

palities and water districts have a responsibility for water management. How aggressive they are with end users in urban areas is up to them.

When it comes to restricting water use, landscape is one of the first because it's not a health or human safety issue, Bennett says.

"It's considered a luxury, and will make a sacrifice before other industries do," he says, adding that about 75% of all the water from the Colorado River goes to agriculture. "There are many rules and regulations that dictate who gets what and when in urban areas. Agencies can shut off water if there are chronic violators. The property owner is responsible."

Unlike Las Vegas and Phoenix, Grand Junction, CO, in Mesa County is lucky to have two major drainage systems flow through it: the Gunnison and Colorado rivers.

"We do have an incredible water supply," Komlo says. "We're blessed. Denver envies us. Our annual rainfall ... if we can get 9 in. a year, it's a wet season. Without a river flowing through here, we'd have unusable landscape."

There are other sources of water other than the Colorado River in Mesa County, of course. There are huge aquifers in the Front Range, and 0.05% of the water in the county comes from wells, which are expensive to drill.

Contractors step in

More homeowners and commercial properties will be converting to desert landscaping because of water-use concerns, and that's a boon to landscape contractors, Johnson says. Some landscapes were designed 30 or 40 years ago and need to be redesigned.

Bennett recommends contractors work with water authorities to make it easier for customers to get rebates and understand laws and policies.

Isenberg agrees. "From a design standpoint, we consider water with every step we make," he says. "Design is the first important step in water conservation. The use of invasive and non-invasive plants, how to make space usable, how water moves through a space, minimizing erosion and pooling ... these are the things we think about."

In the commercial sector, there are standards for new construction in Tucson — and similar standards are in the works for the residential sector, Isenberg says.

"Water is a central issue, yet people don't take a conservation approach to water because it's been taken for granted for so long," he says. "Now we don't have a choice. People are resistant to limit water use. The city of Tucson

could pull in revenue by fining people who misuse water."

Many people may still think of xeriscaping as just cactus and rock, but that's not so, Isenberg says.

"That's the biggest hurdle for us," he says. "We usually say xeriscaping isn't a style, it's a tactic, an approach. For example, our xeriscaping award project (see photos) is a super-modern, chic landscape with concrete, glass and steel. It didn't fit the typical model of xeriscaping. You can apply xeriscaping tenets to any landscape."

"The key is that the water conservation efforts and landscape can't be bohemian," he adds. "It has to be approachable and appropriate. It needs to have sex appeal."

Technology

There's a lot of smart technology that can save homeowners money on their water bills and protect their landscape investment, Eisenberg says. Envirotranspiration (ET) clocks with in-ground sensors in which soil moisture dictates

watering is an example.

"We need to divert water to where it's needed, and capture water to save it for later use," he says.

Komlo cites match precipitation, drip irrigation, smart clocks and two-wire systems for better computer control as examples of technology that will help guide the Green Industry toward the future of water conservation.

"There's always innovation with turf and shrubs and plants for drought tolerance," he adds.

The river ahead

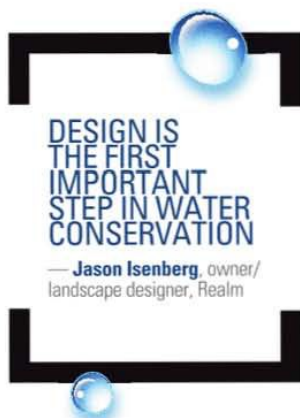
Most cities in the Southwest will continue to grow, so there will be more pressure on water sources. In addition to the Colorado River, other water sources exist. Aquifers are an example, but they tend to be located in unpopulated areas and are distant from demand. Many predict that water will become more expensive, too.

"Water rates in Vegas have increased 500% since 1990," Bennett says. "Landscape contractors need to understand their customers' water sources and rates."

Water conservation needs to be a national effort, Komlo says, adding that drip irrigation, which has been used since the 1980s, has been a big turnaround for the Green Industry.

"Before that, we were watering (flower and shrub) beds like lawns," he says. "It started in California. Rain Bird, Toro, Ewing and Hunter worked to help contractors conserve water and make money." ■■■

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A climate change of attitude

Australian policymakers are talking global warming and its implications for the country's fresh water resources.



BY **RON HALL** EDITOR AT LARGE

Australian water at a glance

- ▶ Population 22 million; projected population of more than 39 million by 2056
- ▶ Continental area of 2,680,000 sq. miles (10 times larger than Texas)
- ▶ On average, 90% of rainfall is directly evaporated back to the atmosphere or used by plants; only 10% runs off to rivers and streams or recharges ground-water aquifers
- ▶ Household water consumption, about 75 gal. per person per day
- ▶ Household water use decreased by 8% from 2001 to 2005
- ▶ Household use of reused or recycled water increased from 11% to 16% from 2001 to 2006

Source: "Australian Water Resources 2005," Australian Government, National Water Commission

AUSTRALIA, THE driest inhabited continent on earth, is a testament to man's industriousness, creativity and, perhaps, to his arrogance by choosing to live wherever he desires.

International attention is focusing on the water issues facing this continent, 80% of which is desert or semiarid. In a sense, it's the Earth's test tube for global warming, especially in terms of water resources.

Australian scientists and policymakers are taking climate change seriously. They're preparing the country's water and energy sectors in anticipation of significant environmental changes.

"I don't care if you believe in climate change or not, but you're a bit of a fool if you don't manage the risk," says Dr. Bryson Bates chief scientist with the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organization (CSIRO). "We're seeing strong evidence from climate research, and we seem to be locked into a drying cycle into the future."

Evidence of rapid, global change

is impossible to ignore, Bates says. It's most obvious manifestations are:

- ▶ melting ice sheets and caps
- ▶ melting glaciers
- ▶ melting permafrost
- ▶ ocean acidification
- ▶ atmospheric circulation changes
- ▶ ecosystem changes.

Bates' belief is supported by a recent report from the Australian Climate Change Science Program, claiming, that during the past 30 years, there has been a dramatic shift in the country's climate, which is affecting storm tracks in southern Australia. The shift has resulted in a 30% reduction of storm growth rate, meaning less rainfall throughout southern Australia.

Put in perspective

While it's believed the continent has been inhabited for about 50,000 years, it wasn't until 1788 when ships began disgorging England's excess population that today's Australia began taking shape. The newcomers quickly set about attempting to transform the

vast island continent into a facsimile of their former homeland.

But Australia, apart from the common language, isn't like England. The two are quite different geographically and climatically.

Australia's 22 million people are concentrated in and around a few cities on the eastern, southern and southwestern coasts. And Australia is drier, much drier. Much of the most inhabited and agriculturally important areas of the continent are in the grips of a withering 7-year drought.

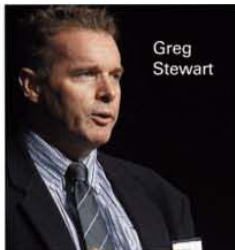
For all of these obvious differences, Australians are finding old habits are hard to break, especially when it comes to landscape irrigation. They are, like today's garden-loving Brits, passionately attached to their landscapes, lawns, golf courses and sports fields.

Changing habits

But break those habits they must. They're starting to get the message, says Greg Stewart, General Manager Total Eden, Chair of Irrigation Association — Western Australia Region.

Stewart cites a water emergency in the region in 2001 as a wake-up call to the Green Industry in terms of landscape irrigation. The water corporation in Perth, the region's capital with a population of about 1.7 million, threatened a complete lawn-and-garden watering ban as the dams that supplied water to the city approached all-time lows.

Thanks to the action of a coalition of Green Industry associations, headed by the Irrigation Association of Australia (now Irrigation Australia), the water corporation agreed to two-day-a-week watering. Even with the restriction, the problem of landscape water waste persisted. Property owners merely increased their watering times and watered on days they



Greg Stewart

weren't allocated.

What was needed and implemented was an aggressive, joint industry/water corporation effort to educate property owners about products and practices to allow them to water only twice a week while still maintaining attractive gardens and lawns, Stewart says.

The resulting media blitz focused on convincing the public to restrict watering to 15-minute intervals during allotted times, adjust controllers regularly, use soil wetting agents and mulch, select and install water-efficient plants and implement proper maintenance practices. These changes began to reduce landscape water waste, says Stewart.

Meanwhile, retailers were encouraged to train their garden staffs about efficient irrigation practices and products. Not only did it improve the advice retailers could offer garden product consumers, it resulted in increased sales of higher-priced, better-quality irrigation products.

ADVANCES IN WATER-EFFICIENT IRRIGATION

Greg Stewart offered these product and product-use suggestions for boosting irrigation efficiency in Australia landscapes:

- ▶ Automatic controllers must come on when required, otherwise the watering day or period is lost. Controllers must not be overly complicated. They should have large, clear display screens.
- ▶ Low precipitation output and high uniformity rotary-type nozzles are becoming more popular for all the right reasons. They must be designed and installed correctly, and programmed for the correct run times.
- ▶ Inline drip and a mixture of well-placed bubblers, drippers and emitters are replacing the traditional spray method. Be advised, drip systems require more education, training and maintenance.
- ▶ Soil moisture and rain sensors should be made mandatory for every automatic system in Australia. The price point needs to be under \$100.



Stuart White

Looking ahead

Water authorities and government agencies are united in preserving and adding to Australia's precious fresh water supplies. They're working with the Green Industry on a range of programs,

including irrigation-product testing and certification, to ensure citizen's have healthy lawns, parks and gardens.

Even as the nation brings alternative supplies of water on line, including using more reclaimed wastewater and construction of desalination plants, it'll continue to seek increased water-use efficiencies from the public.

"There's absolutely no point in putting in systems which reuse water, which capture rainwater, which recycle storm water unless we have maximized efficiency levels first," says Dr. Stuart White, director of the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology, Sydney. "This is the largest and quickest contribution we can make to future water sustainability or energy." LM

NOTE: Much of the information used in this article came from Rain Bird's "Intelligent Use of Water Summit X" in Melbourne, Australia, March 19, 2009.

Watch Intelligent Use
of Water Summit X at
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The author is president of JP Horizons Inc. Visit www.jp horizons.com.

How's your follow through?

In September 2008, *Landscape Management* ran the first Working Smarter column. Since then, we've discussed topics such as better understanding processes, adding value for customers, improving internal communication, getting (and staying) organized and bringing more celebration into your organization.

You've also been given a Monthly Challenge to move your company toward Working Smarter. I wonder how many of you accept our Working Smarter Monthly Challenge.

How many of you not only read it, but also follow through and improve something about yourself, your team and/or company?

There have been many a speaker, philosopher, athletic coach and parent who, having the opportunity to mentor an individual or an entire group, make the following prophetic proclamation: "There are three types of people: Those who watch things happen, those who make things happen, and those who ask, 'What just happened?'"

After a year of Working Smarter columns and Monthly Challenges, let's pause and ask ourselves, "Which one of the three types of people best describes me?" and "Which one best describes my team?"

The 'Watch Things Happen' group

For you, the past year likely included reading this column (and Kevin Kehoe's, Bruce Wilson's and other tips in this key information resource), and thinking, "I need to start doing that."

Unfortunately, that thought usually leaves you the instant you set the magazine down, because you have not yet developed a discipline to follow

through and turn ideas into action. Because of this, you have hundreds of ideas bouncing around in your head that now confuse and frustrate you more than help and guide you.

You will often mutter phrases like, "We tried that before," "We aren't doing too bad now, so let's just keep on doing this" or the all-too-popular "We are too busy and just don't have time." As a result, you continue to struggle and never reach your full potential. One day, you'll say, "I should have ..."

The 'Make Things Happen' group

When is the time to start getting better? Ask this group, and it will be answered with an enthusiastic, "Now!" Those people who make things happen simply have the courage to try something. Even if it does not work, they've had learning experiences that helped them or their companies expand their awareness of the need to Work Smarter.

This group realizes setting aside time to implement a new idea, train the team and communicate goals and accomplishments delivers a hundredfold payback in customer satisfaction, personal growth and improved business performance.

The 'What Just Happened?' group

Consider this: Why will some companies have their best year ever this year and some just get by — if they're lucky?

Ask that question of this group, and they will give you their scientifically verified answer of "luck." They never realize they are part of this group until it's too late. A year from now, they will ask, "What just happened to our business, our best customers and our top employees?" They will act surprised, but deep down they know the truth.

So what's it gonna be — Door 1, 2 or 3?

MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Send an e-mail to jim@jphorizons.com and briefly explain how your company has been able to Work Smarter. Jim will follow up with those stories that might help other readers learn from your ideas.



More than 250 Green Industry companies have participated in JP Horizons' Working Smarter Training Challenge (WSTC), typically saving tens of thousands of dollars annually. To learn whether your organization qualifies to participate in the WSTC, visit www.jp horizons.com/LM.htm today.

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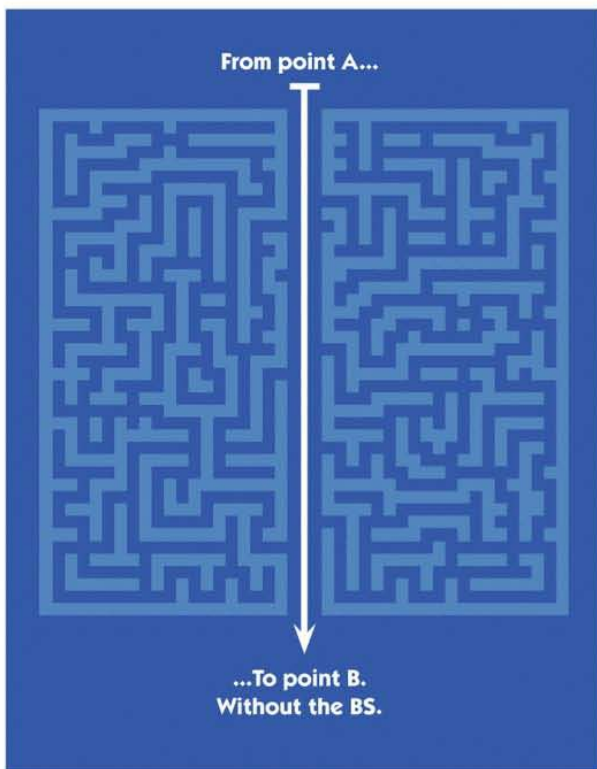
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Vista Professional Outdoor Lighting

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ter. Both models are available with either 2.5- or 3.5-watt LED emitter packages to provide high impact light with minimal energy consumption. The fixture housings are available in brass or stainless steel, and feature a 15-ft. pigtail of 18/3 double-jacketed, water-resistant cable. *VistaPro.com or 800/766-8478*

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and new Gateway irrigation injectable wetting agent. Like Myst, Hydrate and Gateway contain wetting and spreading agents as well as re-wetting agents. The wetting and spreading agents allow applied water to enter the root zone, including areas previously affected by Localized Dry Spot. The water-conserving, surfactant-based, re-wetting agents included in

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