

Success Story: Sonoma Mountain Landscape

Automating smart watering yields dramatic savings for HOAs

Key Benefits of WeatherTRAK for Sonoma Mountain Landscape:

- Saves money on water bills
- Boosts employee productivity
- Enhances landscape appearance
- Improves customer satisfaction

John Kopshever, founder and owner of Sonoma Mountain Landscape, Inc., applies smart technologies and practices to improve landscape health, reduce costs and increase value for customers. His company has enjoyed rapid growth and currently maintains the common areas of more than 25 homeowner associations (HOAs) and other customers in Sonoma County, California.

John recognizes that the water needs of plants are largely dependent upon weather conditions, which is why weather-based irrigation is central to water conservation. But with conventional timers, weather-based irrigation means frequent, even daily site visits to manually adjust irrigation controllers as the local weather changes. With several hundred controllers under their management, John sought a more efficient system for helping clients conserve water.

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*John Kopshever
Sonoma Mountain Landscape, Inc.*

Fortuitously, John’s next-door neighbor is Ben Slick, senior vice president of HydroPoint Data Systems, Inc., the manufacturers of WeatherTRAK® smart irrigation systems. Over dinner one evening, John learned about the WeatherTRAK controller’s ability to automate irrigation based on daily weather changes. John was impressed by the WeatherTRAK solution’s perfect scores on the SWAT™ smart controller protocol (the Energy Star™ rating system for water appliances) and its performance in 23 independent studies.

Now the WeatherTRAK solution is helping Sonoma Mountain Landscape’s customers increase efficiency and get their water budgets under control. “The number one issue is economics,” John said. “WeatherTRAK is proven to reduce water costs, making it the right pick for my HOAs and new landscape installation projects.”

John points out that most of his clients spend more money on water than they do on plants, trees, fertilizer and mulches combined. Given the WeatherTRAK system’s proven ability to reduce water use by as much as 59 percent, these HOAs can expect to reduce water costs by 50 percent. As water rates continue to rise, these savings will grow.

John encourages his HOA customers to use their water bill savings to boost property value by enhancing their landscapes. Landscapes contribute an estimated 15 percent to total property value

and deliver more significant payback than any comparable investment. Sonoma Mountain Landscape, in turn, gains more projects from current customers. It's a win-win situation.

The WeatherTRAK system also boosts the productivity of John's team, enabling them to ensure that clients' landscapes always look their best. By automating irrigation adjustments, WeatherTRAK controllers let John's team do what would otherwise be impossible – simultaneously adjust daily irrigation schedules at the nearly 7,000 individual irrigation valves managed by Sonoma Mountain Landscape. When a sudden heat wave strikes, like the one experienced in July 2006, WeatherTRAK controllers automatically apply more water to the plants that need it. This protects plants while eliminating time-consuming manual adjustments and unnecessary site visits.

To help his customers quickly realize the benefits of the WeatherTRAK solution while managing cash flow, John recommends a phased implementation. He encourages customers to replace aged or broken timers first to achieve water bill savings, which will then fund the purchase of additional controllers. Furthermore, John always recommends WeatherTRAK controllers for newly constructed areas. This approach helps Sonoma Mountain Landscape maximize plant health and cost savings for customers.

Customers' water, cost and time savings are sustained through ongoing customer service. No other irrigation manufacturer offers the array of customer services included with the WeatherTRAK solution. John says, "WeatherTRAK's customer service keeps me from looking at any other system. It's an overwhelming advantage."

Expert assistance from WeatherTRAK Customer Service is always just a phone call away. Any questions from homeowners or John's team are readily answered by knowledgeable service staff, which includes Spanish speakers.

Sonoma Mountain Landscapes' selection of the WeatherTRAK system reflects the company's commitment to maximizing value for HOAs and other customers. With the efficiency and savings John is bringing his customers, he is one of a growing number of landscapers leading the industry to a new concept of customer service and landscape care.