



News Release

AUSTIN IRRIGATION COMPANY HELPS PAY FOR CLIENTS TO STOP WASTING WATER

Groundbreaking technology helps preserve natural resources and saves businesses thousands of dollars

Austin, Texas - September 26, 2007 - By applying land management and horticulture techniques with pioneering technology, irrigation-management company Acequia LP has saved its customers more than 700 million gallons of water since 2001 by eliminating outdoor watering waste.

"It's unbelievable how much water is put out on these properties in relation to what they need," said Acequia Founder Kenneth Cook. "Mother Nature changes every hour, and property managers don't have the ability or the technology to react that fast. Overwatering isn't good for plants and it isn't good for the environment. When you see water running down the street, often it's the result of bad water management."

Acequia's software saves water by measuring 17 factors to determine exactly how many gallons of water will benefit plants and landscapes. The system not only measures daily evaporative loss but also factors in plant species, temperature, wind speed, slope of the ground, impervious cover, proximity of plant beds to shaded areas near buildings as well as 10 other aspects essential to efficient outdoor watering. Each of these unique factors is documented for hundreds of irrigation zones on each property. By comparison, the perhaps better-known "ET (evapo-transpiration) controllers" take into account only evaporative loss in managing irrigation systems.

From its Austin, Texas headquarters, Acequia's computers can use its data to turn on and off each individual sprinkler head on commercial real-estate properties around the country. The result is companies cutting their water use by half and saving tens of thousands of dollars a month.

"The savings are immediate," said Cook. "The minute we install and turn on the system at a particular commercial property, we begin cutting a client's outdoor water use by at least half. Our technology only waters landscape zones when they really need it. We can zero in on landscape beds that are right next to each other, and water for different lengths of time and with different amounts of water depending on the need."

Additionally, when companies are working to meet local city water ordinances, the methodology behind the Acequia system allows them to save a great amount of water to meet those regulations.

Sharing the Cost of Helping the Environment

In addition to its unique technology, Acequia employs a creative business model. Acequia can help clients pay for installing the irrigation system, and the two share the net savings on the water bill. "We compare what our clients would have paid for water without Acequia's technology to what they're paying after our system is installed, and we share the savings," said Tim Wiley, Acequia Partner who made his career in commercial real estate before starting with the company. "We won't get involved in a project until we're certain our client can reduce their water use by at least 50 percent."

Austin Success Story

One of Acequia's Austin clients – Riata, an upscale apartment-home community – has cut its water use by 60 percent. Since installing Acequia's system in 2001, Riata has saved almost half a million dollars and 175 million gallons of water – enough to flood Riata's entire property in 16 feet of water.

Acequia pays Riata's dramatically lower water bills each month and then shares a portion of the savings at the end of the year. Acequia's software can detect if one of Riata's 15,000 sprinkler heads breaks and can turn it off remotely eliminating waste. The Acequia system also senses leaks and spots water-billing mistakes. In July, it found \$20,000 in water-bill mistakes favoring Acequia clients. "We're really proud of what we've been able to conserve here at Riata," said Sandy Eckhardt, Riata General Manager. "It's a combination of the money saved and the environmental impact."

In addition to Riata, Acequia clients include American Airlines, Falcon Southwest, Chelsea Property Group, Hilton, Simon Property Group and Wal-Mart.

Unusual Partnership

Kenneth Cook was a landscaper working on Tim Wiley's commercial properties back in 1988 when the two met.

"I was doing landscape maintenance, and Tim was a commercial real-estate guy," said Cook. "It's hard to believe we could be partners in anything. But in the business we've created, our diverse backgrounds lend a lot of credibility to our work."

Cook spent four years developing the state-of-the-art system that goes far beyond other available irrigation systems by managing the soil, plants and rain events instead of just turning on and off sprinklers.

"My 'aha!' moment came when technology advanced to move data across a wireless path," he reveals. "I realized we could transmit information from specific plant beds to my computer and then have my computer make calculations, transmit it back and control the water flow."

Wiley helped develop Acequia's business model and brings more than 20 years of commercial real-estate development experience to the company. He realized Acequia's technology was one of the few green investments property owners and managers could make that could actually make money, not just save or cost more money.

"Every company has to offer value to the client," said Wiley. "We add value by decreasing expenses through water management and even increasing property value. Water conservation is a bonus that helps both the client and the world."

About Acequia, LP

Acequia has been providing water-saving irrigation-management solutions to commercial property owners since 2001. Acequia developed its advanced proprietary software to provide irrigation scheduling based on real-time environmental data transmitted continuously across the Internet from every control unit to the company's central server for analysis and action.

The selection of our company name has tremendous meaning and history which we feel reflects who we are and how we want to be viewed by our partners. "Acequia" is a term brought to this country via old Spain where it roots back to the formalization of irrigation practices prior to the conquest of the Americas. During this period, Acequia referred to water stewards or overseers assigned to assure that colonies were established in accordance with sound environmental principals.