

TORO®

# THE CONSERVATION TRAP

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENCY



**W**ho doesn't want to conserve water? It's our most essential resource and our industry uses a lot of it. I know most of us feel the responsibility to be effective stewards of this precious gift.

A day doesn't go by without reading a new article about water shortages, droughts, restrictive legislation, new technologies targeting water use etc. Much of this is aimed at conserving water.

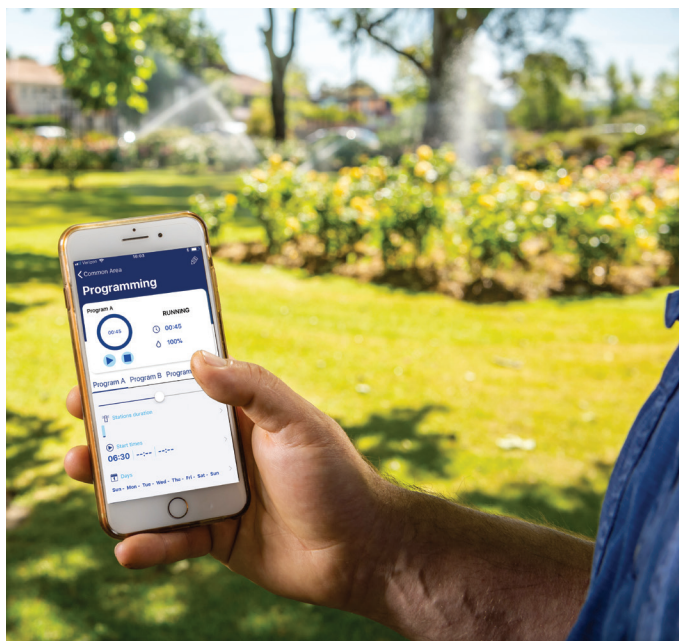
So, what's the problem? Is there a problem?

The way I see it, if we simply have conservation as the goal with no plan on how to achieve it, we run the risk of someone else defining the method for us. This is what happens when municipal water companies restrict use during high demand times. Their goal is conserving water, not managing or maintaining valuable, essential landscapes. So, our goals may conflict.

How do we conserve and also maintain our landscape investments? The answer is for irrigation efficiency to drive and achieve the conservation. In simple terms, irrigation efficiency is the relationship between the amount of moisture/water the landscape needs vs. the amount of water we apply to it. There is no such thing as 100% efficient irrigation systems. We strive to get as close to the unobtainable as possible.

Would you be surprised to know that many newly installed systems are no better than 50% efficient? In other words, they apply 50% more water than the landscape actually needs!

This occurs for various reasons. The schedule programmed in the controller is irresponsible. Much of the installed equipment is incapable of good efficiency. Common spray heads are the main culprit. The installation might have been poor with sprinklers installed low or crooked, using mismatched nozzles impacting uniformity, etc. All this and more will effect efficiency negatively.



Improving efficiency is easy! There are so many new technologies that enable this.

Spray heads with pressure regulation, high efficiency nozzles, controllers that react to weather daily, etc. Implemented properly and installed with care, we can reduce water waste exponentially and the result will be incredible water conservation.

Look, we can all conserve water. Just go to every controller that you service and cut all the run times in half. Of course, that's ridiculous, but it is conservation so let's do better as an industry and build and maintain efficient systems before our municipalities or legislators define conservation for us.

We need to be recognized as part of the solution, not the cause of the problem!



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