



Canada's Premiers Encourage Conservation of Water Resources

March 19, 2012 – As Canada Water Week begins, Premiers encourage individuals, businesses and organizations across Canada to work in partnership to improve stewardship of our valuable water resources.

Canada Water Week, which runs from March 19 to 25, and the United Nations World Water Day on March 22, provide opportunities for Canadians to learn more about how best to use this vital resource.

“Canadians have long been recognized as environmental stewards and our commitment to water conservation and water quality protection is a key priority for provinces and territories,” said British Columbia Premier Christy Clark, Chair of the Council of the Federation. “By working together, we can identify best practices, lessons learned, and ensure our waterways remain healthy for generations.”

Premiers recognize that a sustainable water supply is crucial to our social, environmental and economic well-being, and the creation of the Water Stewardship Council by Premiers in 2011 was an important step in advancing water conservation. During this year's Canada Water Week, Canadians are encouraged to consider their own “water footprint” and participate in community events that draw attention to local water issues and celebrate the freshwater connection we all share.

A “water footprint” is the amount of freshwater we use directly and indirectly during our daily activities – the water we use for drinking, cooking and washing, as well as the water used by industry to produce food, paper and other materials.

Canada Water Week events and activities are being held in all provinces and territories under the banner of “Celebrating and Conserving Water across Our Country”. Highlighted initiatives from each province and territory can be found in the attached backgrounder.

The Council of the Federation comprises all 13 provincial and territorial Premiers. It enables Premiers to work collaboratively to strengthen the Canadian federation by fostering a constructive relationship among the provinces and territories, and with the federal government.

- 30 -

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MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

Highlights of Provincial and Territorial Initiatives for Canada Water Week 2012

Alberta – Under [Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability](#), the province remains committed to the sustainable management, protection and conservation of water. Tremendous progress has been made to date under the strategy, including recent advancements on conservation and efficiency plans from all major sectors.

British Columbia – British Columbia is developing a new *Water Sustainability Act* to better protect water resources, respond to current and future pressures on water and position the province as a leader in water stewardship. For more information on the proposed Act, visit www.livingwatersmart.ca/water-act.

Manitoba – Manitoba will commemorate Canada Water Week and World Water Day through two multi-stakeholder events: Manitoba's Department of Conservation and Water Stewardship will announce the official dates for a Surface Water Management Strategy Summit; and the Manitoba Water Council will host two documentary film showing and panel discussion events throughout Manitoba.

New Brunswick – New Brunswick is focusing on increased awareness of water issues and initiatives by featuring a comprehensive website dedicated to water. This website includes information on water conservation and drinking water, and interactive water resources for kids. Visit the website at: www.gnb.ca/0009/0004-e.asp.

Newfoundland and Labrador – Newfoundland and Labrador's Department of Environment and Conservation will host a three day workshop, aimed at water system operators, municipal administrators and elected officials, to highlight the importance of clean and safe drinking water.

Northwest Territories – Federal and territorial governments are partnering with the Pembina Institute, Ecology North, CPAWS-NWT and Light Adventures to organize a series of activities for all ages promoting water stewardship. Events will be held in six different communities, spanning four regions, and include curriculum material development, a talk on groundwater, and the 2nd Annual Winter Water Wonderland at the Snow Castle in Yellowknife.

Nova Scotia - Nova Scotia is releasing a *Water Strategy Progress Report*, highlighting achievements in the first year since the release of *Water for Life: Nova Scotia's Water Resources Management Strategy*. For more information, see www.waterforlife.gov.ns.ca .

Nunavut – Nunavut is hosting activities related to the territory's wastewater research study and gathering information to help improve current practices of water treatment in the North. A new Canada Water Week poster with a northern theme is being displayed in all of Nunavut's communities.

Ontario – Ontario is participating in the WaterSense® program that provides water efficiency labeling on products such as showerheads, faucets and toilets. The WaterSense® label lets consumers know they are buying products tested and proven to use 20 per cent less water, making it easier for Ontarians to make green choices every day.

Prince Edward Island – Prince Edward Island is promoting water conservation in a three-part series that will run in local newspapers explaining why it is important to conserve water and offering suggestions for ways to use less in the home.

Québec – Québec has recently updated the Regulation respecting the quality of drinking water. The new standards under the Regulation are in line with, and in some cases go further than, the leading jurisdictions in North America. Québec recently published the *2005-2009 Drinking Water Quality Assessment* that indicates the excellent quality of water distributed in Québec during that period. For more information, see www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/infuseur/communiqué.asp?No=2046

Saskatchewan – Saskatchewan is signing on to a promotional partnership agreement with the United States Environmental Protection Agency for WaterSense®, which will serve to encourage consumers in Saskatchewan to look for specially labeled products that have been independently certified for efficiency and performance.

Yukon – Yukon is supporting several public events, including a film night and a photo contest on how Yukoners use water wisely. Photos received will be displayed March 19-22 for public voting, with the winner announced on March 22 (World Water Day). For more information, see http://www.gov.yk.ca/pdf/photo_contest_final.pdf.

- 30 -

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