



CULTURAL STYLE GUIDE

Community. Leadership. Pride.

2019

This guide was developed as a support for those writing about, describing or organizing events in partnership with Westbank First Nation and its Membership.



ABOUT WESTBANK FIRST NATION

Westbank First Nation (WFN) is one of eight communities that make up the Okanagan Nation. The syilx, pronounced “see-yeel-x”, people speak the nsyilxcən language and have inhabited the valley for thousands of years.

On April 1, 2005, Bill C-11 was approved, transferring governance from the Indian Act to Westbank First Nation through WFN’S Self Governing Agreement. Differing from a treaty, WFN has the legal capacity to govern its land and resources.



LANGUAGE ETIQUETTE

‘Westbank First Nation’ is correct terminology, and ‘Westbank First Nations’ is incorrect.

When looking to minimize characters, utilize the acronym ‘WFN’.

When referring to Westbank First Nation, there is no need to add the prefix “the” in front. Westbank First Nation is a proper noun and stands alone.

Example: Westbank First Nation is a Self Governing Nation (not, “The” Westbank First Nation...).



When referring to WFN's Membership, the term Indigenous is preferred over Aboriginal. The shift to Indigenous has been recognized by the Federal Government.

WFN is a Self Governing Nation not a "band" (typically used to describe non-self-governing Nations) nor a "tribe" (more typically used to describe Indigenous communities in the United States).

When wishing to reference both the City of West Kelowna and Westbank First Nation as one, it is appropriate to use the term 'Westside'; the term utilized by both governments when describing joint projects.

When referencing land on the Westside, it is either Westbank First Nation land or West Kelowna land. Each government has its own borders and jurisdictions.



CULTURAL ETIQUETTE FOR EVENTS



- *Always seek permission prior to taking pictures.*
- *It is good practice to provide Elders, dancers and drummers with an honorarium.*

All lands of the syilx nation are unceded and it is appropriate to acknowledge, consult with and accommodate Indigenous people and the traditional history of the lands.

An acknowledgment should be given by the event emcee and should take place at the beginning of the event prior to inviting an Elder to give a blessing.

Example: *“Before we begin, I’d like to acknowledge that we are gathered here today on the traditional and unceded territory of the Okanagan syilx people. We recognize, honour and respect the presence of Indigenous people, past, present and future.”*

Elders are and have always been knowledge keepers. They are responsible for sharing knowledge and providing guidance with respect to the natural world. It is traditional protocol to invite an Elder to give an opening prayer and blessing to show respect to senior community members and the land.

Dancing and drumming is one expression of Indigenous history, spirituality and culture. Although enjoyable, it should not be invited solely for entertainment as it represents a celebration of connection.

Dancers wear regalia that is specific to themselves. Regalia is traditional and often sacred, and should not be confused with a 'costume'.

Drumming and singing portrays cultural knowledge and storytelling and acknowledges spiritual significance.



Media is invited to contact the Communications Department if they would like confirmation on appropriate terminology or to request an interview or statement.

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