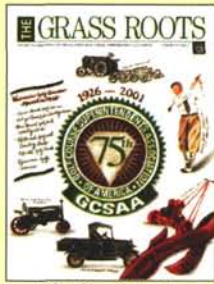




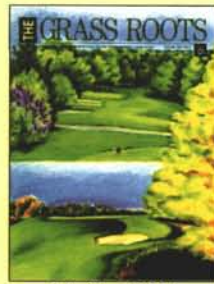
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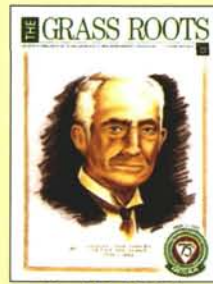
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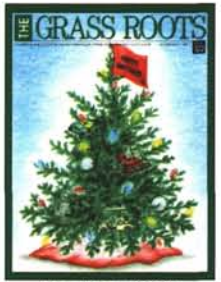
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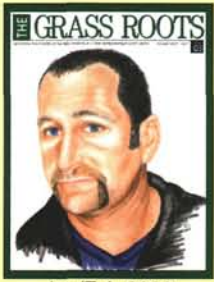
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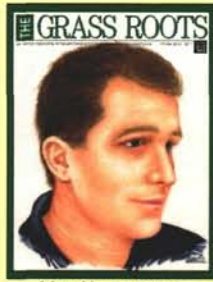
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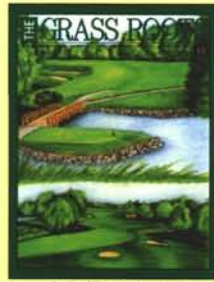
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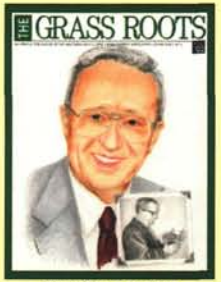
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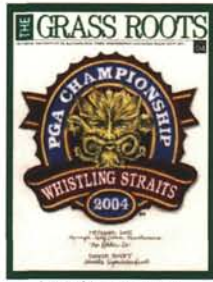
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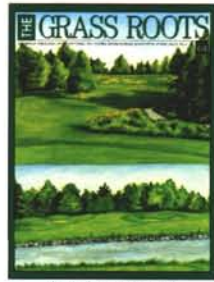
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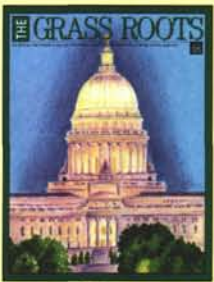
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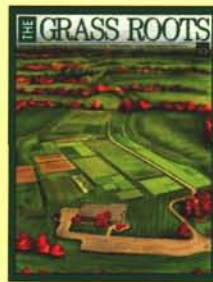
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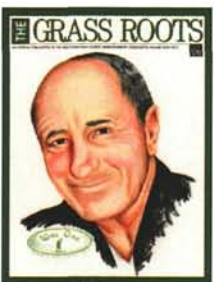
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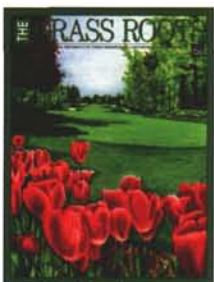
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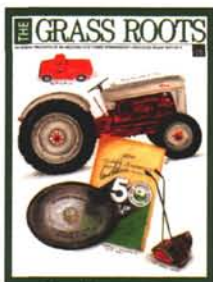
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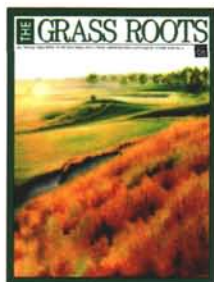
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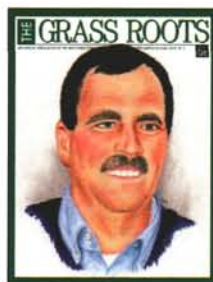
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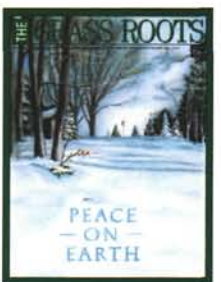
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# THE GRASS ROOTS

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**ABOUT THE COVER**

It was going to take a cover like this one to put Jen Samerdyke's career as our official Grass Roots artist into perspective. It also seem the best way to pay tribute to her and to thank her for her wonderful contributions.

This is also an opportunity to introduce Jen's replacement - Beverly Bergemann. She sketched the cameo of Jen and designed the rest of the cover. She has a challenge ahead of her, but this cover makes it clear she is up to the task.

*"This is the true joy of life: the being used up for a purpose, recognized by yourself as a mighty one: being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish, little clot of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."*  
- George Bernard Shaw



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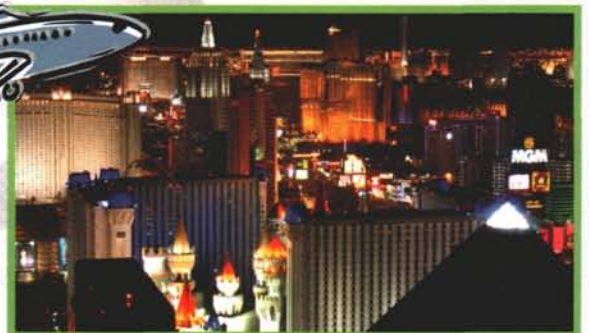


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# Down Time!!!

By Mike Lyons, Golf Course Superintendent, Old Hickory Country Club

I hope everyone has enjoyed their holidays and the much slower pace of late fall and the early winter. The Symposium was once again a great success



and the speakers and topic were outstanding. A big thank you to everyone at Milorganite and to the Symposium committee. Your hard work and dedication to our association is truly appreciated. As I mentioned at the symposium, through the continued support we receive from Milorganite, we are able to make a considerable donation to the O.J. Noer Foundation. In the past five years we have contributed over \$35,000 dollars. Wow! Again, thank you to everyone who makes this possible.

At the WGCSA fall meeting, two new Directors were elected to serve on the WGCSA Board of Directors. They are David Swift from Whistling Straits GC and Jim Van Herwynen from South Hills Golf & CC. Also elected to serve one year terms this coming year are myself as president, Dustin Riley as vice president, Brian Zimmerman as treasurer and Jeff Millies as secretary. I would like to thank all of these men for volunteering their time and commitment to our association. Also, thank you to current board members Chad Harrington, Matt Schmitz and past president Marc Davison for their continued commitment and contributions they make to our association. Thank you to our outgoing board members Eric Jasin and Randy Dupont for all that they have done

for our association these past couple of years. It truly has been a pleasure working with and getting to know you both.

For those of you that were unable to attend, I wanted to make you aware of a few changes. We will be enforcing a new policy at our monthly meetings. If you sign up and are a no-show, we will be charging you the cost of the meeting and you will be unable to attend the next one unless you have taken care of the previous meeting. The main reason is many clubs are no longer allowing us to give them a count the day of the meeting, especially if a meal is involved. So if we say there our 80 people signed up and only 70 show, we get charged the 10 that didn't show. If you sign up and are unable to attend, please give us some time to notify the host course.

Lastly, I would like to ask if there are any members who would like to help out on any committee or serve our association in any capacity, please feel free to contact any board member. We will always welcome your thoughts and inputs. I have served our association for the past ten years and

every year around this time the board hears how we should better serve our association. I don't like using the word "serve" because to me this is an association run by volunteers who are willing to give their time. Every one of us can and should help in one way or another. So if it is more education or "better education" or meeting sites, please step up. I won't speak for the other board members, but I know I would not be offended if you came to me with an idea on anything...just don't complain. Help out. We will and do have resources to help this association. Trust me, we have tried to use them in the past. Also, we need every one who is able to attend the Day on the Hill in Madison on February 14th to please do so. It is a great way to show our legislators how well organized and concerned we are. Look for the mailer some time in January and again, please make time for this important day. Again, I hope everyone takes advantage of this slow time and relax a little. Enjoy your family.

Hope to see many of you at the Golf Industry Show in February in Anaheim. Stay warm and take care. 🌿

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## For the Common Good: A National Turfgrass Research Initiative

By Dr. John Stier, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Horticulture

There exists an estimated six million square miles of turf in the U.S. making it by some accounts the nation's largest irrigated crop (Milesi et al., 2005). The turf industry employs hundreds of thousands of persons and has grown to have an approximate value of \$40 billion (NTRI, 2003). Despite the hugely public nature and impact of turf in the U.S., private enterprises have been virtually the only funding source for turf research for the past 100 years. Requirements to show rapid results, combined with relatively small amounts of funding available for any particular project result in efforts being directed towards applied research with short-term results and limited national impact. Such a situation has resulted in a lack of understanding of fundamental turf processes and has hindered the development of sound environmental practices. Such a lack of understanding has translated

into public apathy and regulations based more on emotion than scientific rationale.

In January 2002 representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Agricultural Research Stations division met with turf managers and researchers to discuss the possibility of federal involvement in turf research. Such a move would facilitate long-term research to focus on fundamental problems requiring more attention and funding than is available using industry monies. The coordination resulting from such an effort would enhance the efficiency of turf research while increasing its public visibility and acceptability as results would be less likely to be viewed as "tainted" by industry funding.

The National Turfgrass Research Initiative (NTRI) is being advanced by the non-profit National Turfgrass Federation (NTF). Board members are drawn from

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the following groups: the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP), United States Golf Association, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Turf Producers International, the Irrigation Association, and Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), Crop Science Society of America-C5 (Turfgrass Division), American Seed Trade Association, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, National Roadside Vegetation Management Association, and the National Parks and Recreation Association. Some of the goals of the NTRI are to:

- Aid communities by developing better management systems to conserve natural resources and protect the environment
- Maintain grass biodiversity through collecting and preserving germplasm
- Improve environmental restorations and protection efforts by exploring grasses abilities to remediate environmental pollution
- Document economic impacts of the turf industry
- Enhance the quality of American life through beautification and recreational facilities

The NTRI seeks to have Congress approve a \$32.4 million line item in the USDA-ARS annual budget to fund turf research. The plan would establish six research cen-



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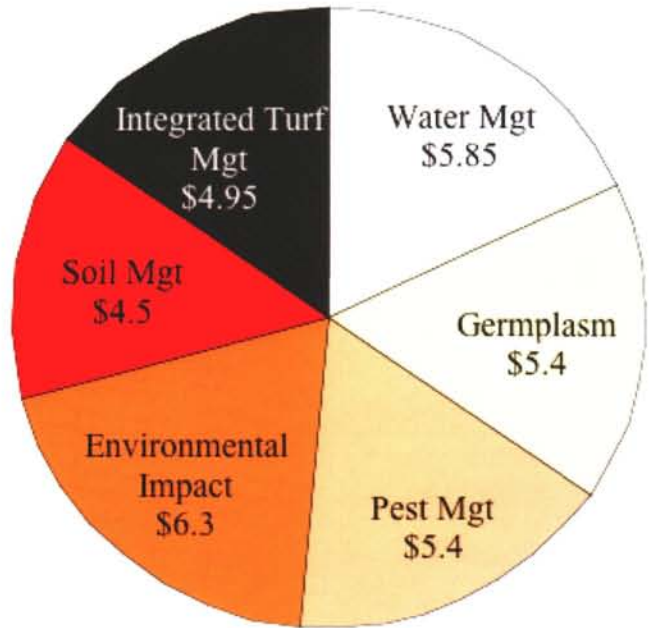


Fig. 1. Proposed budget allocation areas for turf research under the National Turfgrass Initiative. Each value is in millions of dollars.

ters in the U.S., each with a small cadre of scientists working on a specific topic. Their work would complement existing university programs and include research not currently performed at universities or private entities.

Each of the six centers would be funded at approximately \$5 million annually (Fig. 1). Approximately two-thirds of the funds would support research at these centers. The centers would distribute the remaining one-third of the funds to support cooperative projects with university scientists around the country. Major and secondary objectives for each of the centers has already been identified though these could change as progress is made and/or as new issues develop. The six major objectives are as follows:

**1. Improvement of water management strategies and practices** (\$5.85 million).

Water has already become a precious commodity for turf production and management in the West and parts of the southeast and eastern coastal areas. Primary objectives for water management research would be: 1) Increase the understanding of turf water use and efficiency, 2) Improve the management of available water through better conservation strategies and best management practices, and 3) Evaluate the use of non-potable and poor quality water sources on turfgrasses and the environment.

**2. Collection, enhancement and preservation of turfgrass germplasm** (\$5.4 million).

Over 2,000 grass species exist though less than two dozen are routinely used for turf. Even within these 24 species an array of genetic potential exists, though

careful management is required to maintain genetic diversity for use in breeding programs to develop turfgrasses suited for specialized locations and uses. Primary objectives of germplasm work would be to 1) Collect, evaluate and preserve valuable turfgrass germplasm, 2) Increase our understanding of turfgrass biology and genetic systems for stress tolerance, and 3) Improve turfgrass stress tolerance through genetic improvement.

**3. Improvement of pest management practices** (\$5.4 million). Increasing regulations and slow development of new pesticides, along with an awareness to preserve the environment, will cause pest management in the near future to rely more on practices based on a knowledge of pest biology. Research coordinated through this center will focus on disease, insect, weed, and vertebrate pest management.

4. Understanding and improvement of turfgrasses' role in the environment (\$6.3 million). It's been over 10 years since Beard and Green (1994) published their somewhat controversial manuscript outlining the benefits of turfgrasses to the scientific community. Not only is additional documentation needed to support some of these claims, but other impacts such as the cooling power of turf in the urban environment need to be understood. The GCSAA agreed with the importance of turf's environmental impact sufficiently to rename their

research grant program The Environmental Institute of Golf. The importance of this issue to the NTI is obvious as this area is slated to receive more funding than any of the other centers. The primary objectives at this center will be to 1) Assess and characterize the environmental impacts of turfgrass and management techniques, including their effect on beneficial soil and other organisms and mammals, and 2) Evaluate and develop management strategies and technologies to enhance the environmental quality of turfgrass systems, including development of computer modeling systems.

5. Enhancement of soil and management practices (\$4.5 million). The U.S. designated 2006 as the Year of Soil in recognition of the central role soil plays in our ecosystems. Soil issues, ranging from soil erosion to depletion of soil quality, are sufficient to warrant a dedicated group of turf soil researchers, an area which has long been neglected (Wayne Kussow and now Doug Soldat have been two of less than 10 bonafide turf soil researchers in the past 30 years). The Wisconsin Turfgrass Survey of 2000 found that poor soils were identified by homeowners as one of the most important obstacles for maintaining lawn turf. Soil research will focus on two primary objectives: 1) Overcoming soil limitations to turf production, establishment and use, and 2) Investigate the potential of using agricul-

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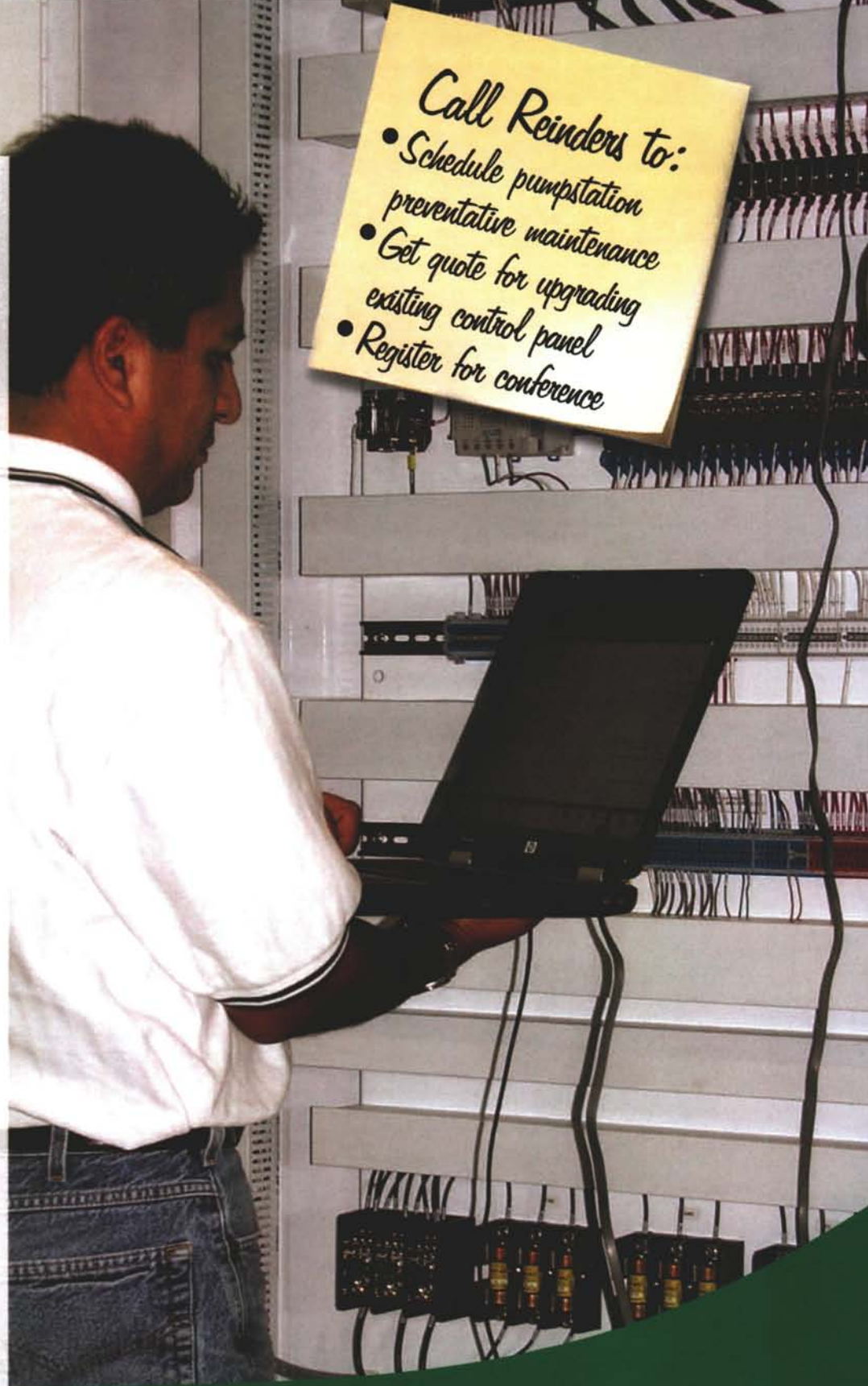
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tural and industrial by-products for turf applications.

6. Development of integrated turf management systems (\$4.95 million). Combining the information developed from the other five centers into an integrated package for turf management will be part of the function of the integrated turf man-

agement system researchers. The program will also seek to enhance economic return while complying with a myriad of environmental regulations and standards and extend integrated turf management system information to the general public. Specific primary objectives include 1) Development of economic-based

integrated turf management tools to enhance environmental quality, and 2) Development of decision tools for Integrated Turf Management practices.

As with any congressional activity, lobbying is necessary for the NTRI to be successful. Successful funding of the \$32.4 million initiative will likely be developed in stages. Initial funds were sufficient to hire one full-time researcher (Dr. Scott Warnke) to work on germplasm issues. His lab is housed at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. More recently a small amount of funds were allocated to Utah and West Virginia for turf research. The initiative is gaining traction in Congress and NTRI could receive \$1.4-1.8 million in 2007. Lobbying is coordinated by the National Turf Federation who received \$600,000 from NTEP for the first six years of operation. The effort has now drained the resources of NTEP, causing them to reduce their annual contribution to \$20,000. An additional \$80,000 is needed annually to maintain lobbying efforts. Turf organizations throughout the country are being asked to help contribute towards the effort. If all goes well, at some point in the not-too-distant future the NTRI may be fully funded and no additional dollars will be needed: meanwhile, the efforts will have paid off by providing much-needed federal research funding for turf and an improved recognition of turf's role in society.

If you would like to find out more about the NTRI, information is available at [www.turfresearch.org](http://www.turfresearch.org).

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# WATERTRONICS®

ELECTRONICALLY CONTROLLED PUMPING SYSTEMS



*Watertronics® offers pump stations for golf and landscape irrigation with the most comprehensive controls software available to provide a smooth and energy efficient irrigation operation. Every station is custom engineered, built to meet your job requirements, and tested under field-type conditions prior to shipment.*



### **A versatile product line for any irrigation application**

Watertronics offers a full line of Golf, Residential, Commercial, Sports Turf and Municipal systems including vertical turbine, horizontal centrifugal, vertical centrifugal, BlackMax submerged sled, WaterMax self-contained enclosed and custom-built systems. We also offer pond controls and Airtronics aerators, filters and screens, EZ Feed fertigation injection systems, and more. Watertronics can provide a total irrigation pumping system specifically designed to meet any customer specifications.

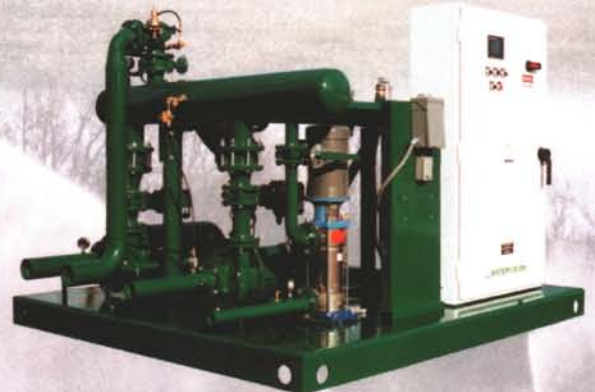
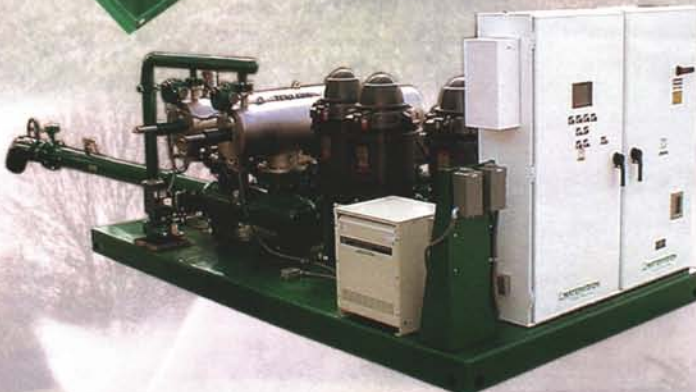
### **Controls that can manage pumping irrigation from anywhere**

Watertronics offers the latest in pump station controls, communications and maintenance software packages. Our Watervision® remote monitoring software combined with the Pumplink® software interface allows your pump station to communicate with the irrigation central computer in real time. Add the Maintenance Manager® software package and you have "total control" of your entire irrigation system from a remote location.

### **A Pump Service Network (PSN) that knows only one boss - the customer that operates the system**

With over 100 factory trained individuals in the field, Pump Service Network (PSN) provides service for installation, start-up and user training. They offer maintenance and winterization programs, station retrofitting and upgrades. We support our product well beyond installation and warranty and can keep you at the highest pumping efficiency.

Visit our web site for additional information.



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