TODAY'S FACILITY MANAGER
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TFM
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product of the month

WeatherTRAK® from HydroPoint Data Systems

Problem: Overwatered landscapes can increase costs and cause environmental damage.

Solution: A central water management system can control irrigation.

Facility managers know from experience that landscapes consume a lot of water. What some may not know is most landscapes are overwatered by anywhere from 30% to 300%. With rising water rates, improper irrigation can mean higher bills.

The environment is also affected when sites are overwatered. Excess liquid can gather fertilizers, pesticides, and other contaminants, which then drain into nearby bodies of water.

Too much water can also cause plant loss. Furthermore, moving large quantities of water from a central plant out to facilities puts a demand on infrastructures—many of which require carbon based fuels to operate.

HydroPoint Data Systems, Inc. has created WeatherTRAK, a central water management system, in response to these issues. This solution may reduce water bills and help facilities protect the environment.

WeatherTRAK features WeatherTRAK Scheduling Engine™ software to automate irrigation. This approach gives managers control over water windows (the time during the day when landscapes can be watered), water days (specific days when landscapes should be watered), and manual watering.

Users are responsible for selecting parameters specific to the landscape including plant, soil, slope, and sprinkler type. This helps to establish irrigation schedules to match the water budget for every zone of an area.

WeatherTRAK ET Everywhere™ is another feature. Across the U.S., a network of weather stations transmits data to a National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite. HydroPoint downloads this information from the satellite and other sources. The company then uses a data analysis process to calculate evapotranspiration (ET) rates. This term refers to the process in which water is transferred from land to the atmosphere by evaporation from the soil or other surfaces. The system calculates this process for specific locations.

This system can reduce nonpoint source pollution (such as when liquids from overwatered landscapes drain into lakes and rivers), which is a major factor affecting water quality.

It is inefficient to rely on historical data to make decisions that affect the economics and environmental impact of a building. WeatherTRAK may help facility managers make more informed choices. Write 338 on Reader Service Card.

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Hydropoint then transfers ET information to a wireless network, which broadcasts it to WeatherTrak controllers. These automatically adjust irrigation output as weather changes.

This system factors in every variable that affects ET, including humidity, solar radiation, temperature, and wind. It eliminates reliance on historical data and triggers irrigation adjustments based on the local, daily weather.

WeatherTRAK may help organizations save money in water costs. One property management company, RNM Properties based out of the San Francisco Bay area, found this product significantly impacted its water bills. Says CEO Paul Elmore, "After reducing water use by 46% at two properties—an office building and a shopping plaza—we installed WeatherTRAK throughout our entire portfolio."

It could also help facilities to be more environmentally friendly. The billions of gallons of water WeatherTRAK customers may conserve this year will help reduce dependence on carbon based fuels otherwise needed to support the movement and management of local water supplies.

WeatherTRAK diminishes the flow of fertilizers, pesticides, and other contaminants into nearby bodies of water. A California study, funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), demonstrated this solution's ability to reduce nonpoint source runoff pollution by 71%.

Other capabilities of Hydropoint's WeatherTRAK include real time data management. It includes a single online interface for managing both irrigation and HVAC systems.

With more information, facility managers can save money and be better stewards of their facilities and the planet. WeatherTRAK ET Pro2 Central can help by providing a more accurate picture of irrigation needs. □