



## A STORY OF ADAPTION FROM THE MILD MIDWEST TO SCORCHING ARIZONA HEAT

### HOW A TOP PHOENIX IRRIGATION COMPANY SUCCEEDS WITH THE HELP OF TRUSTED PRODUCTS AND PARTNERS

Living in sunny Phoenix, Arizona, has plenty of perks — beautiful winters, year-round outdoor activity, and access to hiking and national parks to name a few. Like any climate, though, living in Arizona also has its challenges. No one knows those challenges better than Josh Wells, president of the successful irrigation business, Controlled Rain. The family business installs new irrigation systems and fixes issues within existing systems, focusing on the East Valley.



Josh has acclimated to the desert climate since moving to Phoenix in 2006 but didn't grow up in it. Josh's father, Ken Wells, owned Heartland Irrigation in Omaha, Nebraska, before heading south and starting Controlled Rain. As a kid, Josh grew up around the business and naturally picked up a knowledge of sprinkler parts and installation and the commitment it takes to run a business. As an adult, Josh began his career in Information Technology. After seven years, he decided to leave the office environment and return to digging holes for the family business.

Acknowledging the difficulties his parents faced in building not one, but two small businesses, he attributes much of Controlled Rain's success to focusing on the customers. "The biggest thing for us, and what made my father successful in Nebraska as well as here in Phoenix, is always putting the customer first," says Josh. "Customer relations are our priority. That means being in regular communication about the status of a project, quickly tending to their service request, and treating every person with fairness and respect."

Since the Phoenix company was founded in 2000, Controlled Rain has continued to grow year after year. It's one of the only irrigation-focused businesses in the area and they want to keep growing by being the most knowledgeable in the area, as well.

## **Irritrol®**



### TACKLING CHALLENGES HEAD-ON

**Climate.** In Nebraska, Ken Wells primarily installed lawn and pop-up sprinkler heads, spray heads, and rotor heads. Now, 90% of Controlled Rain's Phoenix installs are drip irrigation. Desert landscaping needs more specialized attention than Midwest landscaping to thrive. To achieve that, the company runs drip lines and emitters throughout the yard to allow the landscaping to thrive. Ken Wells, owner and president of Controlled Rain at the time of its inception had to adapt to an entirely new way of doing business.

**Water shortages.** Water shortages are becoming more common across the country, which poses new questions for irrigation companies, landscape businesses, and homeowners alike. Questions such as "Should we limit water usage?", "How can we become more efficient?", and "How much watering

is too much?" are being asked. Everyone is becoming more aware of the shortage and making a concerted effort to choose efficient products that conserve water.

**Hard water.** Arizona's hard water provides a unique challenge as well. The hardness of water is defined by the amount of dissolved calcium and magnesium it contains. These minerals cause water spots, grimy residue, and buildup that can clog pipes. "We have parts, such as valves, failing quicker than they did back in the Midwest," says Josh. When hard water continuously runs through the equipment, depositing calcium and magnesium each time, the lines can clog, resulting in equipment repairs or replacement. The best way homeowners can combat hard water buildup is to use self-flushing drip emitters that are proven to last many years longer than a standard emitter.

#### A SHIFT IN INDUSTRY FOCUS

"My favorite aspect of the industry is that technology has advanced over the past few years. The availability of smart timers has given homeowners a way to improve efficiency quickly and easily — and with little effort," says Josh. "By switching to a smart timer, anyone can make a positive impact in their small corner of the world, and those small actions add up and equate to real change."

The landscaping and irrigation industries have the potential to drive the water-savings charge, and Controlled Rain is doing just that by getting smart products into the hands of homeowners.



#### Products that Perform

Several of Controlled Rain's challenges are combated with the help of Irritrol products. Irritrol is the company's preferred irrigation equipment manufacturer. "The Irritrol Rain Dial timer is my favorite option when it comes to standard digital timers. Our team and I can set these timers up in our sleep, they're that easy to work with. It's the same story with their sprinkler valves, too," says Josh. "They've always been a quality partner that provides a quality product for us."

Drip systems last 10-15 years in the Phoenix area, giving Controlled Rain the chance to re-pipe drip systems daily, alongside making single part replacements. That means Irritrol products are being introduced to new homeowners every day. "We know Irritrol is well-liked by our customers based on the lack of complaints over the years," says Josh. "If their products were causing problems, we'd undoubtedly hear about it — and we haven't heard a thing."

#### Trusted Partner

When you're in the customer service business, you understand the importance of relationships. "Throughout the years, Irritrol has gotten to know our crew and we've gotten to know them, making for a great working relationship. Having an open line of communication gives us the same type of relationship with them that we strive to build with our customers," says Josh.

Controlled Rain functions on the pillars of honesty, integrity and hard work. Not coincidentally, companies that focus on quality service tend to stick around for a long time. Irritrol has a similar story. The manufacturer has been in business since 1967 and aims to help resolve controller problems before the customer's lawn suffers any damage. Irritrol knows a professional's reputation is only as good as the people behind them. The goals of Controlled Rain and Irritrol are the same — be the service partner you wish you had. It's that kind of mentality that will take you far.

