



IRRIGATION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF B.C.

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Water Sustainability Act
Ministry of Environment
Water Protection and Sustainability Branch
PO Box 9362 Stn Prov Gov,
Victoria, BC V8W 9M2

November 5th, 2013

Thank you for allowing residents and organizations in British Columbia to respond to the new Water Sustainability Act that is proposed for the spring of 2014. The Irrigation Industry Association of British Columbia (IIABC) is a not for profit society that has been established to promote efficient and effective irrigation system design and management for both landscape and agricultural irrigation systems. The IIABC currently has over 375 members consisting of local governments, irrigation equipment suppliers and dealers, manufacturers, contractors and managers and landscape architects. The IIABC has several certification programs that have been established to promote improved irrigation system design and operation with the goal of improved water use efficiency in British Columbia.

Irrigation is the largest consumptive water user in many regions of the province. In the Okanagan Valley it is estimated that 85% of all water consumed is for irrigation purposes. Yet most contractors designing and installing landscape irrigation systems do not have any formal training. As a result many inferior systems are being installed and once installed they will be wasting water for the next 25 years. While the standards for agriculture systems are better, there is still an opportunity for significant improvements.

The IIABC has developed [irrigation certification programs](#) for individuals designing, installing and operating irrigation systems. Additional information on the certification programs can be found on our website at:

<https://www.irrigationbc.com/page/certification-program>

Members of the IIABC that have attained certification can be searched at:

<https://www.irrigationbc.com/irrigation/certifications/search/>

The IIABC supports the initiatives and the direction that the WSA is going. Our organization is fully supportive of the improvements in efficiency that are described. One concern related to water use efficiency is the current partnership the province has, if any, with [Water Sense](#). It is logical that Water Sense would be one of the programs that the province would partner with to improve water efficiency in many sectors. However, currently our members can only become a partner with Water Sense if they hold a certification from an organization in the USA. There are Canadian certification programs, such as the IIABC's that have high standards and should be acceptable for registration with Water Sense. Certainly it makes sense that adopted programs from the USA accept CANADIAN standards of education and competency in Canada, especially if the existing Canadian programs are of an acceptable standard.



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The IIABC would like to work with the Province and Environment Canada to help get acceptable certification programs in Canada, or more specifically British Columbia approved by Water Sense. The Province's assistance in having Canadian programs recognized would be invaluable.

The IIABC is currently developing a [high efficiency irrigation standard](#), which will include a tool that will allow an assessment of landscape irrigation systems to determine if they meet the standard. This project will assist in furthering irrigation system efficiency.

Setting goals and targets for water use efficiency cannot be accomplished without incorporating improved irrigation efficiency design and management practices. The IIABC is hopeful that our programs will be promoted and supported by the province of BC, local governments and water purveyors. If required our executive and Certification Board members would be pleased to meet with your staff to investigate how improved irrigation efficiency can be promoted and implemented in British Columbia.

Yours sincerely;

Keesha Rosario
President, IIABC