



Maintain Your Irrigation System

Increase efficiency and achieve sustainable goals

By Corena Cane and Jeremy Harris

Do you manage a condominium that has an in-ground irrigation system? Chances are, your system has been through several seasons of wear and tear that can impact the efficiency of the system. Some of the major causes of inefficient irrigation and water waste are:

- system leakage;
- broken or improper head selection;
- outdated control technology; and
- improper scheduling.

All of these inefficiencies lead to unnecessary and expensive waste. Long-term studies indicate an average of 55 per cent of the water used for irrigation on condominium properties is wasted.

With water rates increasing eight to 10 per cent each year, property managers are under pressure to reduce operating costs by lowering the impact of utility bills. Maintaining irrigation systems is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce water waste and save significant amounts of money without impacting the quality or health of the landscape. A

well-maintained system also improves the property's appearance by applying the correct amount of water to the landscape.

Water Smart Irrigation Professionals (WSIP) receive specialized training and are certified by Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association to perform irrigation system assessments that identify efficiency opportunities and demonstrate concrete return on investment. This specialized training and certification program was developed in partnership with Landscape Ontario, The Regional Municipality of York and the Region of Peel. Property managers in need of irrigation system management should consult with a Water Smart Irrigation Professional to take advantage of the services being offered. Having your irrigation system assessed and receiving a formal report by a WSIP-certified company enables property managers to effectively communicate the potential water- and money-saving opportunities to owners

and condominium boards. The WSIP firm can detect damaged or leaking irrigation system hardware and customize a maintenance plan to help maximize the life of systems. The formal assessment will calculate all associated return on investments; enhance the health and beauty of the landscape, while saving money for clients, residents and condominium corporations.

What to Expect When You Call a WSIP Contractor

The WSIP contractor will complete a thorough inspection of each zone of your irrigation system to calculate the water use and efficiency opportunities. Following the infield assessment, you will be presented with a detailed report outlining how much water your irrigation system uses annually and how much less it would use if identified efficiency measures were implemented. These values are based on expert knowledge and calculations from irrigation data management soft-



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CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

Association of Condominium Managers (ACMO)



This program has been developed specifically for individuals working in the condominium field. It is designed for new entrants or experienced individuals who are seeking formal accreditation.

Condominium management is a growth industry throughout the province. Participants will learn how to deal with people, buildings and record keeping. A combination of theory and practical problems are incorporated into all courses providing opportunities for participants to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities in planning effective condominiums.

In cooperation with ACMO, Mohawk College offers the following Association of Condominium Managers Program courses online:

- Introduction to Condominium Law (LAWS CDM01)
- Physical Building Management (MGMT CDM02)
- Financial Planning for Condominium Managers (FINC CDM03)
- Condominium Administration and Human Relations (MGMT CDM04)

Participants require regular access to a computer with an internet connection. This program is a valuable education step in the process of obtaining the Registered Condominium Management (R.C.M.) Designation.

Visit ce.mohawkcollege.ca/acmo for future registration dates.

Contact:
ceskills@mohawkcollege.ca



Central Control Systems Table 1

<p>Average Pre-Assessment: Total water use before installation of a Central Control System</p> <p>2,217 m³</p>
<p>Average Post Assessment: Total water use after installation of a Central Control System (saves minimum 30%)</p> <p>1,552 m³</p>
<p>Average Savings</p> <p>665 m³</p>

ware designed specifically to quantify the savings related to the implementation of water efficient upgrades.

Since the program started in 2014, 31 assessments have been completed by WSIP certified companies in York and Peel Regions. They have resulted in average savings opportunities of 57 per cent, valued at approximately 1,000 m³ of water per season. After participating in a WSIP assessment, approximately 45 per cent of property managers implemented water-efficient technologies like smart or central control systems within the first year. Central control systems save an estimated *additional* 30 per cent of total water use (see Table 1 above). Ongoing monitoring and water management by the irrigation professional can easily achieve additional savings.

Often the decision to proceed with a water efficiency project is solely based on the return on investment (ROI). Although the ROI is one of the most important factors in the decision-making process, it is not the only factor that should be considered. There are many intangible reasons for a property manager to decide to proceed with a project. These factors include:

- Tenant demands – tenants are concerned with rising fees but continue to demand a well-maintained landscape

- Building owner demand – owners may want to “green” their portfolio to attract new tenants by participating in Green Certification Programs like the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

- Recognition and promotion – property managers can showcase initiative and creativity for saving water and money for their company

- Corporate image – avoid watering in the rain and prevent landscape from suffering due to overly wet or dry areas

- Corporate responsibility – it is the right thing to do and demonstrates industry leadership

- Safety and maintenance – protect against safety issues like slip and fall incidents; these issues need to be addressed regardless of ROI

The WSIP program supports York and Peel Regional goals for environmental protection and sustainable water use. To address the concern of high water use as a result of irrigation, the Regions have partnered with Landscape Ontario to develop and deliver an innovative, award-winning program to elevate the irrigation indus-

try. As a result, businesses and residents can now access Water Smart Irrigation Professionals as a trusted source for water-efficient irrigation services and products.

Start achieving your sustainability goals and improve your bottom line by booking an assessment with a WSIP-certified contractor. For more information visit: york.ca/wsip; watersmartpeel.ca ■



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