.

Additionally, outreach material and the Capital Regional District website will be updated as needed and there are plans to have signage installed this year prior to the activation of water use restrictions at key locations in the LSA to inform residents of the current water stage, including Stage 4 if this bylaw amendment is adopted by the Capital Regional District Board. The CRD will also issue a Public Alert Notification System (PANS) notification to the community.

CONCLUSION

There is a need for a more restrictive stage to promote water conservation in times of severe water shortages where water supplies may be at risk of not having enough water available. Currently, Stage 3 of the Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 4492 is the most restrictive stage in the bylaw and has been activated five times over the last two years. Staff have prepared an amendment to this bylaw to add Stage 4 with increased water use restrictions to protect water supplies in Local Service Areas. Activation of Stage 4 will be supported by communications, including local signage, website pages, social media, public alerts and hand-delivery of letters to impacted properties.

RECOMMENDATION

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4671, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2025”, be introduced and read a first, second and third time; and
2. That Bylaw No. 4671 be adopted.
3. That Bylaw No. 4673, “Capital Regional District Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 84, 2025”, be introduced and read a first, second and third time; and
4. That Bylaw No. 4673 be adopted.

Submitted by:	Glenn Harris, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., Acting General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Alicia Fraser, P. Eng., General Manager, Infrastructure & Water Services
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Bylaw No. 4492, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023”, unofficial redlined consolidation

Appendix B: Bylaw No. 4671, “Capital Regional District Electoral Areas Water Conservation Bylaw No. 1, 2023, Amendment Bylaw No. 1, 2025”

Appendix C: Bylaw No. 4673, “Capital Regional District Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 84, 2025”

Appendix D: Stage 4 Water Conservation Notice