

Choose an Irrigation Audit Before You Select Water-Efficient Upgrades

If you manage irrigation systems for sports turf fields or expansive university grounds you have more tools available to efficiently manage and reduce water use than ever before. The tools include ET-based controllers, soil moisture sensors, flow sensors and management, and remote access to all field controllers through a computer and smart devices.

However, proper planning and design of an irrigation system is the foundation for efficient irrigation. If you want to improve the efficiency of an existing system(s) starting with an irrigation audit is recommended. It will help you identify system problems and choose the best options to reduce water use while helping to reduce unintended consequences.

Water-Efficient Systems Start with Good Design

An irrigation design that correctly sizes valves and pipes for the water pressure and site conditions, uses the right sprinklers, nozzles and components to deliver the water needed in the time given, and proper zoning and head spacing to provide even distribution of water is critical. If you are designing a new system, you'll get the most benefit from water efficient products and practices if your system is designed properly.

Existing Systems Benefit from an Irrigation Audit

If you have an existing irrigation system(s) the irrigation audit will help you assess the overall condition of the system. One of the results of the audit is knowing the distribution uniformity or how evenly the water is distributed throughout the system which is important to know if you are thinking about adding ET-based controllers or soil moisture sensors.

When you add these products to an existing inefficient system you might have plant material in certain areas



that does not receive enough water. The reason being is that inefficient systems may be programmed to run longer than what is really needed to make up for areas that don't receive enough due to improper spacing or lack of water pressure.

When you begin scheduling based on soil moisture sensing or ET you'll be scheduling the system based on weather conditions and soil moisture conditions, but if you don't have even distribution of the water you'll have plants and turf that may suffer. An irrigation audit can help you discover these areas so you can plan the best approach, and select the best products to help you reduce water use while still maintaining the health of your plant material.

Resources

[Irrigation Association's Irrigation Audit Guidelines](#)

Become an Irrigation Auditor (CLIA)

Prep class for Exam

[Rain Bird Services Irrigation Auditor Course](#)

Irrigation Association Certified Landscape
Irrigation Auditor

[Certification Exam](#)