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Perris water saving program

City uses water-saving outdoor irrigation equipment

Battling budget cuts and xeric conditions, the City of Perris began water saving program using water-saving outdoor irrigation equipment that can cut water use by more than 30 percent without changing the landscape.

Located in the heart of Riverside County, Perris is the award-winning city that is a leader in powering its public buildings with solar energy and fighting the foreclosure crisis by painting lawns to improve curb appeal of foreclosed homes.

Unveiled Thursday as part of SMART Irrigation month, Perris' WaterSmart garden in front of City Hall features state-of-the-art equipment from The Toro Company. Toro's Intelli-Sense irrigation controller and it's Precision Series Spray Nozzles that are expected to cut water use in the one-acre garden by as much as 632,000 gallons a year.

"The WaterSmart irrigation showcase garden is another example of how the City of Perris has turned to strategic partnerships, in this case with Toro, to address the challenges our city faces," said Mayor Daryl Busch. "We shared the same vision. If we can show residents how to save water, together we can meet the water needs of our community."

The advanced irrigation system comes at a time when cities throughout Southern California are wrestling with ways to cut costs and are trying to cope with reduced water allocations due to the drought and environmental issues in the Bay Delta.

"Most Southern Californian's don't realize that two-thirds of our water comes from 200 to 500 miles away, said William Steele, Area Manager for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. "We have to be smart about what we put in the ground. Demonstrations like the WaterSmart garden goes a long way in showing what people need to do."

City leaders, irrigation industry experts, the Toro team and representatives from the water industry were on hand Thursday, July 30, in front of City Hall to learn about and discuss Toro's Intelli-Sense irrigation controller and its Precision Series Spray Nozzles.

The system's Intelli-Sense is a weather-based controller that automatically changes its irrigation schedule in response to changes in the weather, ensuring that individual landscape zones receive precisely the correct amount of water. By monitoring each zone, the controller adjusts to allow the soil to partially dry out to encourage deeper healthier root growth.

The Precision Series spray nozzles incorporate H2O Chip Technology which enables a stream of water to oscillate within a specially designed chamber at 200 cycles a second. Detectable only under strobe light, the spray pattern is far more consistent than conventional nozzles, resulting in up to a third less water use than traditional sprinkler nozzles.

And if a nozzle is broken, no geysers! The sprinkler head will shut off if its nozzle is damaged, saving 30 to 40 gallons a minute that can occur when damaged conventional sprinkler heads go unrepaired.

Last year, Perris won the Helen Putnam Award from the League of California Cities for its Solar Shine project that covered the City Hall's parking structures with photovoltaic cells. In addition to restoring its historic rail depot and instituting a business façade program, the city's implemented an internationally recognized home and lawn rejuvenation effort to improve curb appeal of homes affected by the foreclosure crisis.

"We are privileged to have a forward thinking city such as Perris as a partner in showing residents, contractors and other municipalities that there is a better way to water," said Mike Baron, Toro's National Specification and Sales Manager.